



THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP
ON EARLY CHILDHOOD
CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

National Quality ECCE Profiles: Towards Ensuring Diversity & Reliability

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Develop definitions of quality ECCE in the contexts of

- Home
- Community, as well as
- More Structured Settings

2. Develop integrated Quality Profiles, including ECCE ...

- Environments
- Resources
- Processes
- Developmental & Academic Outcomes

that are used as tools through all the stages of curriculum & programme planning, implementation as well as monitoring & evaluation.

3. Internationally monitor national efforts to define quality ECCE

- Develop an international comparative indicator that shows where nations are at in the process of defining & monitoring quality.

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SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

STEP 1:

- Identify whether national definitions of quality exist and whether results of evaluations of quality are available and reported;
- Countries participating in EFA could be asked to respond to a set of questions (see Inset 1) and present this information, about how they define quality, in conceptual and operational terms, in their ECCE programs as well as about how they utilize the results.

NOTE:

This **does not require that all countries apply the same instrument** to assess and compare the quality of programs. It would, however provide an indicator of a country's commitment to taking seriously quality in ECCE programs. Moreover, having to answer these questions should promote dialogue and move the discussion of quality to a different level.

Inset 1:

Sample Set of Questions:

1. Has a national definition (or multiple definitions) of quality been produced for ECCE programs?
2. Does the definition take into account diversity of viewpoint and allow for adjustments when used in particular contexts?
3. Does the definition (do the definitions) guide a systematic and periodic process of evaluating and monitoring programs?
4. Are the results of that monitoring fed back to centers so they can use them to improve their programming and planning?
5. Are the results of that monitoring taken into consideration when reviewing policy?
6. Are the results of that monitoring made public?

STEP 2:

- Assuming that some national description / measure (see Inset 2) of quality has been established, see how quality changes over time, using the national measures and baselines, defined and operationalized in each country.

NOTE:

- The comparison would not be against an international standard but rather against the country itself (much as growth monitoring shifted from looking at a moment in time classified in red, yellow or green to looking at whether a child is improving or faltering).
 - Internationally, countries could be classified according to whether or not they are improving their level of quality.

Inset 2:

Descriptions of the quality of educational environments provide

- information helping to understand why ECCE outcomes are as they are;
- important indicators of the quality of educational environments and processes which are important in and of themselves because they represent a first approximation of difficult-to-measure outcome variables. For example:
 - If the characteristics and processes of an educational environment are not consistent with the kind of world, country and citizenry desired, as set out in national documents and curricula, and/or with widely agreed-upon rights for children, it is difficult to say that the program is of high quality.
 - From this perspective, to be judged as of high quality a program should, for instance, treat children equitably, allow participation, expose them to peaceful means of resolving conflicts etc.

STEP 3:

- Continue to collect more traditional information about such suggestive features of ECCE as:
 - whether a national policy exists for the development of young children during their early years;
 - the relative resources being devoted to ECCE;
 - the number of children per teacher;
 - teacher qualifications.
- Cautiously compare and interpret this information
 - making explicit the basis for choosing such indicators,
 - taking into account variations in contexts and
 - adhering to the idea that a profile of quality is much more reliable than individual indicators of quality.

Reference: Myers, Bob (2006). Quality in Programs of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE): A paper prepared for the 2007 Education for All Global Monitoring Report.

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