



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



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

**World Conference on  
Early Childhood Care and Education**  
***Building the Wealth of Nations***

27-29 September 2010  
Moscow, Russian Federation

**Final Report**

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# **World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education**

## ***Building the Wealth of Nations***

**Moscow, Russian Federation**  
**27-29 September 2010**

### **AGENDA**

1. Opening Session: The ECCE Global Challenge: Setting the Stage
2. Plenary I: The ECCE Development Imperative
3. Plenary II: The Global State of the Art: Scaling up Towards 2015
4. Commission 1: Enabling the Scaling up Towards 2015
5. Commission 2: Regional Experiences
6. Plenary III: ECCE Country Best Practices
7. Roundtable on Innovative Financing for ECCE
8. Commission 3: Critical Thematic Areas
9. Commission 4: Exclusion and Marginalization
10. Commission 5: Monitoring and Evaluation of ECCE at National and International Levels
11. Plenary IV: Presentation of Conference Summary Report by the Conference Rapporteur General
12. Plenary V: Presentation and Adoption of the Conference Plan of Action by the Chair of the Drafting Group
13. Closing Plenary: The Way Forward

## PART I

### ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

#### A. Opening Session

1. The World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education *Building the Wealth of Nations*, convened by the Director-General of UNESCO in accordance with the 35 C/Resolution 15 adopted by the General Conference at its 35<sup>th</sup> session, took place in Moscow, Russian Federation, from 27 to 29 September 2010. The Conference was held as a joint collaboration between UNESCO and the Russian Federation.
2. Significantly, the Conference was the first ever world conference dedicated to the area of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). It aimed to: (1) heighten global awareness of ECCE as the right of all children; (2) encourage a dynamic and far-reaching reflection on the transformative powers of ECCE and reinforce its role as a basis for development; (3) take stock of progress, identify challenges and establish more effective benchmarks towards achieving Education for All; (4) engage governments, policy-makers, researchers and a range of institutions in reorienting national systems and programmes to take into account the early childhood years as human right and an integral part of development; and (5) promote global exchange of good practices.
3. A total of around 1,000 participants from 101 UNESCO Member States attended the Conference, including 67 Ministers and Deputy Ministers. There were also representatives of UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, foundations and other institutions of civil society (see [List of Participants](#)).
4. The participants were greeted at the beginning of the Conference by children singing from Moscow preschools. Their best wishes for a successful conference were warmly welcomed by the participants.
5. The first session was preceded upon by Mr Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education at UNESCO, serving as Moderator for the opening session and supported by Ms Mmantsetsa Marope, Director of Basic Education, serving as the conference Secretary.
6. The Moderator invited first Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, and then H.E. Ms Eleonora Mitrofanova, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO, Mr Yuri Luzhkov, Mayor of Moscow City, H.E. Ms Mehriban Aliyeva, First Lady of Azerbaijan and H.E. Hon. Danny Faure, Vice President of Seychelles, to address the Conference. Also, the Moderator invited H.E. Mr Fursenko, Minister of Education, Russian Federation to deliver the message of H.E. Ms Svetlana Vladimirovna Medvedeva, the First Lady of the Russian Federation (see their [Speeches](#)).
7. The Moderator introduced the provisional agenda (WCECCE/1 Prov), which was adopted. The Rules of Procedure (WCECCE/2) were also introduced and adopted.

8. Upon the proposal of Electoral Group II (Eastern European States), the Conference elected by acclamation, H.E. Mr Fursenko, Minister of Education, Russian Federation, as the Chair of the Conference.

9. The Conference then established its Bureau and elected the following five Vice-Chairs by acclamation:

H.E. Ms Donna Harpauer, Minister of Education, Canada

H.E. Mr Mohamed Enver Surty, Deputy Minister of Basic Education, South Africa

H.E. Mr Hamidreza Hajibabaei, Minister of Education, Iran

H.E. Mr Hkhaled Al-Karaki, Minister of Education, Jordan

H.E. Ms Sonia Sarmiento Gutierrez, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate, Permanent Delegation of Colombia to UNESCO

10. Mr Arief Rachman, Executive Chairman of the Indonesian National Commission to UNESCO, was then elected Rapporteur General of the Conference by acclamation.

11. The Conference decided that the Drafting Committee should be composed of representatives from each of the Electoral Groups. The Drafting Committee thus brought together representatives from the following Member States:

Group I: Germany and Norway

Group II: Latvia

Group III: Brazil and Suriname

Group IV: Thailand and New Zealand

Group Va: The United Republic of Tanzania and Senegal

Group Vb: Jordan and the United Arab Emirates

## **B. Organization of Work - Working Methods**

12. Based on the experience of the organization of the regional preparatory conferences and meetings in Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the Conference was designed to provide multiple, genuine dialogue among all participants and stakeholders. The main work of the Conference is elaborated in the [Conference Programme](#) and was organized as follows:

- An opening plenary session entitled “The ECCE Development Imperative”;
- An introductory plenary session entitled “The Global State of the Art: Scaling Up Toward 2015”;
- Five commissions (i.e. parallel sessions) on the following ECCE-related themes, broken down into 19 sub-themes: (1) Enabling the Scale up Towards 2015; (2) Regional Experiences; (3) Critical Thematic Areas; (4) Exclusion and Marginalization; and (5) Monitoring and Evaluation of ECCE at National and International Levels;
- A plenary session on ECCE Country Best Practices;

- A roundtable on Innovative Financing for ECCE;
- Two plenary sessions to present and discuss the Summary Report of the Rapporteur General and the adoption of the Conference outcome document “Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation: Harnessing the Wealth of Nations”, presented by the Chair of the Drafting Committee; and
- A closing plenary session entitled “The Way Forward”.

13. As an integral part of the Conference, the special events (one-hour workshops on specific issues related to the conference themes, organized by interested institutions) and the exhibition were also organized.

14. The main conference document “The World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE): Building the Wealth of Nations” ([WCECCE/3](#)) provided a conceptual basis for defining the objectives of the Conference and for elaborating the Conference Programme. It defines ECCE as a human right and as a development imperative that has multiple and far-reaching benefits to individuals and societies. Recognizing that countries’ wealth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not defined in material terms but by the quality of their human capital, it puts forward ECCE as a critical first step toward building the wealth of nations. Other background documents prepared for the Conference or the regional preparatory meetings are available on the [conference website](#).

15. The introductory plenary “The ECCE Development Imperative” was chaired by Mr. Adama Ouane, Director of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, and featured, as a distinguished keynote speaker, Mr. Jack P. Shonkoff, Julius B. Richmond FAMRI Professor of Child Health and Development, Harvard School of Public Health and the Harvard Graduate School of Education; Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School and Children’s Hospital Boston; and Founding Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, United States of America.

16. **Mr Shonkoff’s presentation:**

- provided scientific evidence on early brain development drawn from neuroscience, molecular biology, genomics and social sciences, and its implications for policy and programme development;
- stated that comprehensive ECCE for all young children builds human capital and lays a strong foundation for lifelong competence and well-being; and
- called for actions based on compelling moral imperative and social and economic returns that could be generated from science-based investments in the healthy development of young children. Particular attention should be paid to the potential benefits of more coordinated approaches encompassing public health, early education, child protection, social welfare and economic development that are guided by well-established, evidence-based principles.

17. The following plenary “Global State of the Scaling up Toward 2015”, chaired by Mr Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education at UNESCO, focused on the current state of provision of ECCE services and the need to substantially invest in ECCE provision. The keynote speakers were:

Ms Mmantsetsa Marope, Director of Basic Education, UNESCO  
Mr Nicholas Burnett, Managing Director, Results for Development, USA

The presentations of **Ms Marope** and **Mr Burnett** showed:

- Less than modest progress in achieving the first Education For All goal as well as persisting inequities in access to quality ECCE, with Sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and Arab States lagging behind the most;
- The need for revamping the first EFA goal and for making concerted and resolute effort to expand a holistic ECCE to enable the world's children, families and countries to reap the benefits of the related services and programmes; and
- Critical requirements for facilitating accelerated progress, such as renewed political commitment, dedicated and innovative financing, an emphasis on subsidies for the poor and disadvantaged, and a wider adoption of quality standards and their implementation and monitoring.

18. Featuring 19 sub-themes altogether, the subsequent series of five Commissions were organized in the form of panel discussion: (1) Enabling the Scaling up Toward 2015; (2) Regional Experiences; (3) Critical Thematic Areas; (4) Exclusion and Marginalization; and (5) Monitoring and Evaluation of ECCE at National and International Levels. In these Commissions, Ministers and Vice-Ministers, senior government officials, researchers and experts, and representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations from all world regions engaged in lively discussions, and many of them played an active role as conveners, speakers and rapporteurs. **The presentations** featured in these Commissions are available on the conference website.

19. Some of the key issues and observations were:

- ECCE may be established within a comprehensive framework that embraces relevant sectoral components and that facilitates service delivery in a coordinated manner;
- Declared commitment to ECCE should be expressed in the level of investment given to this area. Moving from policy to proclamation, from good intention to real policy and action, remains a true challenge in most countries;
- All countries, regardless of their levels of socio-economic development and ECCE profiles, are concerned with how to promote better and more equitable access and to improve quality of services and programmes. In particular, the situation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children (e.g. children from poor and disadvantaged families, those from ethnic minorities, those in emergency and conflict and post-conflict situations, those in rural settings and urban informal settlements) was emphasized as requiring urgent attention, and highlighted the need to establish more inclusive systems and programmes. The host country, the Russian Federation, provided several good examples on this;
- Most regions face the challenge of coverage and quality of ECCE services. The lack of policy and operational frameworks for comprehensive ECCE was addressed as one key challenge;



- The inadequacy of quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure progress in achieving the first EFA goal holistically was an important area of concern for most regions;
- Networking and sharing and exchange of information, experiences and good practices – particularly regarding innovative strategies for improving access, equity and quality of ECCE – must be promoted and put into practice in order for ECCE to be scaled up. Leadership- and broad-based partnerships, coordination, collaboration and good governance are some of the key enablers of successful scaling-up efforts;
- There is a vital need to prioritize the first EFA goal and to significantly increase investment in ECCE so as to realize the rights of all children to develop their potentials to the fullest and to improve the quality of health, nutrition, care, protection and education;
- The insufficient services and programmes for children under the age of three is a common concern across regions. Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, where the status of child and maternal health and well-being is most serious and where there is little formal ECCE provision, it is crucial to extend appropriate support to families, which are the first and most important caregivers and educators of young children.

20. The plenary session III on “ECCE Country Best Practices”, chaired by Ms Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Africa, showcased good practices from the Russian Federation, Cuba and Mauritius through the following presenters:

Ms L. I. Shvetsova, First Deputy Mayor of Moscow City, Russian Federation

Ms Isabel Rios Leonard, National Director of ECCE, Cuba

Ms Nirmala Gobin-Bheenick, Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, Mauritius

21. The discussions in the Roundtable for Innovative Financing for ECCE chaired by H.E. Vice President of Seychelles Hon Danny Faure highlighted several critical issues related to scaling up ECCE provision with equity and quality. Evidence on the development benefits of ECCE for children and societies is compelling and clear; yet, the level of investment – on the part of governments and donor communities – is insufficient. Adequate attention to the holistic development of children of all early childhood ages needs to be paid, as it builds the very foundation for lifelong learning, well-being and human capital development. ECCE is a powerful equalizer that empowers all children, especially those who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged. A strong recommendation was made to urgently mobilize financial resources for ECCE, particularly for countries and regions that are lagging behind in making progress toward the achievement of the first EFA goal. In this regard, establishment of a global fund dedicated to funding ECCE provision was proposed as an idea to further explore collectively. Also, a strong recommendation was made to work collaboratively on the target-setting and improvement of the monitoring of EFA goal 1, which would help accelerate the related efforts.

22. In the plenary session IV, the Rapporteur General, Mr Arief Rachman, presented his Oral Report of the Conference, which was met with acclamation. The Report is attached in Part II-A.

23. In the plenary session V, the President of the Drafting Group, Mr. Leonardo Barchini, Head of the International Affairs Office, Ministry of Education, Brazil, was invited to present the draft “Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation: Harnessing the Wealth of Nations”. Conference participants were informed that a minor addition had been suggested after the text was circulated. The Conference accepted the addition; and the Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation was adopted by acclamation. This document is attached in Part II-B.

### C. Closing Session

24. The formal closing ceremony was moderated by the Vice-Chair of the Conference H.E. Mr Mohamed Enver Surty, Deputy Minister of Basic Education, South Africa, who opened the session. The Moderator gave the floor first to Mr Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, representing the Director-General of UNESCO, and then to H.E. Hon. Danny Faure, Vice-President of Seychelles.

25. Finally, H.E. Hon. Danny Faure, Vice-President of Seychelles, delivered his closing address and pronounced the work of the first World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education as officially closed.

### D. Special Events

26. Special Events are one-hour workshops on specific topics in ECCE, organized by various institutions and partners, scheduled outside of the main Conference Programme. They are designed to contribute to achieving the overall conference objectives and to address in depth one or more of the Conference themes. A total of 15 Special Events were organized on the following topics; and [the programme for Special Events](#) is available on the conference website.

- Development in Early Childhood and ECCE: Vygotsky’s Perspective
- Early Childhood Rights Indicators: A Right-Based Approach to Early Child Development
- Damascus Declaration on ECCE in Arab States: The Way Forward
- Specialists Training for Teachers and Practitioners Working in ECCE
- Early Childhood Education in a Multicultural World
- Intergenerational Learning and Family Literacy: New Opportunities for ECCE in Africa
- Raising Standards in ECCE through Creative, Resourceful and Sustainable Programmes for Young Children
- Recognizing Potential of ICT in Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood Quality Initiatives: Six Russian Regions
- Can Global and Regional Networks Drive the Early Childhood Agenda, in Policy and Practice?
- The Role of Special Education in Poverty and Marginalization: An Effective, Cost-Efficient, and Sustainable Approach
- Ready for Success in School: Quality Teaching Practices for Scaling Up Inclusive and Innovative ECCE Programmes
- Collaborating with Parents in ECCE

- Psycho-Pedagogical Follow-up of Children in ECCE
- Building Capacity for Early Education to Accommodate HIV-affected and -infected Children

## **E. Exhibition**

27. Exhibitors came from around the world, representing international, national, non-governmental and private sector actors working on ECCE. Their display showed a variety of innovative practices and policy approaches that would stimulate new ideas and thinking about how best to address the challenges of providing for young children’s holistic development. **The description of the exhibition** is available on the conference website.

## **PART II-A**

### **ORAL REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE BY THE RAPPORTEUR GENERAL**

H.E Mr Danny Faure,  
Mr President of the Conference,  
Mr Assistant Director-General of UNESCO for Education,  
Honourable Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I like to thank all the Member States that have participated in the first ever World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for the honor granted to Indonesia and for the trust in me personally by appointing me as the Rapporteur General to this conference.

The important task entrusted to me was to report to you as faithfully and as objectively as possible on the content and proceedings of the conference. Since this is no easy task, I beg your indulgence for any apparent shortcomings or omissions in this report.

May I point out that this report is a summary with highlights of the main concerns expressed in the Conference.

I would like to emphasize the high quality of the debates, thanks to the substantial contribution and constructive commitment of all the participants who have shown remarkable understanding of the different issues involved in improving ECCE.

I have been impressed by the dedication from all participants; their enthusiasm mixed with humour and strong commitments shows me that we are in good hands when it comes to building the foundations for ECCE and its development.

I would like to mention in particular the Russian Government and Moscow City for the excellent manner in which they have made this conference possible. The investment of the UNESCO Team, led by Ms Mmantsetsa Marope, Director of Basic Education at the Education Sector, together with the Russian Secretariat, spared no effort in ensuring the success of this conference.

We have enjoyed the warm, friendly hospitality care and support from the Russian hosts and would like to express our deep gratitude to the authorities and the organizers for tirelessly working on this conference.

I also wish to extend my sincerest thanks to all the delegations, which have shown a great responsibility throughout the proceedings, thereby demonstrating their firm and steadfast commitment to early childhood care and education.

## **BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION**

Following extended consultations, the 35th Session of UNESCO's General Conference in October 2009 adopted Resolution 35 C/Resolution 15 to hold the first ever World Conference on ECCE in Moscow City, the Russian Federation, in 2010. The Conference was also to be organized as a joint collaboration between UNESCO, the Russian Federation and key stakeholders.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WCECCE**

The overarching goals of this Conference have been to:

- reaffirm ECCE as a right of all children and as the basis for sustainable human development;
- keep track of the progress of Member States towards achieving Education For All (EFA) goal 1;
- identify binding constraints toward making the intended equitable expansion of access to quality ECCE services;
- establish, more concretely, benchmarks and targets for EFA goal 1 toward 2015 and beyond;
- identify key enablers that would facilitate Member States to reach the established targets; and
- promote an overall partnership and global exchange of good practices.

## **OPENING**

UNESCO's Director-General Ms Irina Bokova opened the conference in the presence of the Mayor of Moscow Mr Yury Luzhkov, the Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr Andrei Fursenko, the Vice-President of the Seychelles H.E. Mr. Danny Faure, the First Lady of Azerbaijan and UNESCO's Goodwill Ambassador H.E. Ms Mehriban Aliyeva, and H.E. Ms Eleonora Mitrofanova, Chairperson of UNESCO's Executive Board.

Over 1,000 participants including 67 Ministers and Vice-Ministers participated from 101 Member States. Participants also included representatives from UN Agencies and Development partners, 76 NGOs and other professional organizations, experts, academics and practitioners of ECCE from all over the world.

"Early childhood care and education programmes yield greater investment returns than any other level of education," Ms Irina Bokova said. "This is probably one of the least publicized facts in the policy-making and development arena."

The Director-General emphasized that "The early years, from birth to age 8, are ones of extraordinary physical and intellectual development – on the condition that children receive adequate care and stimulation." She further underlined that "This conference must give a fresh impetus to early childhood care and education worldwide. Every country that is committed to inclusion, growth and social justice should have strong national early childhood care and education policies in place. They are the bedrock of a prosperous future."

Welcoming the progress that has been made in pre-primary education since 2000, Ms Irina Bokova pointed out that only 15 percent children are enrolled in pre-primary education in Sub-Saharan Africa, 19 percent in Arab States, 28 percent in Central Asia and 36 percent South and West Asia. “Scope for progress is immense. Most importantly, there is real reason for expanding provision for young children,” she said.

The Chairperson of the UNESCO Executive Board, Ms Eleonora Mitrofanova, welcomed the participants and expressed her gratitude to the City of Moscow in the preparation of the Conference. She also declared that Moscow’s high standard of ECCE made it to be a very good place to show models of ECCE.

This was also emphasized by the Education Minister of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr Andrei Fursenko, who also underlined the opportunity provided by the Conference for countries to exchange experiences, by looking at what works and how.

The Mayor of Moscow, Mr Yuri Luzhkov, welcomed the conference participants and pointed out the fact that, “The most important thing is the education of a human being at the beginning of their lives.” He stated that “It is the period of early childhood that learning, language, etc are developed, so the earlier the better.” He highlighted Russia’s achievement in ECCE, but emphasized the opportunity provided by the Conference for countries to exchange experiences look at what works and how.

In her opening address the First lady of Azerbaijan, H. E. Ms Mehriban Alieva, specified that “It is the early period of life that values, attitudes, behaviors and basic life skills, such as cooperation, autonomy, communication and pre-literacy skills, creativity and problem-solving, are shaped or not.” She strongly underlined the importance of early intervention during this phase when brain development is taking place and the roots of vulnerability seeded.

Ms Ludmilla Shvetsova, First Deputy Mayor of Moscow, welcomed participants and wished them a successful conference, she read on behalf of the First Lady of the Russian Federation in a statement.

The Guest of Honor of the Conference, Vice-President of Seychelles, H.E. Mr Danny Faure, extended his congratulations to UNESCO for hosting the first ever world conference on ECCE, held only days after the MDG Summit where leaders of the world reaffirmed their commitments to achieve MDGs by 2015. He also urged governments to act “swiftly and concretely”. They must give priority to early childhood programmes and “demonstrate that the political will to make this happen,” he said.

## **CONFERENCE GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE**

The Conference elected the following Bureau:

- A Bureau consisting of a Chairperson (Russian Federation) and four Vice-Chairs: Canada (Group I); Colombia (Group III); South Africa (Group Va); Syria (Group Vb);
- A Rapporteur General; and

- A drafting group with the following members: Germany and Norway (Group I. Europe and North America); Latvia (Group II. Eastern Europe); Brazil and Suriname (Group III. Latin America and the Caribbean); Thailand and New Zealand (Group IV. Asia and the Pacific); The United Republic of Tanzania and Senegal (Group Va. Africa); and Jordan and United Arab Emirates (Group Vb. Arab States).

The Moscow Conference will keep track of progress made over the past decade and identify ways for countries to achieve the goal of expanding and improving comprehensive ECCE, especially for the most disadvantaged by 2015. It will explore mechanisms for setting benchmarks and targets, for overcoming obstacles that hinder development of ECCE services and for monitoring progress towards service delivery.

Discussions focused on: development policies, costs and financing, and legal and institutional frameworks; regional experiences; quality and responsiveness; exclusion and marginalization; and monitoring and evaluation. A number of country cases will also be presented to highlight effective programmes in different parts in the world.

## **CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

The children followed us through the whole conference. During the opening we were warmly greeted by the children of Moscow and this continued and became a real crescendo in the marvelous Children's Gala Concert in the Kremlin followed by the reception hosted by the Mayor. Many of us were also fortunate to visit the children's work place - the Kindergartens.

### **Themes**

Before going into the themes of our discussions, I would like to point out the strong evidence that good early childhood education and development is the basis for helping all children to achieve their full potential. This constitutes a framework for the design of early childhood services and we must be aware that children cannot wait for our discussions and slow actions. They have the right to proper services NOW!

#### ***(1) Investments and the development rationale***

Early in the Conference we received striking confirmation on the importance of investments in ECCE. These investments are among society's most important investments.

We were strongly called upon towards a new global partnership for the development of ECCE. The global picture shows that strong efforts must urgently be made to develop and advance ECCE services. Weak policies and the lack of financing are holding back further development and must be addressed through strong commitments from the whole society.

Some good progress in policy development was highlighted. Recommendations to improve policy drivers were to: increase and heighten the perceived value and benefits of ECCE, generate higher political commitment, and to focus on service provision with an emphasis on protection.

The lack of investment in ECCE continues to deny children the opportunity to thrive and grow. We all agree that the consequences of non-intervention in ECCE by governments prompt increased inequalities among children. When the private sector is an important player, there is a need to introduce regulation, subsidies, price controls and direct provision. At the same time, it was made evident that cost-effectiveness of ECCE and the high return on investment make it a number one priority. The messages are clear:

- We cannot afford NOT to invest. Not investing means a loss of opportunities but also contributes to the accumulation of inequalities and condemns generations to deprivation and under performance;
- While the private sector is a valuable partner, over-reliance on private funding leads to and perpetuates inequalities between children;
- Government needs to lead in ECCE;
- Government is key to financing quality ECCE; and
- Government has a key role in regulating quality ECCE.

It was highlighted that both legal frameworks and policy must clarify coverage of special groups (migrants, ethnic minorities, special needs). Regulations relating to precursors need to be strengthened (maternal leave, health of the whole family). Regulations to set standards of service are key, as they impact quality and impose accountability.

Integration of ECCE at various levels of government (national, provincial, district, community, etc.) is a challenge everywhere. We need to have formal agreements among levels of government and sectoral authorities at each level with a clear lead ministry, and precise goals and operational arrangements.

### ***(2) Recent developments and findings in brain research and child development***

Today, we have solid evidence about the importance of stimulation during the early years of development in a child's life. The biology of early brain development and the importance of holistic measures and support provide stronger evidence than ever before toward the necessity to further develop all services in support of the development of our children before the age of three as well as the subsequent years.

### ***(3) Progress and critical challenges and solutions in regions***

All regions underlined the need to give more emphasis to ECCE and to increase significant investments to achieve the right to education for all children.

Another key issue is that ECCE needs to be established as a comprehensive framework that includes all relevant sectors and services. However, all regions agree that ECCE covers ages 0 to 8 and as a



holistic approach includes education, health, nutrition, and protection. This will also facilitate a smooth transition into primary education.

A challenge that is relevant for all countries is that the declared commitment towards ECCE should be expressed in the level of funding and investment given to this area. Moving from policy to proclamation, from good intention to real policy and action remains the true challenge. The Conference genuinely, creatively and comprehensively addresses this. The Framework for action will eloquently reflect this.

A common concern was how to find ways to promote better access to and provide better quality in ECCE. In particular, the situation for children in difficult circumstances or from ethnic minorities was highlighted and the needs to establish more inclusive systems were emphasized. The Russian Federation provided us with several good examples on this.

Most regions face low ECCE coverage and low quality of services. The absence of comprehensive policy provisions and operational frameworks for development of ECCE is a big challenge.

The lack of quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure progress was emphasized and this seems to be a problem shared by most regions.

A common idea expressed was that networking, information sharing and more innovative strategies must be developed and put into practice in order for ECCE to be scaled up and further developed. The regional experiences show that ECCE can be further developed if some basic principles of networking are defined and put in place. A few examples of this are partnerships, coordination, collaboration and good governance.

All regions expressed particular concerns about the lack of services for children under the age of three. In Africa, where the rate of child mortality is very high, lack of ECCE provisions makes it extremely important to support the family, which is at the first level of the delivery of ECCE services. There is a challenge for all regions to actively involve new partners such as the civil society and entrepreneurs, and to find innovative ways to develop methods for an expansion of ECCE. In order to reach out to more children, Africa provided interesting examples on interactive radio programmes as well as community based initiatives.

#### ***(4) Innovation of best practices at the national level***

One of the basic ideas behind this conference was to share ideas and experiences. We have also shared a great number of different and very interesting so called best practices. Taking into consideration the differences in financial contributions, traditions and history, I have been duly impressed by the intense discussions showing that we all have something to bring to others and a lot to learn from each other.

As has been mentioned over and over again, ECCE is a holistic programme where health, education, nutrition and protection represent equally important parts in a chain of services.

### ***(5) Children at risk***

Many children are unfortunately subject to exclusion and marginalization. The reasons may be different (disabilities, ethnic minorities, diseases, living under extreme poverty being subject to emergency and post-emergency situations), but the effects are always difficult. And it goes without saying that children are the most vulnerable as emphasized many times during the Conference, if you lose this important early stimulation, protection and nourishment, the whole life will be affected. So, when we discuss the general needs of children we must not forget that some should have the right to more attention in order to have the same chances as others.

### ***(6) Cooperation***

A recurrent issue in the Conference has been the absence of good and reliable data. The benchmarking and monitoring of the provision of holistic ECCE services has drawn the attention of many participants.

This was high on the Conference Agenda and a full session was devoted to the draft of a *Holistic Child development Index*. Countries ownership and interagency cooperation were sought to design, develop, pilot and use this tool. It is expected that a first reporting will take place in 2015.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Special events served as platforms for exchange of information, experiences and good practices concerning ECCE in addition to the various sessions scheduled within the Official Conference Programme. These one-hour events were there to contribute to achieving the main Conference objectives as well as to address one or more of the main Conference themes. Their titles were:

- Development in Early Childhood and ECCE: Vygotsky's Perspective
- Early Childhood Rights Indicators: A Right-Based Approach to Early Child Development
- Damascus Declaration on ECCE in Arab States: The Way Forward
- Specialists Training for Teachers and Practitioners Working in ECCE
- Early Childhood Education in a Multicultural World
- Intergenerational Learning and Family Literacy: New opportunities for ECCE in Africa
- Raising Standards in ECCE through Creative, Resourceful and Sustainable Programmes for Young Children
- Recognizing Potential of ICT in Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood Quality Initiatives: Six Russian regions (World Bank/UNESCO Policy Review)
- Can Global and Regional Networks Drive the Early Childhood Agenda, in Policy and Practice?
- The Role of Special Education in Poverty and Marginalization: An Effective, Cost-Efficient, and Sustainable Approach
- Ready for Success in School: Quality Teaching Practices for Scaling Up Inclusive and Innovative ECCE Programmes
- Collaborating with Parents in ECCE
- Psycho-Pedagogical Follow-up of Children in ECCE

- Building Capacity for Early Education to Accommodate HIV-affected and infected Children

## **EXHIBITION**

The Conference provided a unique opportunity to display, show and highlight programmes, projects, initiatives, methods and forms of ECCE service provision (pre-school, day-care, facilities, literature, products) as well as a unique platform for ECCE knowledge-sharing. A real fair of experiences was organized.

The exhibitors represented:

- (i) international organizations and UN agencies;
- (ii) national institutions;
- (iii) non-governmental and community-based organizations;
- (iv) the private sector.

## **THE BENEFITS OF ECCE**

- ECCE is a right, recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by 193 countries.
- ECCE is the bedrock of EFA and the first step in meeting all the other EFA goals.
- ECCE can improve the well-being of young children, especially in the developing world, where a child has a four in ten chance of living in extreme poverty and 10.5 million children a year under five die from preventable diseases.
- ECCE contributes to the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty, as well as to the education, health and other international goals and instruments.
- ECCE has a beneficial effect on later schooling and leads to higher school enrolment, particularly for girls.
- ECCE is cost-effective in that it is a preventive measure supporting children early on rather than compensating their disadvantage when they are older.
- ECCE in the form of reliable child care provides essential support for working parents, particularly mothers.
- ECCE investment yields high economic returns, offsetting disadvantage and inequality, especially for children from poor families. It benefits taxpayers and enhances economic vitality.
- ECCE has positive effects on female labour force participation and older siblings' schooling.
- ECCE levels the playing field by reducing inequalities between rich and poor and is thus a key component to breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

The people of the twenty-first century will face great and diverse challenges, and our children will have to meet these challenges and do their utmost to find solutions to them. Thus, we adults should also do our best to minimize the negative legacy of the twentieth century, and we should pass on to our children, as positive a legacy as we can. We need to empower children and to impart wisdom to them, in order that they can face up to and overcome these challenges.

We need to foster in children a spirit of peace, understanding, non-discrimination and harmonious relation with nature. We recognize and nurture the initiative value of childhood and children's inherent rights to provision, protection and participation.

As children of the twenty-first century, no matter where they are and how different they may be, they have at least one thing in common: *They are embodying our hope for the future.*

It is our hope that they will carry on doing what the preceding generations (their parents, grandparents and ancestors) have done well; more than this, we hope that they will even do better, far better, than us.

(end)

## **PART II-B**

### **MOSCOW FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION AND COOPERATION: *HARNESSING THE WEALTH OF NATIONS***

#### **PREAMBLE**

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

priorities. We welcome and support the fact that Africa has demonstrated a clear commitment to ECCE and has prioritized it in its Second Decade of Education.

## **THE CHALLENGES**

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

## **ACTION AGENDA**

We thus call upon the governments to:

### **11. Mobilize stronger commitment to ECCE**

#### **i) Legislation, policies and strategies**

- a) Develop legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms that are conducive to the implementation of the rights of children to ECCE from birth;
- b) Adopt and promote an approach to ECCE that is both holistic and multi-sectoral to

ensure good birth outcomes (prenatal stage), neonatal health and nutritional well-being, care and education of children aged zero to eight, with a special focus on children aged zero to three;

- c) Integrate ECCE policies into human and socioeconomic development policies as a shared responsibility across sectors and departments, parents, families, communities, civil society and the private sector;
- d) Strike an appropriate balance between centralized and decentralized governance guaranteeing collaboration among all spheres with related responsibilities, level of authority and resources;
- e) Strengthen political commitment through evidence-based advocacy on the benefits of ECCE for human development.

#### **ii) Access and scaling up**

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

#### **iii) Assessment, research, monitoring and evaluation**

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

### **12. Reinforce effective ECCE programme delivery**

#### **i) Equity and inclusion**

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

## **ii) Quality**

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

## **iii) Capacity building**

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

## **iv) Partnerships**

- a) Proactively involve civil society and local communities in the policy debate, programme development, implementation and monitoring of ECCE policies as well as in guaranteeing the respect, protection and realization of children's rights; invite national and international organizations to facilitate and support national ECCE policies and programmes;
- b) Enhance resources, when appropriate and respecting the necessary regulations, through partnerships with the private sector. Encourage the regulatory, operational and financing convergence between these schemes and programmes of different government ministries, departments and agencies;
- c) Pay close attention to parental voices and take steps to balance power relationships and foster collaboration among different actors of ECCE.

## **13. Harness resources for ECCE**

- a) Support the above measures by increasing budget allocations by all government departments concerned with the promotion of ECCE, and mobilize diverse and innovative financing sources and mechanisms in support of ECCE. Invest sufficient resources in ECCE to meet set quality standards and enable all rights to ECCE;
- b) Increase targeted resources for programmes for children aged zero to eight, with particular attention to the early years due to their importance for human development;
- c) Conduct and encourage financial analysis of ECCE provisions and service delivery.



#### **14. Cooperation**

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

#### **15. We call upon Donors to:**

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

#### **16. Furthermore, we call upon UNESCO to:**

- a) Champion holistic ECCE at national, regional and international levels based on the principles of children's rights, in cooperation with other agencies;
- b) Work closely with Member States, UN agencies, civil society, specialized agencies, partners and experts to develop holistic integrated ECCE programmes, with particular attention to children aged zero to three;
- c) In consultation with Member States and other organizations, establish a working group to explore the development of an instrument capable of tracking progress towards EFA goal 1, with particular attention to quality and the holistic aspects of ECCE;
- d) Promote ECCE investments through the corporate and business sector worldwide. Collect and disseminate good practices and lessons learned from experience, in particular those demonstrating the multiple and diverse benefits of ECCE;
- e) Support the creation of ECCE networking at national, regional and international levels with related clearinghouse services;
- f) Intensify efforts aimed at developing affordable, readily available and user-friendly tools and models for assessing child development.