



International  
Task Force on Teachers  
for Education 2030

مؤسسة حمدان بن راشد آل مكتوم  
للأداء التعليمي المتميز  
Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation  
for Distinguished Academic Performance



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

*Summary report:*

## **Thematic group session on pre-primary teachers**

*12th Policy Dialogue Forum  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Monday 9 December 2019  
10:30-12:00*

*Coordinators: Nikolina Postic, Yoshie Kaga, Rokhaya Diawara*

The thematic group on pre-primary teachers was formalised in 2017 at the 10th Policy Dialogue Forum (PDF) in Lomé, Togo. Attended by 31 participants, the thematic session at the 12th PDF addressed the PDF's overall theme of the future of teaching and included presentations on professional development of teachers, country-specific models of play-based learning, gender-responsive pedagogies, and key principles of the ILO Policy Guidelines on the promotion of decent work for early childhood personnel. The session also presented the outcomes of the [African Conference on Quality Early Childhood Education and the Professionalization of Educators](#), held 4-5 December 2019 in Casablanca, Morocco, a key activity that had resulted from a recommendation of the pre-primary teachers thematic group session in Lomé.

[Sabre Education](#) presented on the professional development of pre-primary teachers in Ghana (Annex I). Noting that education quality and learning outcomes were low due to a number of factors, including lack of trained teachers and lack of social status attached to being a pre-primary teacher, Sabre Education, in partnership with the Government of Ghana, implemented two training models to respond to these conditions. The first involved pre-service training at the tertiary level including the training of college tutors with manuals, developing model practice classrooms with mentors for student teacher placements, and providing refresher training for newly qualified teachers. The second involved in-service training with four components: training of trainers, in-classroom coaching, distribution of classroom resources, and monitoring and quality assurance of the overall impact. Both models had a positive impact on classroom quality and teacher professional well-being, with pre-service training increasing the quality of newly qualified teachers and classrooms from 32% to 95%. Key reflections included recognizing the importance of providing practical support and experiential training, concentrating investment in training and monitoring, and pairing pre-service and in-service training for positive learning outcomes.

[The LEGO Foundation](#) presented on the BRAC Play Lab model – low-cost, quality play-based learning for children in under-resourced settings – and how it has been adapted in Bangladesh, Uganda and Tanzania (Annex II). The core elements of the model include: building the competencies of Play Leaders; delivering a play-based, child-centred curriculum; ensuring a child-friendly environment adapted to the local context; fostering parent engagement; and developing partnerships with communities. Play leaders are the most important element in the Play Lab. Therefore, identifying the right characteristics during the recruitment process is essential. In Bangladesh, the model builds on the recruitment and training of adolescent girls from the BRAC empowerment program, which creates new career paths for women and builds the local early childhood workforce. In Uganda, on the other hand, women already enrolled in the nationally approved certification program can obtain their certificates by working in Play Labs. Preparation involves

one-week foundational training, monthly refresher courses, peer-to-peer mentoring, supervision, and material development training. The Play Lab model aspires to achieve greater integration into the government school system.

Gender discrimination is manifested within education – from biased teaching and learning materials to gender-based divisions of roles and tasks – and can impact education and career pathways. Given that the concept of gender is formed at an early age, investing in gender equality in early childhood education (ECE) is especially important. Data, however, indicates that donor investments in gender equality in education are considerably lower in ECE than in other schooling levels. [VVOB](#) along with other partners developed the [Gender Responsive Pedagogy for Early Childhood Education \(GRP4ECE\) Toolkit](#) to assist teachers and school leaders to challenge gender stereotypes before gender identities are developed (Annex III). The Toolkit includes material for lesson planning and games for both students and teachers. It is rooted in play-based learning and is designed to be low cost and adaptable to local settings. Findings from the Toolkit pilot in Zambia showed that there was increased awareness by teachers of the social significance of gender, that teachers actively integrated gender in classroom activities, and that teachers required greater support on gender and play-based learning components.

Towards the goal of achieving a qualified ECE workforce and thereby quality ECE, the [ILO](#) developed [Policy Guidelines on the promotion of decent work for early childhood education personnel](#) (2014), which offer guidelines and principles for governments, employers and workers looking to improve or enhance ECE provision (Annex IV). Key principles articulated by the Guidelines include: education and training comparable to that of primary school teachers with similar status and responsibilities; a clear and diversified career structure that allows for lifelong learning through continuous professional development; salaries that provide a decent standard of living and are comparable to other occupations with equivalent professional qualifications; working time that is consistent with the sector and promotes work-life balance; and effective social dialogue that supports input from and involvement of governments, employers and workers. The Guidelines clearly state that ECE should be considered as a part of the fundamental human right to education and as a public good.

The ILO and UNESCO, as co-coordinators of the thematic group, along with the Moroccan Ministry of Education co-organized the African Conference on Quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) and the Professionalization of Educators on 4-5 December 2019 in Casablanca, Morocco (Annex V). The Conference was organized in partnership with the German Development Cooperation (GIZ/BMZ), the International

Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF), the Moroccan Foundation for the Promotion of Pre-School Education (FMPS), the Regional Centre of Quality and Excellence in Education (RCQE) and the Monegasque Cooperation for Development. The Conference included over 200 participants at the opening and over 80 participants attended and contributed to the technical part of the event, including representatives of governments and social partners from 18 countries. It highlighted longstanding challenges – unpaid or poorly paid ECE personnel, workforce shortages in rural and disadvantaged areas, and lack of professional development opportunities – as well as good practices in the sector – policy development involving social partners and incentives and training programmes that encourage teachers and educators to work in rural areas. It recognized the positive contributions of ECE for childhood health and socialization, human capital development, and future employability, and that maximizing on these benefits required benchmarked and sustained funding, quality education, training and continuous professional development for ECE personnel, decent working and teaching conditions in the sector, coordinated efforts between national and international partners and stakeholders, and sustained dialogue between the government and social partners. The Conference resulted in the [Casablanca Declaration and Call for Action](#), which called on governments to establish legal, institutional and policy frameworks to make quality ECE free and accessible to all children, working in partnership with all stakeholders.



The session produced the following recommendations for the thematic group for 2020-21:

- Promote the Casablanca Declaration and Call for Action on Quality Early Childhood Education and the Professionalization of Teachers and Educators;
- Organize a technical meeting between UNESCO, ILO, GIZ/BMZ and other partners in early 2020 to undertake a mapping of existing initiatives and resources related to the development and management of ECE personnel, as well as to develop and refine a concrete action plan for 2020-21, as pertains to the Casablanca Declaration and Call for Action and the thematic group;
- Complete the 18 country profiles on ECE indicators initiated for the African Conference on Quality Early Childhood Education and the Professionalization of Teachers and Educators;
- Organize a similar workshop to the African Conference on Quality ECE in another region in 2021, possibility in the Arab States; and,
- Continue to expand the network of the thematic group and further engage in knowledge-sharing activities.



## **Professional development of kindergarten teachers in Ghana**

---

### **Context of Ghana**



- 2007: **two years compulsory** pre-primary education (ages 4 and 5)
- Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) currently at **73.8%** (2018/2019) - **gender parity**
- Educational **quality and learning outcomes low**
- 2012: Operational Plan to scale up quality Kindergarten
- Lack of trained teachers
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Inadequate teacher and learning materials
- **Negative stigma** attached to being a Kindergarten teacher

## Context of Ghana (continued)

- **Tertiary ECE specialism** introduced in 2008, as part of 3 year Diploma in Basic Education - 8 colleges offering it
- 2019: reforms upgraded **Diploma to 4 year B.Ed** with Early Grade specialism from KG1 to P3.
- Scaling up the number of Universities and Colleges offering B.Ed Early Grade with active play-based methodology
- Efforts to change public perception- **professionalism**: national teacher prize, public broadcast campaigns, **single spine salary scale**
- 2019: Kindergarten curricula- **tertiary and basic education** includes focus on **active play-based learning** with nationwide training

## Support to National Reforms

### Revision of Kindergarten Curriculum

- Contribution of technical expertise, training materials and methodology to **NaCCA**

### Development of B.Ed Early Grades

- Contribution of technical expertise, training materials and methodology to **NCTE/T-TEL**

### NIB KG teacher and classroom assessment tool

- Partnership on review, adaptation and adoption of Sabre assessment tools with **NIB**

### Development of New Early Childhood Education Policy

- Contribution to development of new policy and plan for ECE with **GES/UNICEF**

### Strengthening District and Regional Training & Assurance Systems

- Training **GES** District Teacher Support Teams and Circuit Supervisors to support quality KG

### Joint KG school design with FPMU (planned)

- Co-creation of new cost-effective, child-friendly KG school design with **FPMU**

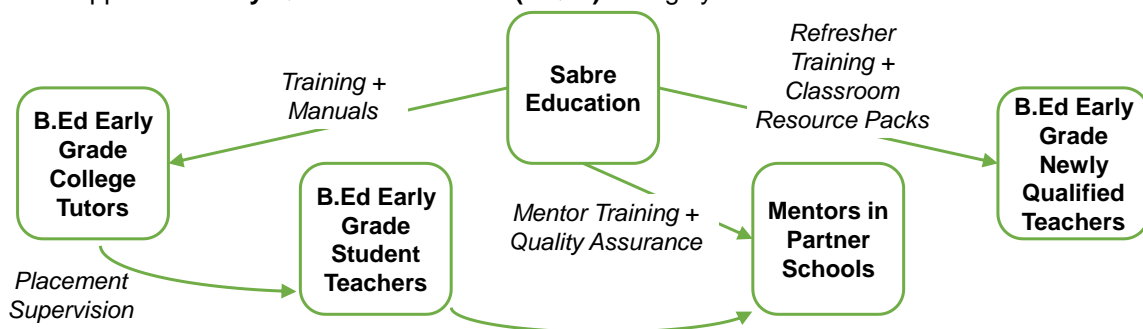


## Sabre Training Model (pre-service)



Tertiary level support embedded in government:

- Training of **College Tutors** with manuals
- Establishment of model practice classrooms in **Partner Schools** with mentors for student teacher placements
- Coaching, Monitoring and Quality Assurance
- Support to **Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)** facing systemic issues

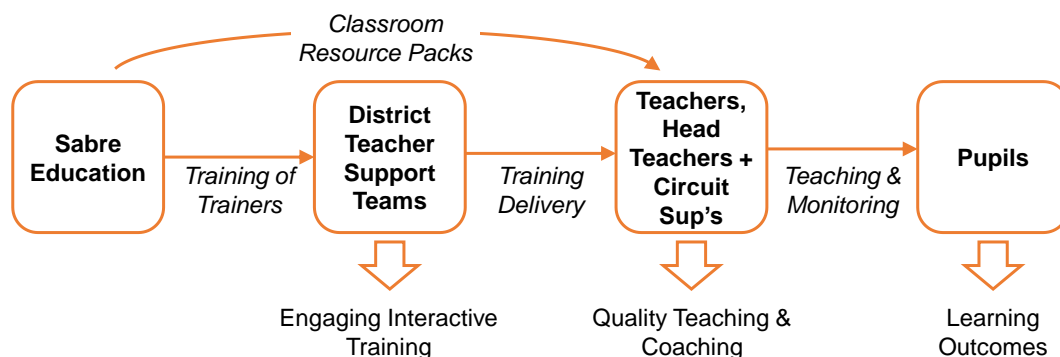


## Sabre Training Model (in-service)



Districtwide in-service training embedded in government:

- 9 days of **Training Workshops** delivered by District Teacher Support Teams
- 3 days of **In-Classroom Coaching** delivered by Head Teachers
- **Classroom Resource Pack** (Story books, construction blocks, dolls & teacher guides)
- **Monitoring & Quality Assurance** of training + teacher & pupil outcomes





## Training Objectives

### For Teachers:

- Implement curriculum using **child friendly approaches** and **positive behaviour management**
- Provide a **playful, activity-based learning** experience in a stimulating learning environment
- Make learning resources using **locally available low-cost and recycled materials**
- **Assess**, record and report on individual child progress
- Collaborative **relationships** with teachers, supervisors, parents and wider community
- **Best practice** forums

### For Pupils:

- **Independent learners**
- Resilient children who respond to questions, are self-managing, acquire personal responsibility for their own behavior, and **problem solve in social and practical situations**
- Children who are '**Confident, Communicative, Cooperative, Curious and can Concentrate**'
- Children whose **literacy skills** outstrip those of their peers on entry to Primary 1

## Pre-service Results

- 1,113 Student teachers trained (300+ per year)
- 158 Model practice classrooms/partner schools
- Positive impact on teacher professional well-being and classroom quality
- Demonstrated higher understanding of the national KG Curriculum
- 60% of NQTs indicated that self-motivation and commitment was a key factor for their success
- Improved NQT teacher and classroom quality: 32% to 95%
- Systemic challenges persist in wider context



## In-service Results

- More than 1,000 teachers trained – moving to districtwide approach
- Positive impact on teacher professional well-being and classroom quality
- Best performing teachers trained as mentors for pre-service student teachers
- Addresses systemic challenges by involving head teachers & education service officers

*“What keeps me moving and motivated in implementing the programme is the joy I get when children are showing improvements in their learning”*  
- Ethel Esther, Kindergarten Teacher, Shama District



## Teacher Monitoring Tool

- Identifies **core behaviours** of a good KG teacher
- Supports **achievement** of these behaviours through intensive training & classroom coaching
- Tool for both **self reflection and supervisor** (head teacher / circuit supervisor) assessment
- **Implemented digitally** by government with our support
- Tool is informing the new national assessment tools



---

## Evidence of Impact is Important



### Two Innovations for Poverty Action Impact Evaluations:

- In-service Teacher Training using Sabre content and methodology:

<https://www.poverty-action.org/study/improving-kindergarten-quality-ghana>

*“...the in-service teacher training and coaching program improved teaching, classroom quality, and school readiness during the implementation year, and some impacts persisted two years later...”*

Key lessons: pupil outcomes in KG persist into lower primary + impact of in-classroom coaching

- Pre-service Teacher Training for student teachers:

<https://www.poverty-action.org/study/mentoring-and-experiential-learning-early-education-student-teachers-ghana>

*“...the program significantly improved student teachers’ implementation and knowledge of the national kindergarten curriculum...”*

Key lessons: placement of Newly Qualified Teachers into classes matching their specialism + education ecosystem presents barriers to quality implementation in first teaching post



---

## Final Thoughts on our Experience



- At classroom level we have seen great success in boosting teacher motivation by giving **training in progressive pedagogies** (active play-based learning, positive behaviour management and formative pupil assessment)
- In the early grades, teachers really need **practical support** and engaging experiential training **to help them deliver** active play-based learning - our training is very focused on this practical approach, and that has been a key part of its success

## Final Thoughts on our Experience



- Changing practice (especially where ECE is a relatively new concept and most teachers haven't experienced it as a learner) takes **time** and requires an **intensive investment** in training and follow-up + classroom guides and resources
- Content-focused, in-service professional development and teaching experience positively affect student learning outcomes, and **learning gains persist** (no 'fade-out').
- **Pairing pre-service** training with well-aligned, **in-service** training may be key to ultimately improving student learning outcomes.

[www.sabre.education](http://www.sabre.education)





## Classroom clips



<https://youtu.be/06mDYRIf3kc>

## Annex II: The LEGO Foundation presentation



**The BRAC Play Lab Model**  
Adaptation of an early learning model across countries and settings

**Lesley Holst**  
The LEGO Foundation



**TG-ECCE session**  
**12th Policy Dialogue Forum**  
**Dubai, December 9, 2019**



**The Play Lab model**  
Low-cost, quality play-based learning for children aged 3-5 in under-resourced settings



- Developed by BRAC, LEGO Foundation and Play Consortium since 2016
- Started in Bangladesh and adapted to Uganda, Tanzania and Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh
- 1500+ play labs established in communities, camps and schools
- 78,000 children reached by end of 2018



## Core elements of the model:

1. Play leader competencies
2. Curriculum and child outcomes
3. Environment, space and materials
4. Parent engagement
5. Community engagement and partnership



### Play Leaders

BRAC trains local adolescent girls and young women as Play Leaders to facilitate Play Lab activities. This **creates new career paths for women and builds local ECDE workforces.**

### Play Curriculum

Play Leaders facilitate age-appropriate play, separating 3-4 year olds and 4-5 year olds. Using a combination of facilitated and child-led activities, along with individualized attention, Play Labs promote children's holistic development.

#### Video links:

Uganda Play Lab: <https://youtu.be/3NPQ1FVH20Tg>

Bangladesh Play Lab: <https://youtu.be/1EVT5Qak6AN>





## Play leaders

The heart of the Play Lab

### Recruitment:

#### Bangladesh & Tanzania

BRAC's adolescent girls' empowerment program

#### Uganda

Young women enrolled in nationally-approved certificate programme

### Training and coaching:

- Foundational training (1 week)
- Monthly refresher training
- Material development training
- Peer-to-peer mentorship
- Supervision



## A systemic approach

### Bangladesh

- 400 play labs operating in government schools. Government MoU for 1000 by 2022
- 4-year olds included in pre-primary programme.
- New curriculum to be developed for 4-6 year-olds.

### Uganda

- 29 play labs co-located in government school premises
- Expanding to include 6-8 year olds to promote healthy transitions

### Tanzania

- Permission to establish 35 play labs in schools (Tanga)
- Endorsement of revised play lab/play-based curriculum by Government in process



The LEGO Foundation

**Thank you**

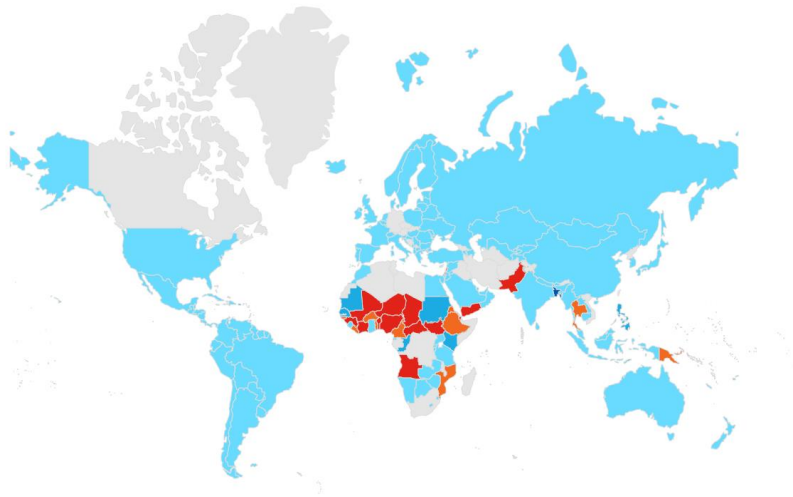


### Annex III: VVOB presentation



## Gender responsive pedagogy for early childhood education

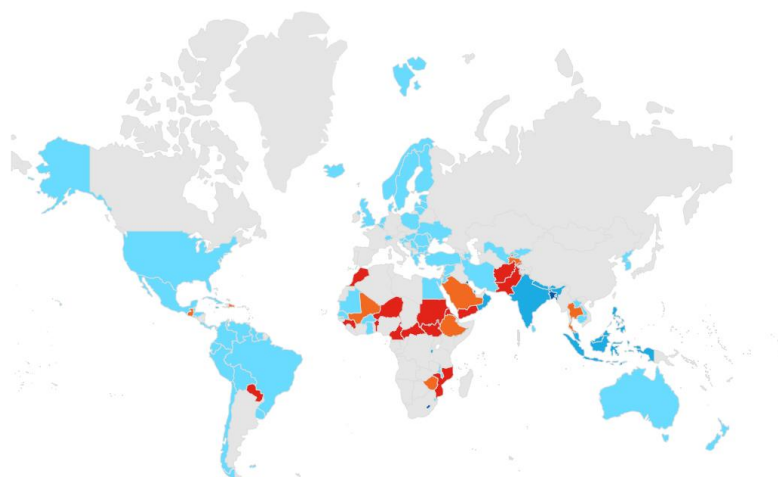
## Gender disparities in education



Gender parity index for primary enrolment, 2011-2016

Source: UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/topic/gender/gender-disparities-in-education/>

## Gender disparities in education



Gender parity index for lower secondary enrolment, 2011-2016

Source: UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/topic/gender/gender-disparities-in-education/>

## Gender discrimination in education

Gender discrimination manifests itself in the education in terms of:

- Biased teaching and learning materials
- Gender insensitive language // use of gender stereotype language patterns
- Unequal treatment of boys/girls (conscious or unconscious)
- Stereotype division of roles and tasks in schools (towards students but also among staff)
- Under-representation of girls or boys in certain subject combinations e.g. STEAM for girls
- Stereotype use of role models in different careers
- Inadequate sanitary facilities
- ...

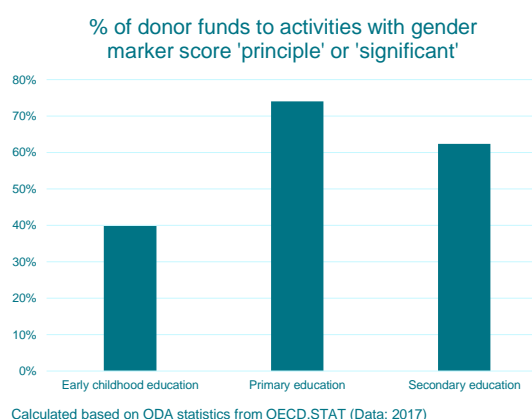


## Gender in education subsectors



Gender is part and parcel of many education programmes

Investments in gender in education by donors is considerably lower in ECE than in other education subsectors



## Gender in Early childhood education



- Concept of gender forms between the ages of 3 and 7.
- By this age, children acquire strong gender biases.
- Rigid understanding of gender norms, identities and stereotypes limit children's freedom to develop into their full and unique potential
- Early childhood education plays an important part in the transmission of gender stereotypes to young children through:
  - Language and teacher-learner interactions
  - Learning materials
  - Songs and stories
  - Roles given to male/female learners
  - Expectations held about male/female learners
  - ...

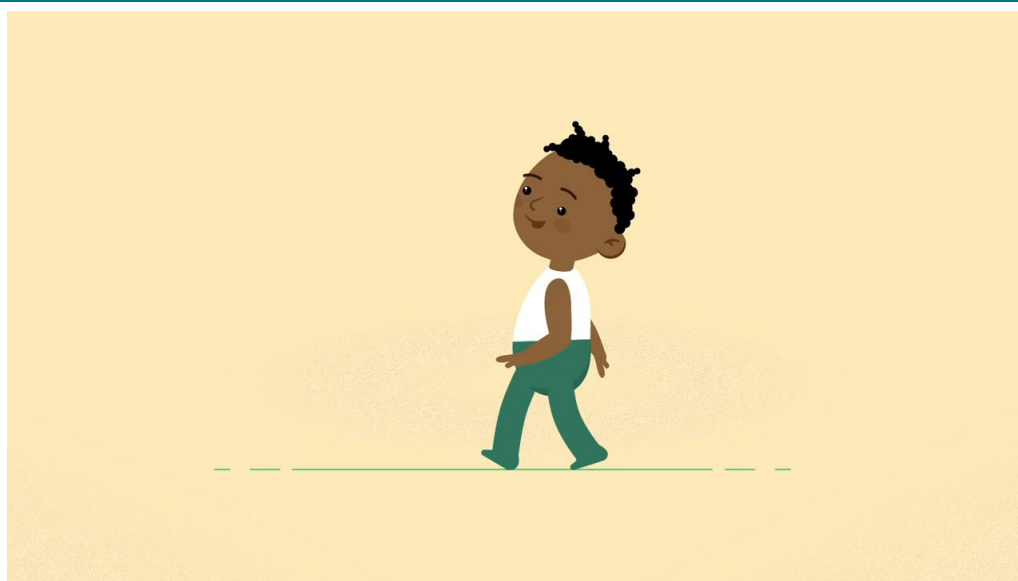
## Gender Responsive Pedagogy Toolkit 4 ECE



ECE is well placed to challenge these gender stereotypes at a time when children are still young and their gender norms and identities are not yet set.

The Gender Responsive Pedagogy for Early childhood Education (GRP4ECE) Toolkit supports teachers and school leaders to do just that.

## Gender Responsive Pedagogy Toolkit 4 ECE

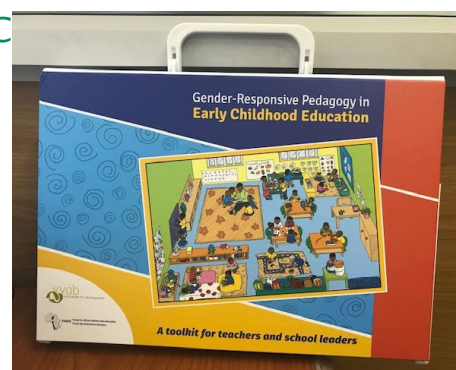


### A Toolkit for Teachers and School Leaders

- FAWE & VVOB
- Developed and tested in Rwanda, South Africa & Zambia
- Endorsed by African Union & UNESCO–IIC

#### Comprises:

- Manual for teachers & school leaders
- Practical activities/games for children
- Go Gender Go Game for teachers



### GRP4ECE: Key Characteristics

- Uses existing stereotypes as an opportunity to discuss gender norms and values in an age-appropriate way
- Specifically tailored to the ECE context: rooted in play-based teaching and learning
- Based on the principle of low cost and locally available resources
- Two-pronged approach: (1) raising awareness of educator's own gender biases; (2) providing educators with concrete handles to implement GRP in their schools and classrooms



## Pilot in Central province Zambia



*Timeline: August to December 2019*

Supported by a study to measure impact of GRP4ECE capacity building on knowledge, attitudes and teaching/leadership practice of ECE teachers and school leadership against a baseline.

- Teacher's awareness of stereotypes
- Teachers challenging stereotypes through questions
- Use of gender responsive group work

### Small sample:

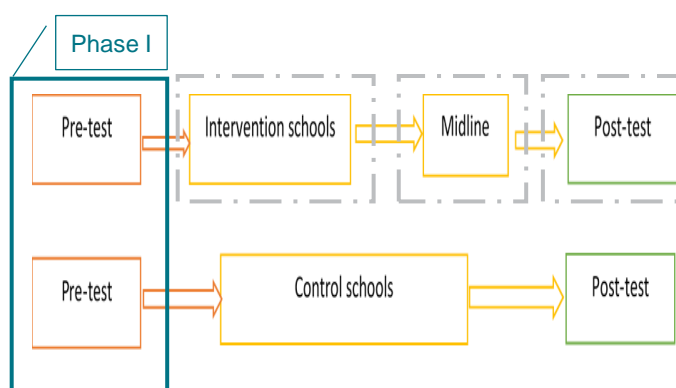
10 schools  
(5 intervention,  
5 control)  
10 teachers;  
20 school  
leaders; 30  
members of  
parents teachers  
association

## The research Methodology and design



The study involves 4 phases:

- **Phase 1: Baseline (intervention vs. Control)**  
– *focus of presentation*
- **Phase 2: Intervention implementation**
- **Phase 3: Midline assessment**
- **Phase 4: End evaluation**



## Key findings at midline stage



- Too early for any significant quantitative results
- Observations and interviews point towards:
  - Stronger alignment between teacher discourse and practice
  - Increased awareness among teachers of societal importance of gender
  - Increased awareness of teachers of how the community perceives gender roles
  - Teachers bringing up gender actively in classroom practice, sometimes challenging learner's perceptions
- Need to support teachers on both the 'gender' and 'play' components of the approach

## 2 year pilot programme in South Africa



### Operational Partners

- DBE
- SACE
- KZNDoe
- VVOB

### Timeframe and funding

- 2020-2021
- Belgian Federal Government

### Objective

A contextualised and tested approach to GRP4ECE provides school leaders and teachers with the competences to create and promote GRP in play-based teaching and learning environments

### Contextualisation



### Professional Development



### Research



## South Africa: Professional Development



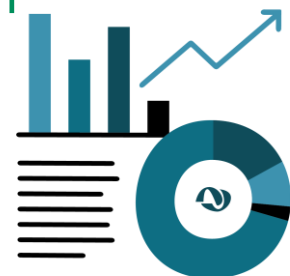
- 72 schools and centres
- 180 grade R and ECD teachers
- 108 school leaders
- Workshops & support to PLCs
- Strengthening 30 DBE Subject advisors ECE
  - Monitoring and support for GRP in ECE
  - Action research



## South Africa: Research



- External research
- Effectiveness of toolkit based on pilot
- Dissemination locally, nationally, regionally
- To inform policy and implementation



## Other programmes and future plans



### Training of teachers, school leaders and policy makers in multiple countries (Zambia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Uganda/Senegal/Rwanda, ...)

- Contextualization of toolkit
- Capacity building of student teachers; in-service teachers;
- Capacity building of the school community and school leaders



**For more information on the toolkit:**

**Gender Responsive Pedagogy for ECE Toolkit:**  
[bit.ly/GRP4ECE](http://bit.ly/GRP4ECE)

**[www.vvob.org](http://www.vvob.org)**

[www.vvob.org](http://www.vvob.org)

f VVOBvzw

🐦 @VVOBvzw

WITH THE SUPPORT OF  
THE BELGIAN  
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION **.be**

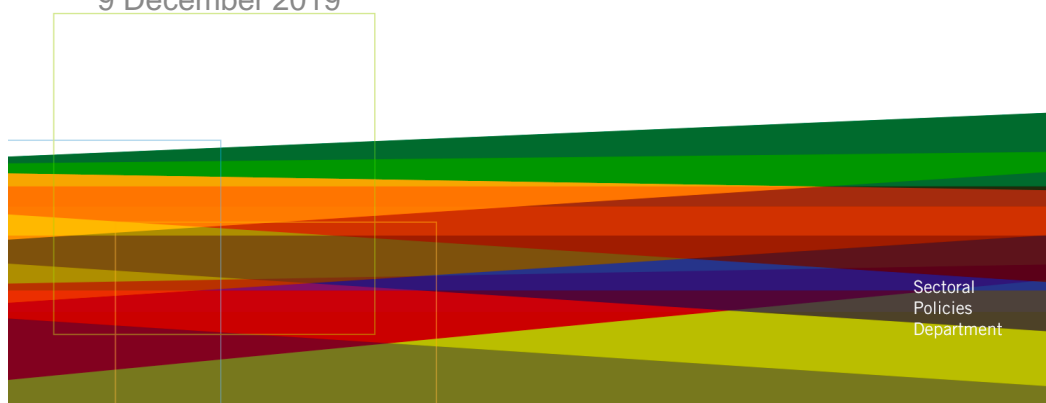
 **Flanders**  
State of the Art

 **vvob**  
education for development

# ILO Policy Guidelines on the promotion of decent work for early childhood personnel

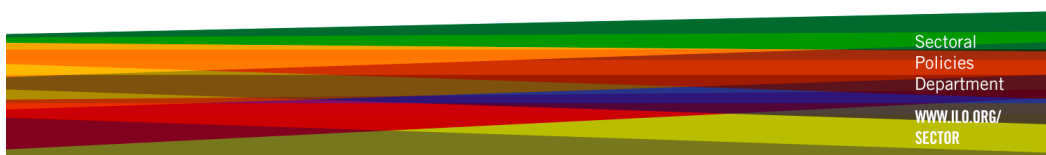


Nikolina Postic  
12th Policy Dialogue Forum – Dubai, UAE  
9 December 2019



## Key contributions include ...

1. Education, training and continuous professional development
2. Remuneration and working conditions
3. Social dialogue



## Annex V: UNESCO presentation

### African Conference on Quality ECE and the Professionalization of Educators (4-5 December 2019, Casablanca, Morocco)

- Co-organized by ILO, UNESCO, Morocco Ministry of Education, in partnership with BMZ/GIZ, TTF, FMPS, UNESCO Category II Centre: Regional Center for Quality and Excellency in Education (RCQE), the Monegasque Cooperation for Development, and Royal Air Maroc
- 150 participants attended the conference
  - Representatives from ministries of education, teacher unions and private sector providers from 18 African countries (Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, and Tunisia)
  - Representatives from civil society, regional institutions and international networks, intergovernmental institution (ICQN-ECD, CONFEMEN), development partners
- **Casablanca Declaration and Call for Action** on Quality ECE and the professionalization of ECE teachers and educators adopted
- **Draft country profiles** on 18 countries compiled – will undergo validation process and finalization

1



1





1



## African Conference on Quality Early Childhood Education and the Professionalization of Educators

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Casablanca, Morocco  
4-5 December 2019

### Casablanca Declaration and Call for Action on Quality Early Childhood Education and the Professionalization of ECE Teachers and Educators

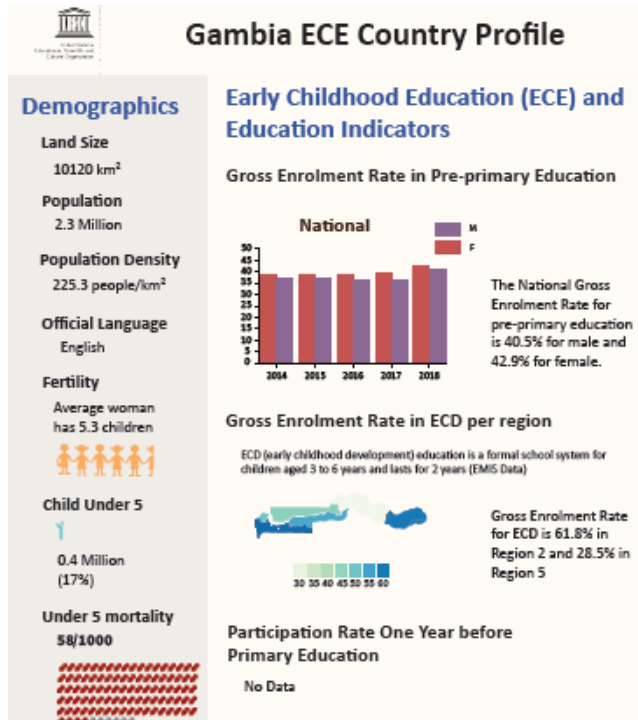
Casablanca, December 2019

#### Preamble

1. We, ministers, representatives of governments, of United Nations organizations and other inter-governmental organizations, of teacher training institutions, of employers and workers organizations and of civil society, actively involved in promoting early childhood education, met in Casablanca, Morocco on 4 and 5 December 2019 for the African Conference on Quality Early Childhood Education and the Professionalization of Educators.
2. The Conference was co-organized by the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Kingdom of Morocco, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), in partnership with the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), the Teacher Task Force for Education 2030 (TTF), the Moroccan Foundation for the Promotion of Pre-School Education (FMPS), the Regional Centre of Quality and Excellence in Education (RCQE), Monegasque Cooperation for Development and Royal Air Maroc. The Conference brought together representatives and stakeholders of 18 African countries<sup>1</sup>, Conference des Ministres de l'Éducation des États et Gouvernements des pays de la Francophonie (CONFEMEN), UNICEF, the World Bank, the Intercountry Quality Node on Early Childhood Development in Africa (ICQN-ECD)
3. We reaffirm our commitment to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 - Education 2030, a centrepiece of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, directed at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. Notably, we seek to achieve its target 4.2 (quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education) and target 4.c

1

## Declaration



**Draft country profile (example)**

1



1

## Planning for 2020-2021

- Carry out follow-up to the Casablanca Declaration and Call for Action
  - E.g. completing country profiles and making them available online
  - Finalizing and disseminating the declaration
  - Organizing a technical meeting in the first quarter of 2020 to define a concrete action plan
- Replicate the African conference on Quality ECE and the Professionalization of Educators in other regions
- Prepare country profiles on other countries
- What else?

1