

**Committee:** Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee (GA3)

**Issue:** Improving access to Early Childhood Education in LEDCs

**Student Officer:** Alexia Alifragki

**Position:** Co-chair

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

Welcome! My name is Alexia Alifragki, I'm 16 years old and I'm excited to be attending the DST MUN conference for the first time. This will be my 7<sup>th</sup> conference overall and my 2<sup>nd</sup> time chairing. MUN has been quite the experience for me as I desire to study Law in the future. It has given me the chance to include myself in international affairs and find my voice in our complex world.

During this session, we will be discussing and debating upon the very important topic of: Improving access to Early Childhood Education in Less Economically Developed Countries. As the Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee of the UN our focus will be on the welfare and protection of the concrete human right to education and the reassurance that all are able to enjoy it no matter their state's economic situation. This document here is a useful guide that will introduce you to the topic and help you grasp the main aspects of it. However, I highly encourage that you all conduct your own research on the topic. You can start your research by visiting the links in the Bibliography section of this Study Guide. If during your research you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email is [alexia24ali@gmail.com](mailto:alexia24ali@gmail.com).

I'm honored and excited to be working with all of you and look forward to meeting you and to enjoy a fruitful and interesting debate.

Best of luck,

Alexia Alifragki

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic brought education as a whole to the political, economic and social forefront of the international community and highlighted its importance in dark times like the ones we experienced. Although, most educational institutions harmonically adjusted, others were neglected deemed unimportant. Such were the institutions providing Early Childhood Education.

Pre-pandemic states had been already experiencing a shortage of early childhood education programs which lacked the capacity to operate. The crisis of Covid-19 left even less of those institutions standing as most closed due to health-related issues and never opened again because of financial and economic challenges. Access since then has been severely limited. States were late to realize the invaluable importance of early childhood education.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) sets the foundations for the child's greater cognitive, social, emotional and psychological development. It is also part of the SDG goals Agenda under Goal 4 advocating the establishment of quality education. However, UNICEF noted that as least 175 million children around the world are not enrolled in pre-primary education which hinders inequalities and harms their spiritual cultivation as a person<sup>1</sup>. The situation worsens when it comes to access to Early Childhood Education in LEDCs. The enrolment percentage in all LEDCs is less than 25% of the children population below 6 years old<sup>2</sup>. The wealth quintile and the way national income is distributed has determines the percentages of access to ECE.

Admittedly, early childhood education programs in LEDCs have minor coverage as until some years before some of those states like Zimbabwe before the signing on of the Education for All (2009) convention lacked the basic virtues of inclusivity in education, with the majority of the female population having been out of school<sup>3</sup>. In Tanzania too, the state and the families have viewed ECE as unnecessary and negatively dismissing the profit for the child of such an investment.

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<sup>1</sup> "A World Ready to Learn: Prioritizing Quality Early Childhood Education." *UNICEF DATA*, 2019, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-world-ready-to-learn-report/>

<sup>2</sup> "A World Ready to Learn: Prioritizing Quality Early Childhood Education." *UNICEF DATA*, 2019, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-world-ready-to-learn-report/>

<sup>3</sup> Mavhunga, Pharaoh Joseph, et al. "ZIMBABWE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ." *OpenDocs Home*, 1 Mar. 2009, <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>

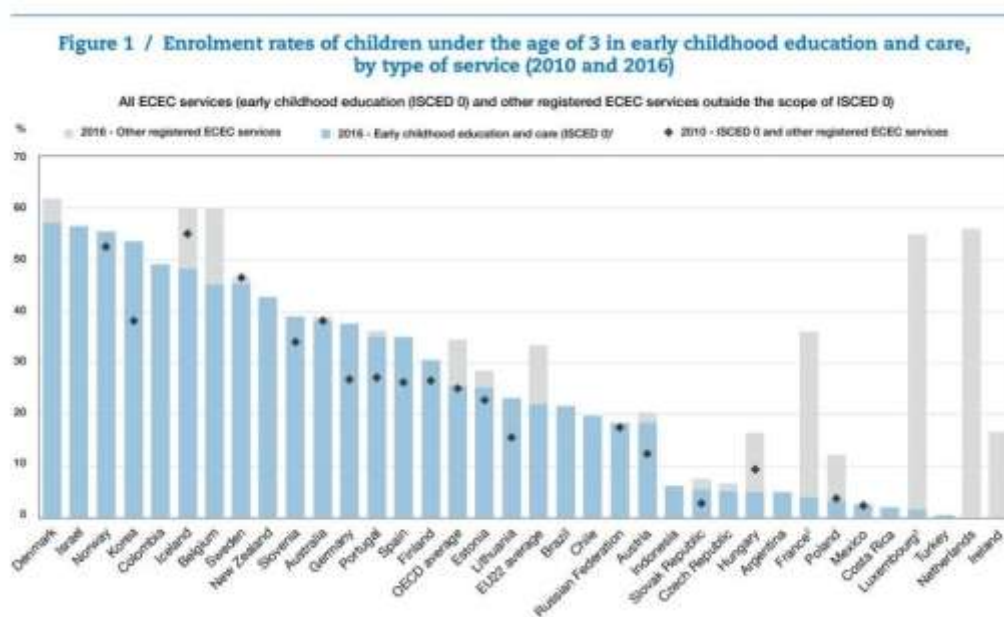


Figure 1: OECD Skills and Education: The struggle of establishing ECEC programs across the globe

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Early Childhood Education (ECE)

“Early Childhood Education refers to the education of children between birth and kindergarten age – the preschool years- where infants and toddlers develop their cognitive, social, physical and emotional skills.”<sup>4</sup>

### Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs)

Less Economically Developed countries are defined as states which suffer from an unstable economic system and have a low Gross Domestic Product. They are states whose people have low incomes, poor nutrition, health care and education.

### Government Spending

Government spending refers to money invested by the government to the public sector for the acquisition of goods and services or the improvement of services such as education, health care, social protection and defense.

<sup>4</sup> Goodwin University. “What Is Early Childhood Education?” *Goodwin University*, 16 Jan. 2019, [https://www.goodwin.edu/enews/what-is-early-childhood-education/#:~:text=Early%20childhood%20education%20\(ECE\)%20is,Young%20ChildrenOpens%20a%20New%20Window](https://www.goodwin.edu/enews/what-is-early-childhood-education/#:~:text=Early%20childhood%20education%20(ECE)%20is,Young%20ChildrenOpens%20a%20New%20Window).

### Economic Interventionism

“Economic interventionism is an economic policy position favoring the government intervention in the market process to correct market failures and promote the general welfare of the people”<sup>5</sup>.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The universal right of access to education, Article 26 of the Declaration of Human Rights, has legally guaranteed access to education for all without any racial, gender, religious discrimination.

### The History of Early Childhood Education

The concept of Early Childhood Education was firstly introduced by Martin Luther King and other likeminded individuals who supported that education results in the creation of a stronger community. They highlighted the importance of children being educated from a young age so as to benefit the wider society as they grow up. The actualization of this concept began with the founding of the first kindergarten by Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852). He formalized the early childhood setting as well as advocated for his ideology that children should learn through playing. Maria Montessori’s reputation precedes her with the internationally recognized model of educating children known as the Montessori Method (1870-1952). She firmly believed that education enhances the child’s life, supporting that learning about the world that surrounds you is directly linked with learning about oneself. Maria Montessori’s stance prioritized sensory education before intellectual one.

Later on, Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925) after studying the Montessori model created the Waldorf education and philosophy and schools characterizing the preschool educational era as experiential education following the activation of the senses and the interaction of the child with different stimulus. Eventually the birth of a curriculum was initiated by David Weikart (1931-2003). His Perry Preschool Project in 1962 answered the question of whether early childhood education is a necessity. The results were positive proving that the kids who had attended an ECE program were met with increased academic success and adherence and a general increase in their wages.

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<sup>5</sup> “Economic Interventionism - Google Arts & Culture.” *Google*, Google, <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/economic-interventionism/m028dz8?hl=en>

The method implicated in most ECE's programs and institutions is a mixture of approaches. The approach combines two or three methods and aims to absorb the advantageous aspects of each and one of them which permits teachers to strike a balance between instructional teaching and constructional learning. No matter the mixture all strive for the advancement of the child's cognitive skills and preparation for primary education.

### Early Childhood Education as a 'grey zone'

Although the right to education had been legally guaranteed by the UN with the Declaration of Human Rights, many weren't able to fully enjoy it due to their race, sex and socioeconomic position. Inequalities were apparent in developed and less developed societies with the majority of the female population being out of school until the very start of the seventies. The first step to establish their right to be educated was taken by the US with the enactment of a federal law which freed education from sex discrimination in 1972<sup>6</sup>. Women since then depicted great achievements, however obstacles still existed. There was still a long way to equality in educational institutions and with the trending of sex-segregated educational programs, discrimination was reflected greatly upon society. With pressure going into more flaming issues early childhood education was neglected and therefore States viewed it to be at parents' discretion and responsibility to cultivate their kid before kindergarten.

In 1990 an international initiative was presented by UNESCO bringing forward the issue of Education and the need for all to be included. The World Conference on Education For All was the first official reassessment of the human's right to education since the Declaration and it went more in depth to importance and realization of the idea that every person should meet basic learning needs. It was declared that basic education is "more than an end in itself". It is the foundation of a harmonically functioning society. In the context of the conference, it was established that learning begins at birth, materializing all those abstract neglected suggestions on the construction of quality initial education and care programs. Lastly, it asked for the activation of all factors affecting a child's pre-primary schooling such as parents, communities and skilled experts to enforce early childhood education and involve

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<sup>6</sup> "Women's Rights in Education." *American Civil Liberties Union*, Apr. 2022, <https://www.aclu.org/issues/womens-rights/womens-rights-education#:~:text=Since%20the%20enactment%20of%20Title,But%20serious%20obstacles%20remain>

themselves to its realization, especially for disabled and vulnerable children. Even after the conference, Early Childhood Education still consisted of an 'unknown territory' and 'grey zone' to most. People questioned its necessity and perceived the concept negatively.

Ten years later UNESCO observing the little progress taking place since WEFA (World Conference on Education For All), held the most extensive evaluation on education, namely the Dakar Framework For Action which protected the right to early and pre-primary education in all member states no matter their socio-economic or political conditions. Regional objectives and strategies were assessed concerning the enhancement of governments' investment in Early Childhood Education programs. Holistic pre-care, development and education were deemed of vital importance for securing the well-being of the kid and providing it with tools to thrive in the future. The Dakar Framework applied more pressure to States and pushed families, communities, public agencies and NGOs to form partnerships and diversify options and services for ECE programs in order to serve the majority of kids, even the isolated and disabled ones. Early Childhood Care and Development became synonyms with Education as all strived for the quality cultivation of the child and the terms 'grey zone' stopped being socially relevant.

### **The reality and problems of ECE in LEDCs**

Early Childhood Education offers an excellent opportunity to reduce inequity and move towards a more equal world where human rights violations will be rendered stories of the past. Despite that though, access to such programs remains uneven. Vulnerable and disabled children are not taken into consideration when it comes to the planning of those programs. Furthermore, access to early childhood education is severely affected by household income. "On average, the poorest children in low-income countries are eight times less likely than children from the wealthiest families to attend an early childhood education programme" published UNICEF in an article talking about the prioritization of ECE. Poor households are an apparent in LEDCs due to the economic instability and lack of social benefits and payments. Governments are unable to invest in educational programs so as to efficiently serve the majority of their population. The harmful nature of this inability isolated villages and disabled children must unfortunately accept.

### **Main Factors Preventing Access to ECE Programs**

#### **Shortfalls in domestic and international funding**

Early Childhood Education in terms of other education levels is relatively underfunded. Domestic and international investment in ECE is restricted even though UNICEF has repeatedly reminded states of its importance and encouraged them to spend more than 10% of their education budget on it<sup>7</sup>. Interestingly, despite the lack of funding ratios of enrolment have increase across the countries but the percentage changes are still small and not significant even after so many years and due to the minimized economic power that low-income countries have investment required levels remain significantly unfulfilled. This leads to lack of infrastructure, low unattractive wages for experts etc. Admittedly though after 2017 there has been in shift in priorities motivating international and domestic donors to extent the percentage of the education budget that goes to pre-primary education.

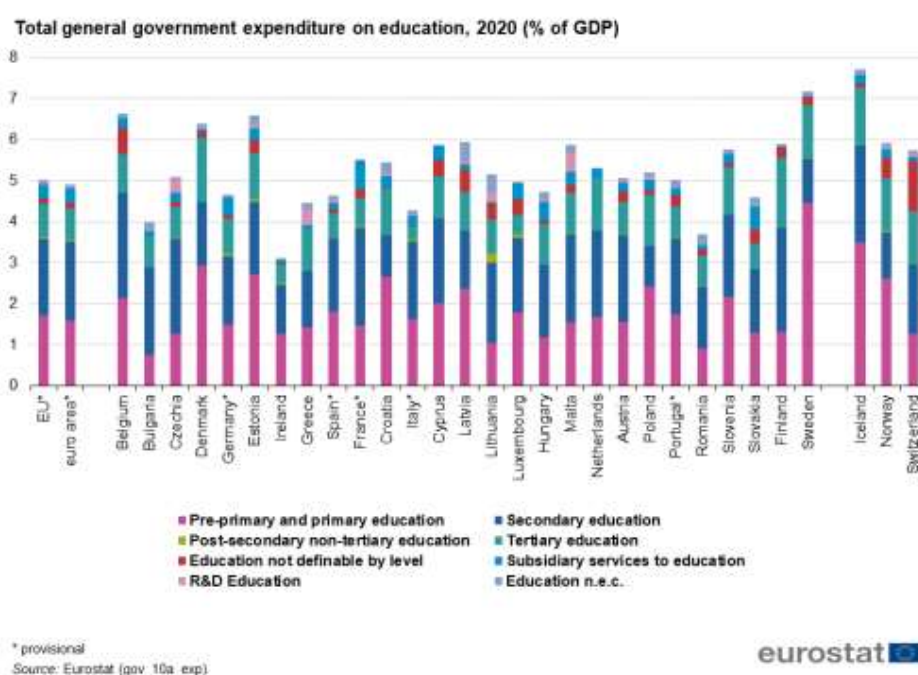


Figure 1: Government Expenditure on Education in 2020 (EUROSTAT/ EUROPEAN COMMISSION)

### Insufficient supplying numbers and training of pre-primary teachers

Of utmost importance is the selection of skilled, nurturing personnel who will be able to guide these young children and communicate with them. Unfortunately, even in higher education levels, there is a shortage of good, qualified teachers. In order to fulfill the SDG 4<sup>th</sup> goal of quality education we need more and more quality

<sup>7</sup> “A World Ready to Learn: Prioritizing Quality Early Childhood Education.” UNICEF DATA, 2019, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-world-ready-to-learn-report/>

personnel which is proved to be hard to find. The demand for such teachers is increasing and without the supply following its motions shortages are created in the market leaving institutions without institutors.

When it comes to training, an immediate upgrade is required. Methods have remained the same since the 1990s without any form of adaptation to the requirements of the new world. Teachers have not been acquainted with new pedagogical theories and methods and are not able to keep up with the kids whose generation is to them, unknown. Moreover, the absence of NGOs and other public providers has worsened the situation. Lack of innovative seminars on new educational practices and workshops has led to minimized progress and evolution in the field with no remarkable development.

### **Lack of parent's awareness and participation**

Ignorance and indifference towards Early Childhood Education coming from the parents has substantially harmed the establishment of such programs and stalled the increase of the enrolment percentages. Parental absence in orientation policies and everyday activities in ECE has had negative effects on the efficiency of those programs for young children and especially disabled ones who are in need of their family's support and aid.

### **Consequences of Limited Access to ECE**

Limited access to Early Childhood Education can harm the kid as an individual and also the wider society. Firstly, when it comes to the problems faced by the individual, the child will most likely have knowledge gaps. That will set its progress behind as it will not be able to keep up with its classmates and rise up to the academic challenges. This will lead to the creation of inequalities between members of different socioeconomic class. Kids equipped with the tools taken from ECE will be able to ascend socially and economically succeeding in school and securing a wage. While the others will be discouraged and give up on trying or even completely drop out. As adults, their lack of education will cost them a high paying job and improved living standards. Consequently, the gap between poor and rich does not only remain but grows bigger and bigger.

## **MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED**



### UNICEF (United Nation Children’s Fund)

UNICEF has been repeatedly advocating for the development and advancement of Early Childhood Education. In cooperation with UNESCO, they were the initiators of the Education For All Act. UNICEF is dedicated to provide a quality pre-primary education to every child around the world. Their current programs, initiatives and supportive campaigns in 129 countries around the world aim to give every kid a fair starting point in education through: the reinforcement of policies and advocacy for increased public funding in Early Childhood Education, the collection of information and data for the establishment of innovative ways to educate vulnerable and disabled children, the hosting of conflict-sensitive ECE programs with psychological support for children living in a post-conflict society etc.

Despite its individual efforts UNICEF has strived to stimulate investment in pre-primary education through openly demanding by governments and international donors to prioritize it in multiple conferences, published articles and annual reports.

### USA (United States of America)

The US government has shown its supports toward Early Childhood Education making visible efforts to ensure that all children have access to a quality pre-primary educational institution. In 2001, President Bush launched the early education initiative which took place in 26-27 of July. The initiative aimed to improve early learning due to the fact that too many kids arrived at schools unprepared to learn. Federal and state actors provided more than 18 billion dollars annually to aid low-income families and poor households to secure economically vulnerable children’s access to Pre-K (ECE)<sup>8</sup>. The publication of the Early Childhood Development Guide “Good Start, Grow Smart” tackled all aspects (financial, social, pedagogical etc.) of ECE and revolutionized it. Since then, organizations have made astounding progress, like Teach For America which since 2006 has managed to provide quality and detailed training to many teachers around the world and put teachers to Pre-K classrooms all around the world.

### EUROPEAN UNION

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<sup>8</sup> “Early Childhood Education: President Bush's Plan to Strengthen Early Learning.” *National Archives and Records Administration*, 2002, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/earlychildhood/>

The European Commission and Council have tightened their relations in order to facilitate their cooperation and achieve their target of 96% of children cited in the EU to be enrolled in ECE programs by 2030. In May 2019, a Recommendation was adopted by the Council of the European Union focusing on advancing early childhood care and education. It was accepted by all EU member states ministers. Later, the Council proceeded with the establishment of an ECCE quality framework which has stimulated many reforms and structural changes throughout countries highly improving access to early childhood education. The success of the Framework has been of paramount importance since the EU has already managed to enroll 96% of children above 4 years in educational institutions and programs<sup>9</sup>.

### **Albania**

Albania has suffered the consequences of conflict and human emigration. Its human services in the 1990s were substantially poor, especially in rural areas. Education went through significant budget cuts. However, since the early 2000s progress has been noted. ECCE was integrated in the government's strategy for poverty reduction as well as a high Committee for Children was created. Its establishment brought substantial reforms to kindergartens and it stimulated cooperation with multiple NGOs, World Bank and UNICEF which implemented successful ECCE community- based centers encouraging participation.

### **Macedonia**

Macedonia had the lowest percent of children enrolled in kindergartens and ECCE institutions with an increased population of minorities. Fortunately, though, the government has introduced reforms ensuring the inclusion of all children in early childhood education. Also, a pilot program was established for parental training and participation in ECCE issues.

### **Tanzania**

In Tanzania, many children do not have access to early childhood education. This is due to lack of parents' awareness, lack of funding, inadequate infrastructure, gender

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<sup>9</sup> "Early Childhood Education and Care Initiatives." *European Education Area*, 2021, <https://education.ec.europa.eu/es/node/1702>

discriminated and national and cultural norms. Moreover, a basic problem is the misinterpretation of the concept of care being same as the one of education in the early years and that is why it is left at the family's discretion. Interestingly, parents in Tanzania believe early investment to be a waste of money without real sense. Consequently, even the kids who have access to an ECCE program are discouraged from attending by their own family.

## Finland

In Finland, the municipalities are responsible for arranging and monitoring the ECCE services and have the obligation to improve them through systematic evaluation. ECCE providers in pair with national and local services are responsible to evaluate the current curriculum and implement it. The education system has reached the advanced level of individually customized pedagogical plans for each child assessed and discussed with their legal guardians.

## GPE (Global Partnership on Education)

GPE is the largest global fund focused on education and it supports low-income countries to improve access to quality learning and care through financial and technical aid. It motivates countries ensure access to ECE for all children for at least one year and advocates the integration of pre-primary education in education sector plans so as to not see it be underfunded. Since 2002, 41% of children in partner countries have been enrolled in pre-primary education. In cooperation with UNICEF, GPE offers free online mainstreaming courses on ECE planning and the ECE Accelerator Analysis on planning toolkit<sup>10</sup> on budgeting in order to measure national capacity and potential for investment in ECE.

## Millennium Institute

The Millennium Institute has been a fervent supporter of the SDGs and a great executor of initiatives in order for the international community to achieve them. In October 2020, it published a thorough Analysis with the iSDG model concerning investment in Early Childhood Development and Education for socioeconomic development in Cote d' Ivoire. It provided moderate scenarios of return on

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<sup>10</sup> "ECE Accelerator." *ECE Accelerator*, <https://www.ece-accelerator.org/>

investment through the model structure so as to activate the quantification of economic interventionism.

## BLOCS EXPECTED

### Bloc 1

In the first, delegates of Less Economically Developed Countries should gather. They should firstly discuss how they can improve access to Early Childhood Education on their own, in ways such as reforming their policies, reassessing the education sector budget, stimulating civil society's participation etc. Furthermore, delegates should promote better teacher training and evaluation by their ministries so as to make sure that children are treated with care and love.

### Bloc 2

The second bloc should consist of More Economically Developed Countries. They should focus on finding ways to financially support LEDCs without making them dependent on their funding. Also, in cooperation with the UNICEF and UNESCO they should advocate for the creation centre-based programs in low-income countries, especially in rural areas so as to see all children being able to attend and access a educational institution. Lastly, they could discuss about sending personnel and teachers in order for the shortages to be taken care of.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1837	Founding of the first kindergarten, the launch of early childhood education
1962	David Weikart's Perry Preschool Project (study)
1989	Founding of the Teach For America Organization
1990	World Conference on Education For All
2000	Launch of the EFA Assessment
2010	The signing of the Dakar Framework For Action
27-29 September 2010	World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education held in Moscow
July 2001	President Bush's Summit on Early

	Childhood Cognitive Development and Education
21 December 2010	Resolution on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assembly
2013	Establishment of Early Childhood Development Organization for African children
2014	ECEC Quality framework Proposal
2017	UNICEF's guidance program for ECE
23-25 October 2019	UNICEF's Pacific Early Childhood Development Forum
22 May 2019	Council of Europe's Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems
2020	European Union's ET Working Group
2020	The development and Launch of the ECE Accelerator

## RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

### World Declaration on Education For All in Thailand (1990)

The ultimate goal of the conference, held by UNICEF and UNESCO, was to establish that all children, youth and adults meet their basic learning needs. The declaration universalized the access to all levels of education promoting equity (Article 3) and also broadened the scope of basic education (Article 5) that an individual is obligated to receive. It introduced officially the concept of early childhood education as 'mandatory' for the intellectual, psychological and mental involvement of the child. Furthermore it constitutionalized the idea of learning 'outside the school borders', specifically for vulnerable and disabled children who don't have the ability to attend an educational institution.

### Education For All Assessment (2000)

The Education For All Assessment functioned as a guide for all states to tap into this source knowledge and expertise of education and bring it all together in order for a point of reference to be created for all states. It would function as the centre of education. The assessment noted down the minimum progress made in LEDCs due to poor policy and legislation, inadequate funding, lack of civil society's participation and large shortages of trained teachers. Although, it had good intentions, the

assessment didn't manage to bring the change needed as it focused more on the problems rather the resolution of the issues. It was criticized later in the Dakar Framework document to be highly inefficient.

### **The Dakar Framework For Action (2010)**

The Dakar Framework was held twenty years after the EFA conference, reporting the progress made since the declaration. The Framework is to this day the most extensive evaluation of education in universal context. It provided regions with customized specific solutions fitting their socioeconomic status concerning policy-making and economic incentives in order to motivate governments to invest in ECE. The Dakar Framework addressed all deficient aspects of the EFA Assessment (2000) and ameliorated through interventions in personnel training, monitoring and national action planning.

### **UN General Assembly's A/RES/65/197: Rights of the Child**

A child's right to education is not negotiable. This concerns each and every level of education. In the resolution's third section (III) issues concerning early childhood education and care are addressed, more specifically in clauses 32,33,40,41,42,43,45. It called upon the welcoming of the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, held in Moscow from 27 to 29 September 2010 and asked for states to include in their overall policy contexts the realization of rights of the child in early childhood education and the provision of the appropriate programs as well as construction of required institutes.

## **PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE**

### **World Bank initiatives, reports and reviews**

In July 1997, the World Bank published a review on Early Childhood policy and programs in Sub-Saharan Africa. The documentation of the problems and issues which institutions and the wider society in general were facing with funding, infrastructure, lack of teachers, aided in the realization of those negative points and stimulated further action. The review was taken into consideration when UNESCO drafted the EFA assessment.

In March 2020, a report on the significance of investing in early childhood development in Asia was published as UNICEF's data collection showed that only

69% of the children in the region have access to early childhood education<sup>11</sup>. It acknowledged the situation as a learning crisis. This information has been of paramount importance for both the UN and the regional governments who try to resolve this upcoming literacy crisis.

### **ET Working Group 2020**

In 2021, the ET Working Group of the EU, published the outcomes and results of its journey to ameliorate early childhood care and education (2018-2020). The Commission supports that in identifying the problems of ECE there is greater possibility in finding efficient and feasible solutions. The Working Group provided the States with a toolkit on how to achieve quality early education and a guideline on how to train and educate well-qualified staff in ECE. However, there is still a long way to go in order for all to have access in ECE.

### **ECE Accelerator (GPE)**

The GPE's ECE toolkit offers access to the ECE Accelerator whose role is to "hover over every section of the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and Planning Cycle below to find related ECE-specific guidance, tools, templates, additional resources, and examples"<sup>12</sup>. The process of planning and implementing is broken down in 5 sections: "Strengthen Political Will for ECE and Understanding of the ECE Subsector, Conduct ECE Data and Policy Mapping and Analysis, Establish an ECE Subsector Vision to Inform Planning, Develop and Appraise ECE Subsector Plans, Report ECE Progress and Engage in Review Processes" .

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

### **Scale up domestic and foreign investment**

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<sup>11</sup> Asia, UNICEF South. "2018 - 2021 Progress Report - Educate All Girls and Boys." *UNICEF South Asia / 2018 - 2021 PROGRESS REPORT*, 2021, <http://www.unicefrosa-progressreport.org/childdeduction.html>

<sup>12</sup> "ECE Accelerator." *ECE Accelerator*, <https://www.ece-accelerator.org/>

One of the main factors preventing access to ECE is lack of funding. This calls for Increased Government Allocation and Sustainable International Support. The prioritization of ECCE demands that it is budgeted for or that funding is accounted for at least 10% of Education Budget Sector. In order for International Support to be sustained various governments and their public agencies efforts must be made to show prudence, respect and accountability towards those funds. Those international donors should establish independent monitoring mechanisms, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNESCO, so as to see the rightful allocation of those funds.

### **Improving the quality of pre-primary education teachers**

Although, there are many certified teachers around the world, there are really a few qualified and skilled ones. By improving the quality of the pre-primary education teachers, their supply will increase making up for the shortages in the market. Governments should provide pre-service and in-service training opportunities, such as seminars etc, for early childhood teachers, especially for those serving in isolated areas and dealing with disabled and vulnerable children in order to equip with the right amount of instructional and constructive tools. Furthermore, they could create supervising mechanisms in order to assess the quality of the teachers and act in accordance with their collected data in situations where they deem is necessary. Those mechanisms will aim to promote educational equity and compliance with as well as reinforcement of the 4<sup>th</sup> goal of the SDGs on quality education and UNICEF's initiatives on ECE.

### **Adopting policies to ensure commitment to Early Childhood Education**

Pioneer of such an action should be each country's ministry of education who will be the leading on agency on the protection and promotion of ECE as well as the main advocate for its inclusion in relevant national legislation and its integration as a vital part of the education system. Governments should ensure that a sufficient number of teachers will be provided to ECE programs and institutions and that their professional, trade union and labour needs will be efficiently addressed. In addition, UNESCO and UNICEF will still lobby for equitable access in ECE and the improvement of the professional status of ECE teachers and amelioration of their working conditions, in cooperation with the state's ministry of education.

### **Increase Research and Advocacy for ECE**

As Early Childhood Education is a concept relatively new to the world, research and advocacy for its continuous improvement is undeniable. Through the



collaboration of various inter-governmental organizations, including UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and OECD and national agencies, campaigns will be undertaken so as to persuade international and domestic donors to invest in ECE and to urge the improvement of services in pre-primary education. The creation of UN Task Force or Working Group on ECE whose role will be to search for innovative pedagogical methods and advise governments in various aspects of ECE: legislative framework, training and conditions of teachers and support staff in the sector.

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