



# Nurturing Environments

For the Wellbeing of Young Children and their Families

Stadsgehoorzaal Leiden | 18 & 19 June 2019 | The Netherlands



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ISSA Conference

#ISSAConference



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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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## June 17<sup>th</sup>, Monday

**13:00-22:00 Registration and Information Desk open**  
*Location: Stadsgehoorzaal, Breestraat 60, Leiden*

### Pre-conference Workshops

- 09:30-16:30 Cities for the Youngest Residents**  
 Organizers: Bernard van Leer Foundation and ISSA, the Netherlands  
*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse kerkgracht 17, Leiden*
- 09:30-17:15 The Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
 Organizers: WHO, Switzerland, UNICEF ECARO and ISSA, the Netherlands  
*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17, Leiden*
- 09:30-16:30 Responsive Care-Giving through Gender Equity and Father Involvement**  
 Organizers: Oak Foundation, Switzerland and ISSA, the Netherlands  
*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17, Leiden*
- 09:30-16:30 Early Childhood Services for Young Refugee Children**  
 Organizers: SARDES, the Netherlands  
*Location: Stadsgehoorzaal, Breezaal (first floor), Breestraat 60, Leiden*
- 09:30-17:00 The European Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care - a Lens for Reflecting Systemically on Quality at Local and National Level**  
 Organizers: Bureau Mutant and the EQF Expert Group in The Netherlands and VBJK, Belgium  
*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17, Leiden*
- 09:00-13:00 From Hard to Reach Families to Easy to Reach Services**  
 Organizers: ICDI, JES Rijnland, Centres of Children and Families (Gemeentelijke Gezondheidsdienst - GGD Leiden), the Netherlands  
*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17, Leiden*
- 09:30-16:30 An Introduction into the Video-Feedback Intervention to Promote Positive Parenting and Sensitive Discipline (VIPP-SD)**  
 Organizer: Leiden University, Institute of Education and Child Studies, the Netherlands  
*Location: Leiden University Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen Pieter de la Courtgebouw, Room no. 1A23 (first floor) Wassenaarseweg 52, Leiden*
- 09:30-17:00 No More Special Needs Inside a Regular Curriculum but a Special Curriculum to Welcome Diversities**  
 Organizers: Center for Research and Documentation 'Gloria Tognetti' La Bottega de Geppetto, Italy  
*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17, Leiden*
- 09:30-16:30 Partnering with Young Children Across Sectors – Beginning a Movement**  
 Organizer: Learning for Well-being Foundation, the Netherlands/Belgium

*Location: Child Rights Home, Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17, Leiden*

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**19:00-22:00 Welcome Reception and ISSA's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

*Location: Stadsgehoorzaal - Breestraat 60, Leiden*

## DAY ONE: June 18<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday

- 8:00-18:30 Registration and Information Desk open**
- 9:00-9:45 Opening Ceremony**
- 9:45-10:30 Keynote address: Paul Leseman**
- 10.30-10:45 Transition Break - Changing Rooms
- 10:45-11:45 Concurrent Sessions 1**
- 11:45-12:15 Coffee/Tea Break
- 12:15-13:15 Concurrent Sessions 2**
- 13:15-14:15 Lunch Break
- 14:15-15:15 Plenary Session: Early Childhood Matters Panel**
- 15:15-15:30 Transition Break – Changing Rooms
- 15:30-16:30 Concurrent Sessions 3**
- 16:30-17:00 Coffee/Tea Break
- 17:00-18.00 Concurrent Sessions 4**
- 18:30-19:30 Leiden Boat tour (optional by registration)
- 18:30-20:00 Leiden Walking tours (optional by registration)
- 19:30- Conference Dinner (optional by registration)

## DAY TWO: June 19<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday

- 8:00-18:30**      **Registration and Information Desk Open**
- 09:00-10:00**      **Concurrent Sessions 5**
- 10:00-10:15      Transition Break – Changing Rooms
- 10:15-11:15**      **Keynote Address: Michael Feigelson**
- 11:15-11:45      Coffee/Tea Break
- 11:45-12:45**      **Concurrent Sessions 6**
- 12:45-13:45      Lunch Break
- 13:45-14:45**      **Concurrent Sessions 7**
- 14:45-15:00      Transition Break – Changing Rooms
- 15:00-16:00**      **Concurrent Sessions 8**
- 16:00-16:30      Coffee/Tea Break
- 16:30-17:30**      **Keynote Address: Sarah Klaus**
- 17:30-18:00**      **Closing Ceremony**
- 18:00-19:00      Leiden Boat tour (optional by registration)
- 18:00-19:30      Leiden Walking tours (optional by registration)
- 20:00              Dinner out in Leiden (optional by registration)

## June 20<sup>th</sup>, Thursday

### **10:00-12:30 Field Visits (optional by registration)**

- 10:00-12:00 De Dukdalf Openbare Jenaplanschool (Integrated Children Center / Public Primary School De Dukdalf)
- 10:00-11:00 Antroposofische opvang Gouden Poortje (Antroposophical Child Care Center Golden Gatelet) and Peuterspeelzaal 't Kwetternest (Toddlercentrum 't Kwetternest, playgroup for toddlers)
- 10:00-10:45 Speelgroep JES Rijnland, groep Roomburg (Playgroup JES Rijnland, group Roomburg)
- 10:00-10:45 Peuterspeelzaal Floddertje (Toddlercentrum Floddertje)
- 10:00-11:00 Woutertje van Leyden (Primary school Woutertje van Leyden)
- 11:00-12:30 Consultatiebureau Oosterkerkstraat I Centrum Jeugd en Gezin (Consultation bureau Oosterkerkstraat I Center of Youth and Family)

### **10:00-12:00 Sightseeing (optional by registration)**

- 10:00-12:00 Leiden Walking tour (optional by registration)

## CONFERENCE STRANDS OVERVIEW

- 1. Nurturing home environments for young children  **Strand 1**
- 2. Nurturing environments in services for young children  **Strand 2**
- 3. Nurturing environments for young children and families in their communities/cities  **Strand 3**

## ROOM KEY

ROOM	FLOOR
Meeting room 1 – Grote zaal	Ground floor
Meeting room 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal	Ground floor
Meeting room 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer	Ground floor
Meeting room 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer	First floor
Meeting room 5 – Breezaal	First floor
Meeting room 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer	First floor
Meeting room 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer	First floor
Meeting room 8 – Aalmarktzaal	First floor
Meeting room 9 – Balkonfoyer	Second floor
Meeting room 10 – Waalse Kerk	Ground floor
Meeting room 11	First floor

# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

## DAY ONE: June 18<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday

### Concurrent Sessions 1: 10:45-11:45

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**  
**SESSION 1/1**

**Joke Van den Branden and Karen Burvenich, Artevelde University College, Belgium**

**Strand 2**

#### **Meeting and Appreciating Diverse Families in Preschool Education**

In 2017, at the ISSA Conference in Ghent, we gave a presentation on how we wanted to evolve towards a new and updated curriculum for our teacher training. An important focus of this curriculum is on meeting and appreciating every family, however 'different' each one may be. This year, we want to tell you about our heart-felt experiences with the first part of this new program, in particular about a new course called 'Meeting and appreciating families'.

During this course for first year students, we work with students and the preschool that they are working in for their internship. The principles we built upon are well-known: how to inspire students to have an open-minded attitude; creating real contact with families; a student's growing and personal awareness of diversity and inclusive communication; and discussing new social trends within family lifestyles. In group discussions with participants, we will tackle questions such as: Are these principles also used in teacher or child practitioner's training programmes in your country? Do you have any ideas/insights regarding how to enrich these principles? What kind of 'awareness' do we want (young) students to have?

Our main goal during the new course is to urge students to feel responsible for the way they welcome and treat families in their preschools and teaching them how to foster warm and meaningful interactions with families. As such, we make students go out of their classroom and interact with the parents of the children they work with. Students also visit children's homes regularly. During classes, we provide video materials and discussion time to make sure that all students come into contact with diverse families and are able to see the bigger picture. We will share some of the video materials with you in this workshop and are keen to hear your opinion on and experiences with the images shown.

As well as elaborating on the new course during this workshop, we also want to share our future plans for courses in our curriculum that follow up on the topic of communication skills and intercultural diversity. Meanwhile, participants of the workshop will be invited to join in a group conversation and discussion on working with diverse families and the role of real families within a teacher or child practitioner training session.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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**MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal**  
**SESSION 1/2**



**Giorgio Tamburlini**, Centro per la Salute del Bambino onlus, Italy  
**Anduena Alushaj**, Centro per la Salute del Bambino onlus, Italy  
**Francesca Vezzini**, Generali Foundation / The Human Safety Net, Italy



**Strand 3**

**Reaching out for the unreachable: overcoming the inverse equity law**

The inverse equity law regulates most interventions in public health, education and social protection leading to the well-known phenomenon of the better off getting the greatest advantages and leaving those families and children most in need with very little out of the expected benefits of the intervention. There have been a variety of approaches to achieve a more equitable distribution of benefits. To start, one should be able to measure the extent to which, in each specific context, the intervention is able to: a) reach the expected population targets; b) ensure equitable retention in the program; c) achieve equity in results. To do so, an analysis of the distribution of the intervention inputs and outputs across population groups (broken down by SES, education, residence, etc.) is necessary. Only when identified can the dimension of the problem and the factors influencing it, along with strategies to overcome it be more sensibly discussed.

Methods to assess and improve the equity of access, retention and ultimately the benefits of the interventions will be discussed. Evidence about targeting, participatory planning and implementation, home visits, use of cultural mediators, local champions, behavior economics and other strategies to improve equity will be considered.

Key discussion points we propose for the participants are as follows.

1. Do you measure how your intervention reaches different population groups (by SES, educational level, residence, ethnicity, other factors)? If yes, how and with what results?
2. Is there any specific strategy that you use for increasing your ability to reach the hardest-to-reach families?
3. Do you have any data about the effectiveness of your efforts?

The objective of the session is to improve awareness of the need to adopt an equity lens in intervention design and evaluation, particularly when targeting disadvantaged population groups. A short initial presentation of the problem with hand-outs distributed to participants will be followed by a facilitated discussion regarding approaches for assessing equity in interventions and reaching out to the unreachable. A final discussion will lead to four or five statements reached through consensus, answering the questions above.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer**  
**SESSION 1/4**

**Facilitator:** **Alison Baum**, Best Beginnings, UK



**Strand 2**

**Alison Baum**, Best Beginnings, UK

**The Early Years Digital Partnership – developing a theory-of-change framework for digital health in the UK**

Best Beginnings has convened a powerful partnership of more than 25 national charities, professional bodies and academic institutions to work collaboratively with mothers, fathers, partners and frontline professionals to create, deploy and evaluate a digital intervention for the whole family. A new digital tool will be designed to maximize the mental, emotional and physical health and relationships of parents from pre-conception until their child is four.

This unique Early Years Digital Partnership (EYDP) project builds upon the work that Best Beginnings has undertaken with the endorsement of organizations from the award-winning Baby Buddy apps. The partnership works to bring together government bodies, academic institutions, charities, professional bodies and other health organizations to work collaboratively to augment and amplify existing service delivery whilst also increasing the knowledge and confidence of parents and parents to be. The aim of this partnership is to work with families and collaborate across the sector to develop

and deploy an engaging, accessible, clinically assured digital resource and achieve equal provision across the UK. The partnership uses two main frameworks to inform the design, implementation and evaluation of this digital product:

1. the Nurturing Care Framework, which was launched by the World Health Organization in October 2018, ensuring that the global priorities for children and families are translated into national work;
2. the COM-B Behaviour Change Wheel developed by Susan Michie et al, informing the design and implementation of the app across the United Kingdom.

The session will reflect on the experiences and findings that the team at Best Beginnings has gained in putting this partnership together and the following discussion points will be included.

- Sharing experiences on developing health tools and support resources for parents and communities.
- Key considerations when incorporating behavior change frameworks into digital health tool development for parents and healthcare professionals across nations.
- Discuss methods of dissemination and integration of digital health tools into healthcare pathways in various healthcare systems.

*Co-author: Shabira Papain, Best Beginnings*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Nazarkhudo Dastambuev, Open Society Institute, Tajikistan**

**Strand 3**

### **Children's Animation Project in Tajikistan**

To date, only 12.4% of preschool-aged children have access to early learning opportunities in Tajikistan (EMIS, 2016). This access is provided mainly through preschools and early-learning centers. Additional early childhood development materials and opportunities for children are bereft in the country. As a consequence, the majority of children in Tajikistan enter the education system without the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve their full potential.

In response to this need, Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation (OSI AF) in Tajikistan and UNICEF Tajikistan in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science, and the national TV and private animation companies have collaborated to create an animated program *Sandukchayi Zulbiyo* (the Magic Box) to promote early childhood development.

At present, 25 animated television series of 15 minutes each have been produced. This animation's broadcast was launched on national TV channel in 2017 and is the first indigenously produced program for young children in the Tajik language in the country.

By watching the series, children learn about healthy nutrition, literacy and numeracy, equality, inclusiveness, tolerance, safety, creativity and many early-childhood development topics. The main characters of the animated series help children learn basic preschool concepts as well as demonstrating the importance of respect, tolerance and cooperation. Thematic areas of this animation program were based on the Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS) and expertise of ECE decision makers and practitioners. The main way these films can be used will be by integrating their content into the curriculum and training programs for ECD specialists at various levels in kindergartens, community-based ECD centers established by OSI AF Tajikistan, UNICEF and the AGA Khan Foundation and at teacher-training institutions. The capacity of local animators and the Working Group members has been developed through the provision of a five-day technical workshop, in which participants developed, strengthened and consolidated their ability to produce child-friendly educational programs. Participants will be invited to watch some of the movies/animated films.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal**  
**SESSION 1/5**

**Nurbek Teleshaliyev**, Open Society Foundations, UK  
**Nino Tsintsadze**, Georgian Coalition of Early Childhood Intervention, Ilia State University, Georgia  
**Irma Khabazi**, Open Society Foundations, Georgia  
**Maia Shishniashvili**, Movements for Change, Georgia



**Building an Early Childhood Intervention National System in Georgia**

A comprehensive national early childhood intervention (ECI) system is crucial for the achievement of improved child development and the prevention of children’s developmental delays and disabilities. Moreover, the development of ECI systems in low- and middle-income countries is essential to improving the well-being of children at risk of developmental delay and their families, and to overcoming obstacles to successful program implementation and sustainability. This presentation highlights milestones in the development of the national ECI system in post-soviet Georgia, which had inherited a strong legacy of institutionalization and medical rehabilitation. It also reflects how attitudes towards children with disabilities and developmental delays and services have changed in the course of the last 20 years.

Professionals and parents will present the development of this national ECI system, quality management approaches of state-supported ECI services, advocacy work and collaborations with the national stakeholders. The presentation will discuss legislation that was developed for the national ECI system, as well as inclusive education and other new initiatives of the Government of Georgia, non-governmental organizations and higher-education institutes. The main achievements and challenges of establishing this system during 2012–2018, the role of civil society organizations and their collaboration with the government in establishing a national Coalition for ECI Services advocating for an expanded state voucher system and developing pre- and in-service training for Early Intervention Specialists, are key issues to be discussed with participants.

*Presentation followed by discussions*  
*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer**  
**SESSION 1/6**

**Facilitator:** **Melissa Kelly**, ChildFund International, USA

**Anat Bar**, Hapaot Center, Israel



***Between us* – A home visit and intervention program for high-risk families with young children**

The *Between us* Program in Hapaot Center, Tirat Carmel in Israel encompasses a wide range of services, and relates in a holistic manner to the child, family and community and the relations between them.

*Between us* helps families with young children who are at risk in developmental physical and emotional domains (families at extreme risk) who are unable to use the available services.

We found that the main mechanism of support is creating a support envelope, which is intensive, flexible and close fitting. It includes home visits, emotional and developmental support, and accompanying the family in daily activities (social problems) in close cooperation with the social worker from social services.

The most important factor enabling success is an expert and experienced team of therapists, who are flexible and non-judgmental, which aims to find the most effective way to deal with each individual family. There is a need for intensive supervision and intensive team work and support to enable the carrying of this very heavy emotional burden, preventing emotional shutdown and detachment, and enabling a continued engagement with on-going pain.

The program is also based on video work with parents, which is a significant tool in supporting parents. During the session, I will present the program and engage participants in discussions around questions such as: What is the challenge we are dealing with? What makes a program successful for families that take part in it? How can we be close and trusting with families who are suspicious and afraid of contact with public organizations?

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Strand 1**

**Melissa Kelly, ChildFund International, USA**

### **Emerging Child Protection Evidence and Implications from an ECD Parenting Program in Kenya and Zambia**

ChildFund International, supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, implemented the 'Assuring the Essentials of Optimal Development for Infants and Young Children Affected by HIV and AIDS in Kenya and Zambia' project from January 2016 – July 2018. The project aimed to support implementing partners that worked directly with government and community partners to identify and build the capacities of caregivers through home or group parenting which included an emphasis on child protection.

A mixed-methods approach was used to conduct a project end-line assessment and provide evidence regarding the child protection-related results of the project. Quantitative data was collected through household surveys and household observations with 667 caregivers in Kenya and Zambia. Qualitative data was collected through 20 focus-group discussions, 24 in-depth interviews, and 49 key-informant interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed through: a) descriptive analyses to profile project participants across socio-demographic and outcome variables; b) inferential statistical analyses to examine group differences.

Findings demonstrate that the interventions positively influenced caregivers' child protection-related knowledge, attitudes, and protective caregiving practices. At base line, 55% of caregivers mentioned some form of violence in their responses. Based on aggregate data at end line, 22% of caregivers mentioned shaking, spanking, or slapping their child, and 6% mentioned pulling the child's ear or pinching the child. At base line, 45% of caregivers mentioned verbal discipline when punishing their child, while at end line, only 12% of caregivers reported the same.

The presentation will include a discussion on how the project data has been utilized to inform the design of subsequent protection-related interventions. It will also include recent country consultations to share important evidence-based considerations for stakeholders designing and implementing interventions aiming to improve protection outcomes and scale up the Nurturing Care Framework's protection components.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer**

**SESSION 1/7**

**Michelle Sieval and Fariidah van Leeuwen, JES Rijnland, The Netherlands**

**Strand 1**

### **Jong geleerd, thuis gedaan – home-based early childhood education**

Research shows that the effect of preschool and early childhood education is better when attention is paid to learning at home. Children get a better start at the primary school and it has a positive effect on learning language, social skills and developing knowledge.

*Jong geleerd, thuis gedaan* is a family-focused preschool and early childhood education (ECE) program at home provided by JES. JES works from the belief that children and youth, regardless of their origin, social class or religion, have equal rights to opportunities in education and in society. The organization aims to utilize the full potential of their target group

and hence reduce the risk of inequality within society. The organization achieves this through programs for parents and children aged from birth to 23 years old.

Within the ECE program, the home visitor takes a strengths-based approach that promotes nurturing relationships between the mother/father and child. In 12 house visits, the parent and child are guided in playing together, doing different enriching activities based on the 12 themes children are learning at school. *Jong geleerd, thuis gedaan* also contributes to risk reduction by supporting and referring families to other services when necessary.

The service is provided to children aged 2–6 years from families with a lower socio-economic status, or with fewer financial resources, lower levels of education, or from vulnerable families, such as families with a history of migration, children with a language deficiency, isolated parents/families, stress factors, etc.

During this session, we invite participants to discuss the aspects that are necessary for a successful implementation of home visit programs, and also about with which parties it is essential to collaborate to ensure a successful implementation.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal

### SESSION 1/8

**Rojena Tatour**, Refugee Trauma Initiative (RTI), Greece

**Zorica Trikić**, International Step by Step Association (ISSA), The Netherlands

**Nektarios Stellakis**, University of Patras, Greece

**Ifigenia Kokali**, Hellenic Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, Greece

**Kamela Usmani**, Open Society Foundations, Early Childhood Program, UK



Strand 2

### **Building Bridges – Bridging the Gap: Working together to support wellbeing, learning, development and the integration of young refugee and migrant children in Greece**

This panel discussion aims to bring together experienced professionals across different levels of the education system, who have been directly involved in the project *Building Bridges – Bridging the Gap*, implemented by ISSA in partnership with the Greek Ministry of Education, the Municipalities of Elefsina and Nikea Renti, the University of Patras, EADAP and the Refugee Trauma Initiative and supported by the Early Childhood Program at the Open Society Foundation. The project aimed at addressing the needs and rights of young refugee and migrant children in Greece, by supporting their wellbeing, learning, development and integration in the local community. The discussions during this session will focus around: the journey from the non-existence of child and family-friendly environments to developing nurturing and inclusive environments for refugee children and their families in kindergartens in reception centers on Greek islands and in respective nurseries; the main challenges that were encountered during the journey with a special emphasis on staff's needs, values, support systems and wellbeing; and on the importance and added value of collaboration between different international and national organizations (ministries, agencies, governmental bodies and local governments) during that journey.

In order to build up a clear picture of the challenges embedded in such a demanding journey, the panel discussion will share the perspectives of policy makers (Ministry of Education), training institutions, NGOs, and international networks with participants.

*Panel discussion*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**  
**SESSION 1/9**

**Marianne van Teunenbroek, Sardes, The Netherlands**

**Strand 2**

**A Three-Steps Approach to Strong Childcare**

A stimulating environment is important for young children. What makes daycare a stimulating environment? Utrecht University and Sardes are monitoring annually the quality of childcare (ECEC services) in the Netherlands, commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs. As a result, we learned a lot about the quality of Dutch childcare. What can individual childcare providers learn from conclusions that are drawn in this nationwide monitor?

As a knowledge broker, Sardes is keen on linking research to practice. In our three-step approach, we use the latest insights about quality in childcare. We help childcare providers to implement these insights in their daily actions. We use a quality scan to analyze the current situation, which, together with the vision and ambition of the childcare provider, leads to a tailor-made program of professional development.

In this presentation, we will explain the main results of the national monitor (LKK). We will talk you through our three-step approach and explain an underlying model. We will present some dilemmas to discuss with the participants. We would like to welcome experts as well as practitioners to reflect on our approach.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk**  
**SESSION 1/10**

**Facilitator: Tamara Milic, Ministry of Education, Montenegro**

**Strand 3**

**Arijana Nikolic and Tamara Milic, Ministry of Education, Montenegro**

**Outreach preschool services: Preschool Interactive Services – an innovative and free service for remote rural areas in Montenegro**

Using a brief overview of the 2016–2020 Strategy for Early and Preschool Education in Montenegro, participants will be invited to discuss positive practices in early childhood and preschool settings.

Low coverage and distance from regular educational units, inadequate attitudes (parents, community and cultural norms) and higher rates of poverty and unemployment prevent children and families in specific areas of Montenegro from benefiting from early childhood and preschool services. A ‘Preschool for all’ campaign promotes the importance of such services in those particular parts of the country and has led to the development of Outreach Preschool Interactive Services. The Montenegrin Outreach Preschool Interactive Services concept was designed to best support the child’s development and parents’ competencies. The Interactive Service Team consists of preschool teachers, professional associates, and managers who have been going through a three-module training program. The Team works in local facilities twice a week for three hours. Concrete activities are: preparatory activities (contact with the community, visiting the settlement and families, adaptation, and furnishing, training sessions); working with children (with an age-appropriate work plan); bringing educational materials; individual and group work with parents; different educational and cultural visits; monthly supervision; evaluation based on indicators. More details about the training program, selection criteria and processes, activities, and plans related to this initiative, will be shared during the sessions.

Participants will be invited to discuss priorities and approaches suitable for their communities facing the same challenges, and will engage further on topics related to working with vulnerable groups: models of Roma and Egyptian population

integration; activities for the children with special education needs; children without parental care enrolled in regular preschool education.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Gerda Sula, University of Tirana / Step by Step Center, Albania**

**Strand 2**

### **Practitioners' ethics in Albanian preschools**

Nurturing environments in preschools are strongly influenced by the behaviors of practitioners who are in daily interaction with the children in their care. The way they act and talk is constantly observed and absorbed by young children. The research we aim to present explores the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding unethical behaviors in terms of severity and occurrence, and compares their reports to provide the grounds for understanding how the main actors in education perceive the ethical constructs of each of these groups in regard to shared responsibility.

A mixed-methods sequential explanatory design was employed, which consisted of two distinct phases: quantitative followed by qualitative. First, we collected and analyzed the quantitative data. The qualitative (text) data were collected and analyzed and helped to explain, or elaborate on, the quantitative results obtained in the first phase. The rationale for this approach was that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provided a general understanding of the level of ethics and unethical behaviors in the Albanian preschool education context.

The presentation aims to explore the role of the school as a social institution which educates, cultivates and upgrades the human soul; but instead, teachers' behaviors, in most cases a little strict and intolerant, can cause the opposite. This means that the job of the new generation educator, both in the formal, legal and institutional aspects, as well as in the informal, spiritual and moral aspects, needs to be revisited not only in terms of the rhetoric of cognitive development, but also in improving the relationships through the day-to-day activity of preschools and communities.

*Co-authors: Anila Sulstarova, Skerdi Zahaj and Blerta Bodinaku, University of Tirana / Step by Step Center, Albania*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

## **MEETING ROOM 11**

### **SESSION 1/11**

**Facilitator: Ridhi Sethi, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, India**

**Ridhi Sethi, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, India**

**Strand 2**

### **Mapping Quality in Daycare Services for Young Children in Urban India**

In India, there is an increase in the presence of childcare services at all social levels. Many families in urban India have outsourced childcare to centers because of lack of availability of familial care and their need to work. Daycare services keep children in their custody for most of the day while parents attend to eight hours of work in dual working families. In this research the authors have studied four daycare programs using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised and Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale – revised to measure the quality of early childhood programs in centers for young children. The assessment of childcare facilities for quality reviewed the nature of the environment, different kinds of practices, infrastructure, curriculum, materials for play, health and safety parameters. Quality was also assessed based on the training of teachers and their relationship with the parents. In the study, it was found that all four programs had a safe and print-rich indoor environment but lacked outdoor spaces for gross motor development. Also, all the programs scored high on personalized care of children; however, the score decreased because they did not have

special provisions for children with special needs. Children's perspectives of their own care in the centers were gathered using creative methods such as drawings and picture reading sessions. Thirty-eight children aged 3–10 years who were in daycare programs expressed their notions of care. Children in daycare indicated their relation and rhythms at places of care by the presence of adults, peers and objects that provide spaces for expression and engagement.

Photographs and graphs, samples of children's drawings and picture-reading cards will stimulate discussions among participants.

*Co-authors: Bhanumathi Sharma and Asha Singh, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi*

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Marleen Groeneveld, Leiden University, The Netherlands**

**Strand 2**

### **Caregiver Sensitivity and Involvement of Boys and Girls in Home-based Childcare**

Childcare quality can influence children's behavior in childcare settings. Children who are in a high-quality childcare setting are encouraged to explore the material and social environment. Boys and girls might differ in their susceptibility to this childcare quality. In this session, a study where associations between childcare quality and the involvement of boys and girls in home-based childcare are examined. Childcare quality (caregiver sensitivity and global quality) and children's involvement were observed at 103 home-based childcare settings in the Netherlands, including 103 female caregivers and 162 children (86 boys, 76 girls).

Results showed that childcare quality interacted with child gender in predicting child involvement: boys showed lower involvement (than girls) when they were in the care of a less sensitive caregiver, and higher involvement (than girls) when they were in the care of a more sensitive caregiver. In addition, boys and girls in smaller groups showed higher involvement than children in larger groups. Global childcare quality and the percentage of boys in the group were not related to children's involvement.

This study shows that it is important, especially for boys, to be taken care of by a sensitive caregiver during the day at childcare: a caregiver who accurately perceives their signals and who responds promptly and adequately to these signals. These caregivers support and encourage children to be involved in their play, and to explore the world around them.

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

## **Concurrent Sessions 2: 12:15-13:15**

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**

**SESSION 2/1**

**Elma Hilbrink, Stichting Babywerk, The Netherlands**

**Su'en Verweij-Kwok, Nederlands Jeugdinstituut, The Netherlands**

**Strand 1**

### **Bridging the gap between science and practice. Translating knowledge of the first 1,000 critical days for parents and practitioners**

A wide range of research shows that the period from conception till the age of two is a crucial phase of human development, a period during which focused attention can reap great returns for society. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Healthcare and Welfare has started a program called Kansrijke Start (A Promising Start), which focuses on practitioners



in the field of birth care and infancy and on expectant parents. After all, the biggest and most rapid development takes place in these three years: the development of the foetus, brain development (approximately 80% of brain-cell development takes place before the age of three), emotional development, language development and the ability to learn, to name a few examples. There is ample scientific knowledge and evidence on supporting families to provide their children with nurturing interactions, care and space in the first 1,000 days. However, a large gap exists between science and practice. The problem, at least in the Netherlands, is that scientific knowledge often doesn't reach the target audience and moreover, the knowledge is very fragmented.

In this discussion forum, we will briefly introduce the importance of emotional and psychological health for the first 1,000 days, including the risk and the protecting factors that influence the nature of the day-to-day relationship between children and their (primary) caregivers. Furthermore, we will give a few examples of how we will try to bridge the gap between science and society. Thereafter, we invite you to take part in an interactive discussion on the best ways to make the existing knowledge of the critical first 1,000 days accessible to practitioners and parents from diverse backgrounds.

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## **MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal SESSION 2/2**

**Paul Kocken**, TNO Child Health, The Netherlands  
**Efren Aguilar**, University College Los Angeles, USA


 Strand 3

### **All Children Thrive: Towards a Transnational Innovative Platform for Health System Change**

Many nations are recognizing that the ecosystem that supports the healthy development of children is being threatened by a rapidly changing world, one that is creating new and common challenges and adversities that often cut across national and class boundaries. A learning system, All Children Thrive (ACT), is proposed to optimize the health, development and wellbeing of children and families. During this session, we will introduce the transnational ACT platform, supporting care-system transformation, and will discuss the ACT initiative focusing on cities and regions as units of innovation, action and transformation.

Children face the risks of obesity, emotional and behavioral disorders, neurodevelopmental conditions and addictive disorders. These syndemics are emerging out of rapidly changing social, economic and developmental conditions that likely characterize a new and common future.

ACT is a transnational innovation platform and learning system that aims to optimize the health, development and wellbeing of children and families. This entails healthy births, school readiness, high-school graduation and college-going rates. This requires the improvement of the conditions and contexts of childhood at the level of family functioning, neighborhoods and communities, including a decrease in poverty, inequality and adversity. ACT supports emerging and promising practices, but also the development of new strategies and breakthrough solutions so that all children can pursue healthy and successful futures. ACT seeks opportunities to improve the performance of child-serving systems from different sectors and institutions, such as health, education, family support, housing and justice. The ACT learning platform will facilitate rapid-cycle social and technical innovation, communication, data sharing and movement building. By doing so, a sustainable culture of health development, resilience and sustainability for children, youth and families can be created.

Participants will be invited to share their views on the development of the ACT initiative. The discussion will focus on the conditions necessary to establish a vibrant, productive and consequential ACT network.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer**  
**SESSION 2/3**

**Giselinde Bracke**, Artevelde University College Ghent, Belgium

**Strand 3**

**To organize services for children or to facilitate them? A double role for municipalities**

How can a municipality be an organizer of education and a neutral facilitator for schools at the same time? How can a municipality encourage different (sometimes competing) schools, services and partners to work towards a common goal? These are the questions!

In this forum, we will discuss the role of municipalities in (supporting the) schooling and education of children. As an input for the discussion, the results of a case study in Flanders will be presented. In Flanders, municipalities have a double role: they can organize schools themselves and they can carry out initiatives that support all types of schools and partners in their municipality. In the presented case study, we mapped a Flemish municipality in terms of how they support schools and what would be advised for the future, based on good practices of other municipalities. The same questions are relevant for other professional fields: services for young children, youth work, etc. Let's share good practices, ideas and reflections.

In this discussion forum, we will explore the different roles of municipalities in this matter in the different countries of the participants and the different ways in which municipalities fulfil these roles. However diverse the answers from our different international contexts might be, we can imagine the conclusion might be the same as in our research: put the child at the center of it all!

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer**  
**SESSION 2/4**

**Ida Ferdinandi**, UNICEF, Montenegro

**Milos Bulatovic**, Pedagogical Centre of Montenegro

**Dijana Radenovic**, Public Preschool Institution "Djina Vrbica", Montenegro

**Strand 1**

**Parenting for Lifelong Health for Young Children: Implementing the parenting program in Montenegro followed by a simulation session**

The purpose of the session is to demonstrate the implementation in Montenegro of an evidence-based parenting program which is gaining international recognition. The program implemented in Montenegro is the group-based program *Parenting for Lifelong Health* (PLH) for Young Children intended for parents of children aged 2–9, which is part of a suite of parenting programmes designed to be affordable for low and middle-income countries ([www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/child/plh/en](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/plh/en)).

The aim of the PLH for Young Children is to strengthen parenting skills and behaviors that help parents and caregivers to maintain nurturing relationships with their children and reduce harsh discipline. The third cycle of the 12-session program is currently being implemented in the country, at present by six UNICEF partners: primary healthcare centers in three municipalities, a public kindergarten and two non-governmental organizations including the Pedagogical Centre of Montenegro (an ISSA member). Pre- and post-program measures taken during the first implementation cycle showed strong evidence of effectiveness.

The session will begin with a brief presentation about the science behind parenting programs, the PLH suite, the PLH for Young Children program structure, the process of implementation in Montenegro, evidence of its effectiveness in Montenegro and elsewhere, lessons learnt and challenges. This will be followed by a short but fun and interactive demo

session based on the first session of the program. Six volunteers will be required to act as a parent group while the rest of the participants will act as observers. The session will end with a 10-minute Q&A/discussion involving all participants.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal  
SESSION 2/5**

**Strand 2**

**Caroline Zijderveld and Ileen Purperhart, Hestia Kinderopvang, The Netherlands**

**Celebrating diversity in multilingual childcare**

Our bilingual childcare locations serve expat families from all over the world. Our staff members also come from various backgrounds and are Dutch and English (near) natives. This enables children to learn both Dutch and English. In our daily work, we use the Reggio Emilia approach. Most activities and themes are child-led. Children are capable of constructing their own learning; they learn through communication, interaction and play. Children, adults and the environment are all regarded as teachers. There are a hundred languages and more for children in which to express themselves.

The children in our centers participate in the daily chores, such as cooking and setting the tables, hanging/folding laundry, shopping for groceries or gardening. They are also stimulated to help each other. Through these kinds of interactions, they expand their vocabulary and social skills.

In the Reggio approach, the community in which children grow up is important in their learning process. Our childcare centers are an important part of this community. Many children spend their whole week at our centers and we want them to feel at home. This also applies to their families. We celebrate diversity. People from different backgrounds and walks of life are welcome, including families as well as staff members.

We will present our own road leading to opening bilingual childcare facilities, the struggles and challenges that have crossed our path and the research we partake in; we will also talk about why we think bilingualism matters and how we involve children and their families.

We plan to engage participants in enriching discussions by answering to questions such as these.

- Do you have any experience in multilingual childcare/schools?
- How is it implemented in your center and/or daily routine? Do you, e.g., use OPOL (one person one language)?
- What do you do to involve the parents and/or other family members?
- Do you feel that accents make it difficult to learn a language? Should a language, e.g. English, be spoken if the speaker has a strong French (or other language) accent?
- How do you involve families who only speak one language, which is not yours? Do you try to learn their language, or do you have other creative solutions?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer  
SESSION 2/6**

**Strand 2**

**Rebecca Riess and Myriam Mony, Le Furet, France**

### **Leading Actions in Promoting Equality in Early Childhood: The First Steps**

Through collaborative and dynamic methods of sharing experiences, Le Furet will animate a 60-minute workshop: Leading Actions in Promoting Equality in Early Childhood: The First Steps.

We encourage all participants to share their understanding of what equality means in early childhood; how they first introduce the topic; how and if they implement programs in their field; what questions they face; and how obstacles are overcome. The objective will be for the group to gain value from their shared experiences, ideas and best practices. Particular attention will be paid to the dynamics of the group, where each person comes from, and the singular aspects of their ideas and practices.

After a first exploration which will lay the foundations of understanding the different dimensions of promoting equality, a consolidation phase will take place with a collective dynamic synthesis of discussions. If necessary, the group leaders will make a brief summary and will feed discussions with new ideas to elaborate and illustrate the topic.

In the second phase of the workshop, participants will work on concrete cases where they will have to either collectively build a proposal or a tool, or share known applicable practices. In this way, the diverse methods, approaches and resources for equality in early childhood will be highlighted and promoted by the participants present.

And finally, in whole-group feedback, participants will share achievements in their subgroups, giving an overall visibility to the wealth of experiences collected.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

### **MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer SESSION 2/7**

**Facilitator:** Adem Ademi, Mediterranean Roma Associations Federation (AKROMFED), Turkey

**Adem Ademi, Mediterranean Roma Associations Federation (AKROMFED), Turkey**

**Strand 2**

#### **The invisible Roma children**

An estimated four to five million Roma live in Turkey. Comprehensive statistics on Romani children education are lacking. In 2017, AKROMFED ran a survey reaching out to 1,000 Roma families in 17 Turkish towns. Poverty and exclusion from services are major problems for these families. The drop-out rates for Romani children in primary schools was 38% in 2017, compared to 3% of the majority population. The great majority of Roma parents (67%) at an average age of 50 are illiterate. The unemployment rate among parents is at 96%

What does the picture look like? Inside the families, we have noticed malnutrition because of a lack of understanding of the importance of proper nutrition, but also because many know nothing about it! More importantly, families have extremely low incomes, leading to an inability to secure proper nutrition. This leads to physical and mental challenges in the development of these children. Furthermore, most of the families have insufficient or sometimes conflicting knowledge and understanding about Early Childhood Development. The extremely low educational background of parents, bizarre lifestyles and economic difficulties cannot result with anything else but rejection, inferiority and illiteracy about adequate children development.

As most of these children live in ghettos, and following the regulations, they are enrolled in the nearest kindergarten or school attended only by Roma – which automatically means segregation, lack of quality and institutionalizing the distance between them and the majority population at least for the next 15 years! Accordingly, these children face their first conflicts after secondary school, when they face the “outside world” and prejudices about themselves that they never realized would exist.

Dealing with emergencies has pushed Turkish authorities to even more neglect the needs of Roma children. Outreach to Roma communities and efforts for involving, integrating and including Roma children are sadly lacking. The inequality in

provision of services is deepening the gap between Roma and other children and is consciously enforcing prejudices that hinders the opportunities for learning and enabling the environments for healthy early childhood development. Roma children are not attending pre-school education, and why is this happening? What should be done to overcome such situations? Who bears the responsibility and what are the best interventions in these and similar situations?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Anat Bar, Hapaot Center, Israel**

**Strand 2**

### **Building an Array of Services for Early Childhood Education – a Presentation of a Work Model**

Research in the field of early childhood states the needs that relate to all spheres of a child's life – their parents, the family, and the educational and medical staff that work with them in the community and the specific cultural contacts and habits that touch their life.

In spite of the correspondence between the professional and organizational spheres, the services for early childhood are not unified under one structure; in other words, in many cases, the therapeutic services, the educational frameworks, the guidance program for parents and so on fall under the authority of different organizational and financial frameworks. The work of professionals demands stipulations, and the lack of one organizational framework has an immediate impact on the nature of their work.

The Municipality of Tirat Carmel has built an early childhood system that operates through a partnership between community leaders and through a large center for children, parents and educational staff. Constructing a comprehensive organizational model for early childhood provides children, their parents and the community with a clear answer, both professionally and occupationally. Because of this, when we wish to build a community service, we must take into account a key idea that includes management, professional and budgetary aspects. In Tirat Carmel in Israel, there is a Center that encompasses a wide range of services, and relates in a holistic manner to the child, family and community and the relations between them.

The Center comprises programs for parents and children with special needs, including educational frameworks and therapeutic frameworks. In the therapeutic framework, the staff work in collaboration with other agents in the community.

The Center is based on developmental theories that place the interaction between the child and their surroundings at the focus of attention, as well as the interactions between the Center and other agents and organizations in the community. In this session, an interesting work model will be presented together with the results of an implementation process on different levels, while demonstrating the connection between the professional and the organizational essence. The following questions will be discussed.

1. Why is it so difficult to build early childhood services for the long term, and make a huge change in families' lives?
2. What are the key principles underlying intervention in high-risk families?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal**  
**SESSION 2/8**

**Anke van Keulen, Bureau MUTANT, The Netherlands**

**Ana del Barrio Saiz, Ana del Barrio Training & Consulting, The Netherlands**

**Josette Hoex, Nederlands Jeugdinstituut, The Netherlands**

**Strand 2**

### **The European Quality Framework as a source of inspiration and an instrument for reflection in ECEC**

The European Quality Framework (EQF) is important for the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector – provisions for young children, initial and on-going training and policy makers at the national and local levels – because it addresses the most relevant themes in the current policy. It offers inspiration and encourages reflection on five fully interconnected and research-based themes: 1) accessibility; 2) workforce; 3) curriculum; 4) monitoring and evaluation; and 5) governance and finance. It provides an umbrella and a lens with which we can oversee the national and local policy frameworks and the pedagogical policy of ECEC services.

This interactive workshop starts with a presentation on the vision and content of the European Quality Framework in ECEC. It gives insight into two products: the 5 Steps to Quality Training package; and the High Five Quality Scan. These have been developed by a Dutch and Flemish expert group to support service providers, policymakers and initial and on-going training. The workshop will also provide a short overview of the implementation of the Framework in different contexts.

We will work in groups and conduct discussions using reflections from the EQF Training package. Participants will have the possibility to look closely at their own practice and situation with respect to at least two (possibly three) of the five EQF themes. In a whole-group exchange, we will discuss questions about the Framework and share the steps necessary to achieve a more inclusive praxis and improve the quality of the ECEC sector.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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### **MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer SESSION 2/9**

**Flora Bacso, Partners Hungary Foundation, Hungary**

**Strand 2**

#### **Listening partnership – a powerful tool to prevent burnout**

Supporting children in need and their parents is hard work. Lacking proper support for professionals, teachers and caretakers can leave one disappointed, unsatisfied, unappreciated and burned out.

To keep ourselves going and keep our commitment and motivation alive, we too, need support. We need people with whom we can share our concerns, worries as well as successes and joys. We need people and a structure where we are listened to without judgement and criticism, with openness, with trust in our intelligence.

In this workshop, you will learn a simple but powerful technique that can be a game-changer in all your relationships, and that can be implemented anywhere and anytime and that can provide the support necessary for people to be their best selves. Listening partnership is one of the five simple tools of *Hand in Hand Parenting* ([www.handinhandparenting.org](http://www.handinhandparenting.org)). The other four tools are dedicated for use with children, which will be also mentioned in the workshop in order to give a full understanding of the approach. However, the tool that we are going to practice most during this workshop is designed for parents, caretakers and ECEC practitioners. What is learned here can also be applied in improving communication and connection both with the children and their parents who we are supporting.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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### **MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk SESSION 2/10**

**Facilitator: Maire Corbett, Early Childhood Ireland**

**Rhona McGinn, Technological University Dublin, Ireland**

**Strand 2**

### **Issues of Professional Identity for Early Childhood Educators in Ireland**

The Researching Early Childhood Education Collaborative (RECEC) was established in 2015 in Dublin, Ireland in response to a need to reflect upon the early childhood education and care (ECEC) policy and practice landscape in Ireland. Its goal is to inform research and policy agendas through sustained, inclusive, multi-professional, multi-agency dialogue where a goal of discussion seeks to achieve inter-subjectivity among its participants. There have been five symposia since the project's inception, all based around topics of relevance to ECEC. The format of the symposia was influenced by 'professional conversations' methodology, a term used to convey the expertise and knowledge participants bring to and share at the events. Presentations on selected topics, delivered by invited key speakers including ECEC practitioners and academics, generated further discussions in small groups among participants. Responses that arose from these 'professional conversations' were analyzed and findings are presented as part of this qualitative research.

The primary research questions ask 'how do issues of professional identity of educators impact ECE in Ireland today?' A qualitative approach informed by thematic analysis is utilized to analyze the data. Initial findings highlight the tension between the confidence of educators in their pedagogical practices and a lack of coherence within the professional identities of early childhood educators. The overall findings will be explored further during the presentation. These findings highlight how professional identities, as negotiated by multiple key stakeholders, including early childhood educators, impact the lived experiences of educators within their pedagogical practices.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Maire Corbett, Early Childhood Ireland**

**Strand 2**

### **Universal Design Creating Nurturing Spaces for All**

'We like this place' (NCNA, 2002) provided the Irish early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector with environment design guidance. Greenman (1988) suggests that the quality of the ECEC environment impacts on the quality of the experiences of the children and adults who 'live' in the space. In 2016, the Access and Inclusion Model was developed by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The definition of Universal Design is to 'ensure that environments are easy to access, use and understand'.

In 2018, Early Childhood Ireland and partner organizations (Trinity Haus, Mary Immaculate College and Nathan Somers Design) were commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design to develop Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care (ELC) settings, with a view to supporting the access of all children (babies, toddlers and young children) to nurturing, rich early-years environments. These settings must also be comfortable and accessible for parents and practitioners. This publication will support planners, architects and ELC professionals to ensure the built environment is nurturing and accessible for all, both in relation to new builds and retrofitting.

A systematic literature review followed by ten onsite visits to a diverse typology of ELC settings took place in March–June 2018. Parents and practitioners were surveyed, and a random sample were interviewed. Children were also involved, using their own drawings and photographs to hear their views on the spaces they use. The literature review and case-study visits led to the development of Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings, including a self-audit tool. The Guidelines will be launched in June 2019. Ethical considerations of informed consent from adults and assent from the children, freedom to withdraw from the study, anonymity, participant safety and wellbeing are adhered to.

The presentation will outline the findings from the case studies and the literature review. We will describe and show in photos the content of the guidelines and we will seek feedback and answer questions regarding the process. Links to the document will be shared.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 11**  
**SESSION 2/11**

**Facilitator:** [Anna Kukuruza](#), Institute of Children and Juvenile Health Protection, Ukraine

[Nino Tsintsadze and Khatuna Dolidze](#), Ilia State University, Georgia



**Strand 2**

**The Handbook of Early Inclusive Education**

The handbook *Early Inclusive Education: a Handbook for Practitioners* has been designed to assist organizations, managers, and practitioners in developing training programs to promote early inclusive education practice in their settings. The handbook is also useful as a self-study resource. It contains all the components of a successful training session – active learning through case studies, background information, practical suggestions for all aspects of planning and implementing high-quality early education environments for young children and working well with families.

The handbook was developed by Georgian experts based at Ilia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia together with one US expert, with the support of Open Society Foundation. The authors have long-term experience in creating and implementing projects improving early childhood education practices in Georgia and in post-Soviet systems in their transition to alternative practices.

The handbook is useful for post-soviet countries which experience challenges in transitioning from solely teacher-led to child-initiated practices in early education. It incorporates many aspects of quality early education based on examples of best practices from different countries around the world and the knowledge and experiences of the authors. The authors strongly believe that quality early education is, in its essence, inclusive. The manual consists of three parts. The first one addresses: the importance and organizational practice of quality early inclusive education; responsibilities and roles in early education; the role of parent and family; ability, religious and ethnic diversity in the kindergarten; and quality assessment of practice and monitoring.

The second part deals with how to create an environment that is supportive and nurturing for everyone in terms of social, emotional, cognitive, communicative, physical and sensory aspects.

The third part discusses successful real-life examples of practice of the participation of children with different educational needs, mainly from kindergartens in Georgia. This helps the teachers to better plan and implement successful and enriching practices.

The staff of six kindergartens of Georgia, both rural and urban, with groups of similar and mixed ages, with skilled and less-skilled teachers, were trained through this module. Post-training evaluation shows positive changes in practice.

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*



**Anna Kukuruza**, Institute of Children and Juvenile Health Protection, Ukraine

**Organization of the transition program from early intervention in inclusive preschool education in Ukraine: experience of Kharkov, difficulties and achievements**

The results of the project on developing and piloting a transition program from early childhood intervention to preschool inclusive education, supported by the Open Society Foundation, the Early Childhood Program, will be presented. The project was carried out in partnership with the Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation and the Educational and Rehabilitation Center Dzherelo (Lviv), and a brief analysis of the work done in Kharkiv in 2018–2019 will be shared. Kharkiv is one of the largest cities in Ukraine with a population of over one million inhabitants. Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) programs have started developing since 2000, while the systematic program of transition from ECI to inclusive education has been innovative. Currently, Ukraine is undergoing a reform in the education system and active development of inclusive education. It makes the transition program quite innovative and an important part of the process.

We will share the stages of organizing a transition program, the role of each participants in this process (parents, NGOs, ECI and preschool specialists, local authorities), type and quality of support provided to children, parents, pre-school teachers and staff from the ECI specialists, and the results of the questionnaires of parents and specialists. We will also present an analysis of the interaction and coordination of early-intervention providers with the new institution created in Ukraine to provide inclusive education – the Kharkiv Inclusive Resource Center.

*Co-authors: Alina Torba, CF Early Intervention Institute, Ukraine  
 Olena Osmachko, Education Department, Kharkiv City Council, Ukraine  
 Aliona Zamiatina, CF Early Intervention Institute, Ukraine*

*Poster presentation  
 Duration: 30 minutes*

**Concurrent Sessions 3: 15:30-16:30**

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal  
 SESSION 3/1**

**Facilitator: Mihaela Ionescu**, International Step by Step Association (ISSA), The Netherlands

**Hester Hulpia**, VBJK – Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium  
**Jerneja Jager**, Step by Step Centre for Quality in Education – Educational Research Institute, Slovenia  
**Claudia Mandrile**, Compagnia di San Paolo, Italy  
**Frank Oberklaid**, Centre for Community Child Health at The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia

**Nurturing integration in early childhood systems – unpacking roadmaps**

There is a growing interest and an intensive discourse around the integration of early childhood services across sectors, services and ages (especially birth to 6–7 years) with good examples from several countries around the world. However, although there have been some lessons learned, the pathways to reaching integration are not carved in stone, there is no recipe for them, and they very much depend on the specific context of the country. In addition, the complexity of challenges that young children and their families encounter in fulfilling their rights in many societies today, asks for a

systemic approach and a re-thinking of how systems operate in order to provide children and families with quality opportunities and services.

The INTESYS project, funded under the Erasmus+ Programme, has pioneered various pathways towards integration in four different countries: Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia. This has been done by developing and piloting a Reference Framework for Integration, and through a versatile Toolkit for enabling changes at the practice level, which has led to policy recommendations.

What were the results of this piloting? What has really changed and what will be there to stay? What can we learn from each other across countries and how we can contribute to a greater understanding about how to promote and create concrete actions for integration? These are only a few of the questions that will be addressed during the panel discussions, and we welcome many more from the participants in this session.

*Panel discussion*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal  
SESSION 3/2**

**Felicitas zu Dohna**, Arup, UK

**Patrin Watanatada**, Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF), The Netherlands



**Strand 3**

**Better Places for Early Childhood in Vulnerable Environments**

International conflict and exponential, and often unsustainable, urban growth mean more and more children find themselves in informal, poor and vulnerable contexts. We recognize the urgency and challenges of providing environments within such vulnerable contexts that cater, in particular, towards the specific needs of young children, their caregivers, and pregnant women.

The Bernard van Leer Foundation and built-environment consultancy Arup have partnered to produce a guide to support the assessment, design and implementation of child-friendly interventions in vulnerable urban environments, such as informal and refugee urban settlements. This guide builds on the Bernard van Leer Foundation's Urban95 initiative, and the wide array of publications and studies aiming at tackling a child-centred approach to design and planning. The partnership aims to develop a practical guide that key urban players can directly use in their everyday work to address the specific needs of young children, caregivers, and pregnant women.

This session seeks to gather feedback from early childhood development experts to shape the on-going research, and identify priorities and gaps.

The workshop will begin with an overview of the research to date, and an outline of the overall project. Following a facilitated group-working session, participants will get the opportunity to review and contribute to the research by providing feedback, with a focus on the child-development perspective. The workshop will close with a report from the groups and a plenary discussion.

Arup and the Bernard van Leer Foundation will use the feedback to refine the development of their (assessment) tool and guidance before testing them in contexts.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer  
SESSION 3/3**

**Facilitator:** Cornelia Cincilei, Step by Step Moldova

Duminica Gelu, Impreuna Agency, Romania  
 Costache Luminita, UNICEF, Romania

Strand 2

**“If you don’t behave, a Gypsy will come and steal you”**

A lot of non-Roma children are raised across Europe, hearing sentences like this. Also, a lot of Romani children’s and other vulnerable groups of children are used to having low educational expectations as a result of the permanent stigma and low self-esteem.

Both parents and early childhood services are the primary socializing actors. Even if one of the main benefits of early childhood education and care (ECEC) lies in fostering children’s social and emotional development, in the current services the means by which Roma children and other vulnerable groups of children can achieve this goal are missing.

In recent years, UNICEF and the Impreuna Agency Foundation have created a series of materials and instruments to be used in classrooms and with families in order to influence the overall behavior of the future adult. Emotional maturity, empathy, resilience, acceptance and valuing diversity and promoting non-discrimination etc., are skills that, even if not easily measurable, can play a major role in future human and professional development.

The session will be focused on 3 main issues: the importance of the non-cognitive skills in ECEC (I); the instruments that have been developed in recent years by Impreuna and UNICEF in order to support quality inclusive education since the early stages of education (II); and the importance of adapting communication tools to those channels that are accessible to each child/parent/teacher (III).

Participants are invited to discuss these questions.

- What instruments are the most appropriate to be used in the early years to develop children’s socio-emotional abilities?
- Which communication channels and tools should be used when working with young children and their parents?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

Strand 2

**Cornelia Cincilei, Step by Step Moldova**

**Fostering reflection to embrace innovation – a generative nurturing environment in early childhood services**

This session will focus on the country experience (Republic of Moldova) with education reform initiatives related to the translation of the educational policy discourse into practice. There is a gap between the rather out-dated way that preschool and primary school teachers are still being trained and the declared child/learner-centered approach in the main policy documents. The lack of a critical and shared understanding by the relevant actors in early childhood development (ECD) field of the child-centered pedagogy, plus the control-oriented quality management in the system often create confusion and generate traps for the practitioners. One such trap is the formal and fragmented introduction during pre- and in-service teacher training of new teaching-learning strategies and techniques (which were adequately and purposely used by international trainers): without developing teachers’ critical reflection skills, the novelty of the form and format will most likely overshadow or stand for their function and essence. In this sense, even the attempts to use the increasingly popular project-based approach as a method of structuring a curriculum around projects might be misleading if the latter are rather product oriented (evaluated against pre-determined, primarily content-based criteria) than process-oriented (more open-ended, with multiple possibilities for children’s input, evaluated based on jointly developed success criteria that go beyond narrow curricular contents and skills, etc.).

The specific examples will come from the challenges Step by Step preschool and primary school teachers encounter when confronted with a deficient external understanding of the child-centered approach.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

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#### **MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer**

##### **SESSION 3/4**

**Sofie Verschaeve**, University College Artevelde, Belgium

**Jan De Mets**, University Ghent, Belgium

**Valentina Migliarini**, University of Bologna, Italy



**Strand 2**

#### **Enhancing reflexivity through video analysis: comparing two case studies**

Diversity and globally widespread socio-economic and racial inequalities have had an impact on childcare centers and schools. These inequalities are regarded as normalized, at the expense of vulnerable groups of families and children (Migliarini, Annamma). Research shows that video-analysis can be a successful method for helping educators and practitioners to co-construct inclusive practices through a reflective and professional attitude.

Drawing on a cross-national study, TRACKS, funded under the Erasmus+ Program, the presentation aims to explore two case studies focusing on the use of video analysis. The first is focused on the use of video analysis as a tool of coaching (in a one-to-one context) and the second considers video analysis as a tool of documentation (in a group context).

*Video analysis as a tool of coaching – a case study in Belgium:* the study invests in the high-quality interaction of ECEC professionals. During the study, the researcher and practitioners observe the video recordings and reflect on the interactions. Through shared discussions, ECEC professionals are able to grow, to strengthen existing competences and see more interaction opportunities by reflecting on interaction competences. We present initial findings from a local case study carried out in two ECEC preschools, two out-of-school care service and one childcare service in the city of Ghent.

*Video analysis as a tool of documentation – an Italian case study:* this study explores the possibilities of the analysis of videos as tools to generate reflective spaces whereby ECEC professionals can co-construct an inclusive environment and teaching practices. Building on a corpus of literature that focuses on video analysis as a tool for professional development, and on the application of video-coaching methodology, this study sheds light on the potential and challenges that practitioners encounter when using video as a means to create a nurturing environment and practices rooted in the inclusive paradigm. Initial findings are presented from a local case study carried out in two ECEC services in the city of Bologna, Emilia Romagna.

The presenters will engage with participants in a discussion about how the researchers in the study become facilitators in the process of collectively co-constructing practices that benefits all the children.

*Co-authors: Lucia Balduzzi and Arianna Lazzari, University of Bologna, Italy*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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#### **MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal**

##### **SESSION 3/5**

**Giulia Cortellesi**, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI), The Netherlands

**Zorica Trikić**, International Step-by-Step Association (ISSA), The Netherlands



**Strand 3**

#### **TOY for Inclusion: a gateway to education and care of children from disadvantaged communities**

Have you ever wondered how non-formal early childhood education and care (ECEC) spaces for children and their families can support school transition? And how such spaces can be inclusive, high quality and function as bridges between Roma and non-Roma? Join this workshop and discover the power of the TOY for Inclusion Play Hubs.

*It is a unique place for us. I have never seen a place where so many different children play together like in our Play Hub. (Mother of four children, Slovakia).*

TOY for Inclusion addresses exclusion and segregation in ECEC services by creating community-based Play Hubs. These are non-formal, inclusive ECEC spaces where children and families are welcome to play, meet and take part in creative and social activities. So far, eight Play Hubs have been opened in seven EU countries. They are bringing Roma and non-Roma communities together, building parenting skills and improving cooperation between civil society and local agencies (inter-sectoral cooperation). They also build on the strengths of communities with regard to intergenerational learning and parenting competences, strengthen and at the same time improve the capacity of ECEC practitioners with respect to anti-discrimination.

Based on the experience of the past two years, TOY for Inclusion has developed key recommendations for policy and practice. These are meant to inspire others to adopt the TOY for Inclusion approach and start new Play Hubs. They also show and explore the links between the TOY for Inclusion approach and the European policies on education and integration on Roma.

In this interactive workshop, ICDI and ISSA will show a video and present the key results and recommendations of TOY for Inclusion. Participants will be invited to work in groups and reflect on the key elements of the TOY for Inclusion approach and how this could be adapted to their local practice and policy context.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer  
SESSION 3/6**



**Beril Bayrak, Lowell Community Health Center, Intersections LLC, USA**

**Intersections: Promoting Pathways for Social Emotional Wellbeing**

How does an early childhood home visitor support the social-emotional development of a young child in culturally diverse environments? During this workshop, we will present a theoretical framework and a visual map for applying the core principles of infant mental health to clinical practice in order to support social emotional development in culturally diverse environments. The framework offers a transformative relational practice with the use of a care map as a visual guide to help sequence strategies and interventions. The framework is informed by infant mental health concepts including the following models: the Mutual Regulation Model (Ed Tronick); the Buffer Transduction Model (Ed Tronick); the Neuro-sequential Model (Bruce Perry); and the Mentalization Model (Peter Fonagy).

We will introduce participants to these models and discuss how to address parental stressors and enhancers in an integrative framework. We will present the relational strategies that home visitors can use to help support parent-child relationships. Lastly, we will invite participants to think about child development in a neuro-sequential manner and how this integrated thinking might inform their practice. We will summarize by presenting highlights from a recent case study. Questions we would like to discuss with participants include: How would you support the parent-child relationship in the home environment? How would you address parental stressors and parental strengths during the home visit? How would you make care recommendations that are culturally acceptable to and truly achievable by parents? How would you think about the child’s neuro-development when creating a care plan and how would you sequence interventions?

*Co-author: Colleen Ciccarello, Thom Early Intervention, USA*

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer  
SESSION 3/7**

**Facilitator:** Eric Bloemkolk, Stichting SOFT Tulip, The Netherlands

**Elena Kozhevnikova**, Research and Education Center "Biological and Social Foundations of Inclusion", Pavlov Institute of Physiology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russian Federation

**Strand 3**

**Open Space for Everyone**

In 1999, the Parents Club appeared at the St. Petersburg Early Intervention Institute. The idea came from parents at one of the group sessions where children with cerebral palsy and typically developing kids were playing together. 'We can gather in such a way more often and we can organize such meetings ourselves,' decided parents. Thanks to Open Society Institute, it was possible to start.

Since that time, on Thursdays from 6 p.m. there has been a lot of fun at the Institute. The door never closing, parents with children rushed in to meet each other.

Sculpting with mother when both are passionate about this occupation, drawing in the corridor right on the floor with your hands, it is so interesting! Hitting the tambourine in time, repeating the simple words of a song, and making a picture of semolina, all these were offered to children by parents themselves, ready to share their parental experience with others. It was the parents, not the specialists of the Institute who were the initiators of any lecture or meeting, the one that was necessary and important to them.

The main aim of the club was inclusion, an attempt to answer the question 'What will be next? What will happen in the future? How should we help people to accept a child with special needs, not to turn away from her/him, not to take away their own child, not to try to transfer their child to another group of the preschool, if in the group there are such children?' The club members have tried to do things for themselves and to share their experiences with others. They went together for walks, in cafes, and arranged holidays. That's why they called their club 'To Be Together'.

*Co-author: Maksim Struzhkin, Research and Education Center "Biological and Social Foundations of Inclusion", Pavlov Institute of Physiology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russian Federation*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Eric Bloemkolk**, Stichting SOFT Tulip, The Netherlands  
**Anna Kukuza**, Charity Fund Early Intervention Institute, Ukraine

**Strand 3**

**NGOs building a system of Early Childhood Intervention in Ukraine**

This session will highlight the important role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and parents in building good grass-root practices in Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), in creating strong networks with local, national and international partners and in advocating for a quality system of ECI in the country. It will provide participants with an insight into a unique process of building a system of ECI in the complex context of a post-Soviet country.

According a study executed by the Commissioner on the Rights of the Child in Ukraine (September 1, 2016), there were 751 institutions of institutional care and education, of which 39 were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, 132 under the Ministry of Social Policy and 580 under the Ministry of Education and Science. There are an unknown number of institutional care facilities for children established by NGOs and religious organizations. In total, there were 105,783 children in institutions; only 8,741 (8%) are orphaned children or children deprived of parental care; 97,042 (92%) had parents; 18,054 (17%) have disabilities.

Children with disabilities form the most vulnerable group being excluded from society. Children with developmental delays or who are at risk of developing them, who stay with their families, have little chance of an inclusive life, given the fact

that adequate rehabilitation, education and leisure services are scarce, inaccessible or unavailable (especially in the rural areas). Caring for a child with developmental delays in Ukraine is mainly the task of the mother, which seriously hampers her possibilities of personal growth or for having a job. Poverty, isolation, divorce and emotional stress are frequently the result, for mothers and for the family. This is certainly the case in Ukraine for mothers and families with a child with developmental delays from a population of over one million internally displaced persons.

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal  
SESSION 3/8**

**Facilitator:** Deepa Grover, UNICEF, Switzerland

**Bernadette Daelmans, World Health Organization (WHO), Switzerland**



**New WHO guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behavior and sleep for children under 5: how to implement them in early childhood education and care settings**

WHO has recently launched the first ever guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behavior (including recommendations on sedentary screen use) and sleep for children under 5 years of age. These recommendations indicate how much time children should be physically active and how they can have quality sleep, as well as the maximum recommended time spent on sedentary screen-based activities. The guidelines take a 24-hour approach and also recognize the importance of quality sedentary time spent interacting with a caregiver, such as through reading, storytelling, singing or other activities that are so important for early childhood development. As such, they contribute to the Nurturing Care Framework, as well as fulfilling the call for guidance on these behaviors made by the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity.

Early childhood education and care settings provide important opportunities for active play, as well as ensuring adequate rest and relaxation time as part of an overall program. Educators are also important sources of information for parents and caregivers and can support families and children in incorporating physical activity and reducing sedentary screen time in their daily routines. To support the implementation of the guidelines through these settings, WHO is developing a set of global standards. This session will outline the new guidelines and the draft global standards, and serve as an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback and inputs into the development of these standards.

*Co-author: Juana Willumsen, World Health Organization (WHO), Switzerland*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*



**Iskra Stoykova, Trust for Social Achievement Foundation, Bulgaria**

**The promise of nurse home visitors to change the lives of the most disadvantaged children: initial findings from testing the Nurse-Family Partnership in Bulgaria**

Since 2015, Bulgaria has been testing, for the first time in Eastern Europe, one of the world’s most effective home visit programs to target vulnerable groups. This is the Nurse-Family Partnership Program developed by Prof. David Olds of the University of Denver, which has consistently delivered, during multiple randomised control trials, significant improvements in pregnancy outcomes, preventing child abuse and neglect, school readiness and mothers’ life course.

In Bulgaria, the Program has been tested in two sites with first-time pregnant women under the age of 22 of low socio-economic status. They receive about 60 home visits by a nurse or a midwife from early pregnancy until the child turns

two. The first clients of the Program have started to graduate and the implementation team at the Trust for Social Achievement Foundation is ready to share with the wider public the key lessons learnt with respect to adapting the program to the realities of families living in deep poverty as well as the promising results and the insights from working with Roma clients.

The discussion following the presentation will allow for questions on the testing of the Program and the feasibility of applying the Program in other countries with geographically concentrated low-income populations.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**  
**SESSION 3/9**



**Mark Gross, Upriver Solutions, USA**

**Sharing Early Childhood Ecosystems around the World; Early Childhood Development’s (ECD) Power to Change the World**

Through PowerPoint, discussions, and interactive activities, participants will discuss community ecosystems, the relationships ECD has within the ecosystem, and ECD’s impact on the community’s efforts to achieve the United Nation’s 17 Goals for Sustainable Development.

C-QuELL (Community for Quality Early Learning and Literacy), an innovative Kellogg Foundation-funded initiative will be presented. Through C-QuELL, Family Central (a South Florida ECD leader) and the City of Sunrise partnered to expand community awareness of the effect that quality ECD services has on the ecosystem.

C-QuELL has helped ECD/ECE providers and other ecosystem members redefine their shared relationships. It became a paradigm for community engagement with ECD, and ECD engagement with the community. Ecosystem members recognized ECD/ECE’s central role in building a sustainable community; ECD/ECE providers accepted their status as an essential link to the community’s high quality of life. Diverse members of the ecosystem understood that when ECD professionals do good things with their children, they do even more important things for their community. Through C-QuELL, the community realized that ECD/ECE was not just early childhood education, an opportunity to promote child welfare, a way to help children reach full potential, or an altruistic goal. When it is left to governments, practitioners, and parents to solve the challenges that ECD/ECE providers face in providing high-quality services, no long-term solution will occur. With too few available resources, additional non-ECD/ECE investment is critical for the community’s vitality.

Participants will compare key C-QuELL challenges, solutions, and findings with systems in their community. They will work with their peers to discuss the ripples ECD/ECE creates in the ecosystem. They will design ecosystem maps that reflect the ways their home ecosystem perceives, relates to, and finances ECD. They will learn from each other and share challenges and successes their communities have had in reframing ECD’s role.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk**  
**SESSION 3/10**



**Romilla Karnati, Save the Children, USA**



### ***Building Brains: Integrating early stimulation and responsive caregiving into health systems***

The Nurturing Care Framework (NCF) recognizes the critical role multiple sectors play to create an enabling environment to protect, promote and nourish child growth and brain development. In particular, the framework advocates for inter-sectoral collaboration, especially with the health sector responsible for providing nurturing environments in services for young children.

Save the Children developed the *Building Brains* approach to support children’s cognitive development from birth. The *Building Brains* approach focuses on early stimulation and responsive caregiving, designed to be integrated into existing early childhood development (ECD) services delivered through any sector. This session will focus on the experience of integrating ECD into existing health systems, including building capacity of health workers to support caregivers in providing nurturing environments for their children.

In Ghana, through USAID’s Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) existing country-level health and nutrition activities were leveraged to improve interaction between caregivers and children aged from birth to three years old. The ECD technical package was adapted to be contextually relevant for delivery in Ghana and more than 1,500 community health workers were trained to deliver the program through health facilities and existing mother-to-mother support groups. In Nepal, the Ministry of Health’s Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) were trained to deliver the *Building Brains* package, in addition to health and nutrition sessions through home visits and mothers’ groups. In Bhutan, Save the Children partnered with the Ministry of Health to deliver the *Building Brains* approach by training health workers and volunteers. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in evaluating the approach and results of the Randomized Control Trial in Bhutan particularly provide rigorous evidence on the impact of nurturing environments.

Participants will review samples of the *Building Brains* content as well as engage in rich discussions around the successes and challenges of implementing integrated ECD and health programs in Africa and Asia.

*Co-author: Caroline Dusabe, Save the Children, Rwanda*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Romilla Karnati, Save the Children, USA**


 Strand 3

### **From Implementation to Policy: Using Evidence from Save the Children’s Program and Research to Influence Early Childhood Development Policy and Strategies**

Access to quality early childhood development (ECD) services has long-term impact on future learning achievement, incomes, health and development outcomes. In Ghana for example, 19% of children are stunted, although in some regions of the country the rate is as high as 33%. This is largely attributed to weak and inadequate care, stimulation and support in the early childhood period.

In order to reverse this trend, there is a need for evidence-based solutions and approaches to be scaled up, and for governments and non-governmental partners to increase investment and attention to ECD. This will ensure a nurturing environment for the healthy development and wellbeing of children and their families in communities. Parents and other caregivers need access to parenting programs that act to increase knowledge, attitudes, practice and efficacy in early child development.

Save the Children has engaged in robust advocacy and policy influence in multiple countries including Rwanda, Ghana, Bhutan, etc., in order to ensure not only increased attention to ECD but also the scale and sustainability of proven approaches for ensuring children have nurturing environments at home, at school and in the community.

This paper will focus on sharing how Save the Children has used learning and evidence from birth-to-three programming and research to influence national-level policy, strategy and practice by government, non-governmental actors and the private sector. A Call to Action Paper developed and disseminated in Ghana as part of advocacy and policy efforts by the USAID’s Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) will be shared with participants. The paper presentation will also include achievements, findings and practical tips on how to carry out effective advocacy to influence policy and practice in low-income contexts.

*Co-author: Caroline Dusabe, Save the Children, Rwanda*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

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## **MEETING ROOM 11**

### **SESSION 3/11**

**Marjolein Branger**, Leiden University, The Netherlands

**Strand 1**

#### **Context Matters: Maternal and Paternal Sensitivity to Infants in Four Different Settings**

Parental sensitivity reflects parents' ability to accurately interpret and appropriately respond to their children's signals. It is related to a host of positive child outcomes, such as attachment security and adaptive cognitive development. To date, results have been inconsistent as to whether mothers show greater parental sensitivity towards their infant than fathers do.

The context in which sensitivity is measured may play a role in these inconsistent findings, but this has not been examined yet. The aim of the current study was to test context as a source of variability in parental sensitivity, comparing maternal and paternal sensitivity to infants in four different observational settings. Participants included 109 families with their four-month-old infants. Parental sensitivity was observed during a routine caregiving session, a free-play session, and the baseline and reunion of the Still Face Procedure. Results demonstrated that parental sensitivity showed weak to strong stability (correlations) across the four contexts.

Furthermore, overall levels of parental sensitivity were higher in more naturalistic contexts (routine caregiving > free play > Still Face). Lastly, mothers and fathers were equally sensitive across contexts, overall. Our findings highlight the importance of taking context into account when observing parental sensitivity in research as well as in practice. Furthermore, future research should examine the emergence of possible differences in maternal and paternal sensitivity over time.

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

## **Concurrent Sessions 4: 17:00-18:00**

### **MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**

#### **SESSION 4/1**

**Jennifer Jackson**, Victoria University, Australia

**Strand 2**

#### **Qualifications and Social Diversity in the ECEC Workforce**

In many countries, the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce includes personnel with different levels of qualification (including no qualifications, vocational qualifications, and university degrees). As global policy trends push educators' qualification levels upwards, it is worth pausing to consider what benefits this diversely qualified ECEC workforce might offer.

Drawing on recent Australian research, this session raises some provocative questions. Participants will be invited to reflect on and discuss the following, based on their experience in the ECEC field.

- What other dimensions of social diversity are associated with educators' qualifications? The Australian research found that educators' qualifications are associated with broader differences in their social advantage (economic, cultural and social capital). These broader differences have implications for educators' professional learning and practice.
- What are the advantages of a diversely qualified ECEC workforce? Research in schools suggests that socially disadvantaged families can feel uncomfortable engaging with teachers with university degrees. The social diversity of the ECEC workforce may therefore be an asset in engaging with these families, if educators come from similar social backgrounds.
- How can the ECEC workforce pursue professionalization, without losing these advantages? A socially diverse ECEC workforce requires professional-development pathways that build on what educators know, while extending their knowledge and practice. Reflecting on educators' social diversity may be valuable in educators' collaborative professional learning.

Nurturing environments for children in ECEC services are places where every child and family feels welcome. A socially diverse ECEC workforce can be a valuable resource for ensuring that diverse children and families feel like they belong. How can this asset be maintained, while continuing to raise the qualifications and professionalism of the ECEC workforce worldwide?

*Debate on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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## MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal

### SESSION 4/2

**Jan Peeters**, Ghent University, VBJK – Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium

**Ayca Alayli**, VBJK – Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium

**Marilou Hyson**, Consultant at UNICEF, USA



Strand 2

#### **A Workforce Technical Guidance Instrument for ECEC in Low- and Middle-Income Countries**

As low- and lower-middle-income countries (LMIC) take up the pre-primary expansion agenda in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the role of pre-primary workforce development is crucial. There is an urgent need to provide increased support and solutions-oriented guidance to help countries make key decisions about how to conceptualize, navigate, and lead their workforce development efforts.

UNICEF wants to provide practical support and solutions-oriented guidance to LMIC countries in the area of developing or strengthening the cadre of professionals responsible for delivering pre-primary services anchored in play-based learning and teaching methodologies. Countries have many options in decisions within initial training and continuous professional development (for example, stakeholders may disagree on the level of formal education that is both important and realistic, e.g., basic, secondary, tertiary or vocational). A country may value some competences more highly than others; or institutions may lack the capacity to provide pre-service training, but have great potential for in-service provision. As expansion of the pre-primary services take place, countries will need to make important decisions around each one of these elements, so that there is a clear strategy on how to develop and build the pre-primary workforce, so that different pathways consisting of a variety of combinations of the elements above can be considered.

Keeping this in mind, a technical guide has been developed that can be useful to LMIC countries in the process of expanding pre-primary education and developing their pre-primary cadre of professionals. The technical guide is meant to be a 'living guidance,' enriched with promising regional and local examples, but allowing for further enhancements as new practices/pathways for pre-primary teacher development in countries emerge. This tool encompasses a two-fold approach that allows countries to position themselves within both elements of workforce development and stages of progress, providing them with a foundation to further develop their strategies.

In this interactive workshop, participants will get the opportunity to work with the guidance instrument from the perspective of their own context. The group will be divided into smaller working groups and each group will be assisted by one facilitator who has actively participated in the development of this guidance instrument.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer  
SESSION 4/3**

**Margaret Kernan**, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI), The Netherlands  
**Flora Bacso**, Partners Hungary Foundation, Hungary  
**Hanno van Keulen**, Windesheim Flevoland University of Applied Science, The Netherlands



**Putting social and emotional well-being at the center of ECEC practice**

While early education creates an important foundation for academic skills, social skills are actually far more predictive of outcomes into adulthood than early academics. Social and emotional development is a main contributor to successful school transitions and a significant preventative factor of disruptive behavior, and mental health problems. Not paying attention to social and emotional development is harmful to children’s capacity to learn and to thrive. It is also expensive in terms of the socio-economic costs associated with bullying, violence and mental health problems.

*SEED: Social and Emotional Education and Development* is a European project which draws attention to the importance of social and emotional well-being for children’s learning and development. SEED is conducting research and improving Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) practice in Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Norway and the Netherlands. In 2018, SEED researchers in these countries assessed the social and emotional well-being of 1,195 five-year-old children in ECEC settings through interviews with ECEC practitioners. A second focus of the research was to identify the factors in ECEC settings that promote and hinder children’s social and emotional well-being in each of the countries.

Based on the findings of the research, groups of ECEC practitioners in all five countries are being supported to critically reflect on their practice in relation to supporting children’s social and emotional wellbeing in ECEC settings, using the WANDA method developed by VBJK, one of the partners in the project.

The panellists in this discussion are SEED project researchers and trainers from Hungary and the Netherlands. They will share the most important findings of the research. Issues related to how practitioners are looking at aspects of the daily life in the ECEC settings impacting positively and negatively on social and emotional development will also be addressed, based on the Hungarian and Dutch experiences. There will also be time for questions and input from the floor.

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer  
SESSION 4/4**

**Helena Sienaert, Simon Wemel and Barbara Vandorpe**, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium



**Supporting risk-taking in play**

Children spontaneously seek challenges in everyday life. They tend to try things that are slightly more difficult than those they master. There are risks involved in this exploratory nature. Early childhood education and care (ECEC) professionals often struggle with the contradictory demands of their profession: to keep children safe and to encourage them to explore.

The classical training for ECEC professionals teaches them how to make the environment as safe as possible for children. As a result, professionals might show excessive caution. They try to exclude all risks and set rules for what children should (especially not) do. Professionals regularly interrupt children's play, informed by (perceived) danger or by their own fear. 'Beware, watch out, that's dangerous!' is a standard expression, even in situations where there is no acute danger at all. As a result, ECEC professionals often unintentionally limit rich play opportunities for children. Thereby, they overlook the added value of risk-taking in play: children can overcome fear, gain self-confidence and, above all, become more risk competent.

How can ECEC professionals create a challenging environment in which children are encouraged to take the risks they are drawn to and (with the right support) are capable of managing? How can professionals support children during their risk-taking in play while maximizing children's ownership, fun and risk competence? How can professionals support each other to grow in their own competence to evaluate and manage risks during (un)structured activities? And how can they attune themselves to the diverse views of parents and other professionals?

In the RePLAY Toddler research project, a risky play toolbox is being developed in co-creation with professionals from the Flemish ECEC field and policy. Experience your own boundaries, look inside a Flemish daycare center and share your thoughts on risky play during this interactive workshop. You are welcome to participate 'at your own risk'!

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal

### SESSION 4/5

**Facilitator:** [Eleonora Mura](#), Arigatou International, Switzerland

[Shafique Ssekakala](#), Madrasa Early Childhood Programme, Uganda

[Caroline Arnold](#), Aga Khan Foundation / Senior Expert in ECD, UK and Switzerland

[Rashied Omar](#), University of Notre Dame and Imam in Cape Town South Africa, USA and South Africa



Strand 3

### **Strengthening Families in order to Nurture Ethical Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence: Working with Religious Communities**

Nurturing ethical values and spirituality in early childhood contributes in order to foster upbringing practices that support the flourishing of the child, as well as their identity formation, improving their healthy socio-emotional development, their self-esteem, capacity to relate to and empathize with others, learn non-violent alternatives, self-regulate, become resilient and interconnected with others. It helps to create stronger parent-child bonds, as well as safe and empowering environments that reinforce the notion that nurturing care that is needed from parents, caregivers, teachers and communities. It also supports the realization and protection of the rights of the child.

There is evolving evidence that suggests harmful social norms and attitudes can be changed by strengthening those that support non-violent, respectful, nurturing, positive and gender-equal relationships. For this change to happen, it is also essential to engage and mobilize religious leaders together with communities to nurturing, protecting, promoting and supporting families and children in their early years.

Among other community resources, religious actors play a critical role in supporting parents, caregivers, and teachers in fostering values and spirituality in early childhood, and are also uniquely positioned to help communities to challenge structures and social and cultural norms that violate children's human dignity. Interfaith approaches can help to uphold children's rights and contribute to safer environments for children.

As 84% of the world's population associates with a religion, religious communities in collaboration with other partners play a great role in creating nurturing environments for the wellbeing of children. What can religious communities working together do to challenge social and cultural norms that condone violence against children and to prevent harmful

practices? How can CSOs, governments, practitioners and others work closely with religious communities to nurture safe environments for children? What are your recommendations as a practitioner or a scholar? These and other relevant questions will be explored during our discussions.

*Panel discussion*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer  
SESSION 4/6**

**Tetiana van Waveren and Theresa Salzer, Aflatoun International, The Netherlands**

**Strand 2**

**Say ‘Yes’ to CSFE: Child Social and Financial Education**

Aflatot supports early childhood education for sustainable development.

‘Very young children can be taught about the basic benefits and tools of sharing, savings, and purchase that will support good financial habits and practices as children, leading to better managed financial lives as adults, independent spenders and savers.’ (Holden et al., 2009).

Aflatot is a program providing a foundation for children in the pre-school age range (3–6 years old). Research indeed shows that habits of the mind, which lead to positive financial behavior in the future are determined in the first years of life.

Aflatot is therefore:

- a coherent, holistic, comprehensive program that guides the teacher and the child through a learning path that starts from the child’s self-understanding and personal exploration skill and explores the role of the family, friends, community and the monetary world;
- a positive learning experience during preschool years, which lays the foundation for children to reach their full potential;
- an early-childhood curriculum with the foundations for essential life skills and attitudes to change their circumstances and effect a positive transformation on society as a whole.

During our workshop we will:

- present selected content from the Aflatot program, as well as the learning framework;
- familiarize all workshop participants with a few interactive, playful, child-oriented pedagogical approaches and techniques used in the curriculum;
- discuss the approach of the Aflatot Family Toolkit, as a means to help teachers and parents work hand-in-hand to create a comprehensive family engagement strategy, looking at learning as part of the daily routine.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer  
SESSION 4/7**

**Alice Wong, OneSky, Hong Kong  
Janice Cotton, OneSky, USA**

**Strand 2**

**OneSky Home-Based Care Training Program**

In Vietnam, there are 1.2 million children of migrant workers employed in 300 industrial parks. The rising population of migrant workers has exposed the lack of affordable quality childcare, leaving parents who work in factories few childcare

options except minimally regulated, low-quality, home-based care. Home-care providers often have little understanding of child development and this negatively impacts children’s development.

OneSky, a non-profit organization with 20 years’ experience in early intervention for vulnerable children, launched a training program in collaboration with the Department of Education for 80 home-based care providers in Danang. The goal was to test a model for preparing caregivers to provide responsive care that nurtures children’s development.

In this session, an overview of this nine-month training program will be presented. The components provided were: 1) twenty classroom trainings; 2) bi-monthly visits by trainers to home centers to coach providers on best practices; and 3) an online learning platform supporting OneSky’s blended-learning approach. Monitoring of the program included classroom training reports, trainers’ home visit observation notes, and provider surveys. Initial conclusions on the pilot program and how they impact expansion in 2019 will be shared during this session.

After this overview, discussions among participants will focus on the benefits and challenges of using a multi-pronged approach to training childcare providers, with a focus on on-site coaching by trainers and the use of distance learning or social media platforms to extend and reinforce learning. Possible solutions to challenges will be generated. In addition, participants will discuss how to keep home providers interested and engaged in learning beyond the classroom setting. Attendees should leave with a deeper understanding of approaches for training home childcare providers and possible solutions to challenges that arise.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal  
SESSION 4/8**

**Josette Hoex**, Nederlands Jeugdinstituut (Netherlands Youth Institute), The Netherlands

**Simon Hay**, KindeRdam, The Netherlands

**Erik Jan de Wilde**, Nederlands Jeugdinstituut (Netherlands Youth Institute), The Netherlands



**Talking about quality: the most important step for improvement!**

The main issue for every professional in childcare is providing high-quality care and education for children. A lot of time and effort is being spent on structural improvement, inspections and research regarding the quality of childcare, but the question for the single childcare organizations remains: is the quality of our childcare good (enough)?

In the Dutch ‘commercial’ childcare system, all centers have to deal with parents in their role as clients, and with colleague-organizations as competitors. Besides having to deliver good-quality care and education for the children, childcare organizations are obliged to explain their pedagogical goals and how they think they will achieve these goals.

Since 2016, Childcare Organization KindeRdam from Rotterdam and the Netherlands Youth Institute (NJI) have invested in the construction of a monitor, *Pedagogische Praktijk in Beeld* (PPIB), that generates quantitative data to provide insight into the quality of daily pedagogical practice. It facilitates professionals (team leaders, pedagogical coaches, HRM) to strengthen their pedagogical practice in a positive way.

During observation of the group, the observer rates the pedagogical climate using PPIB, preferably on a tablet. The content of PPIB is exactly the same as the instrument used by (most of) the childcare inspectors. Via a personalized login on the PPIB, the observer can enter data straight away, and generate a report. The report is an interactive presentation of the results which serves as input for discussion with team members: what results make you proud, what are points of improvement, how the results compare to results of observation(s) you did before, how the results of your group compare to other groups in your organization. It gives everyone, from childcare educators to managers, insight into and feedback on the return of investment in pedagogical quality.

The discussion about pedagogical quality with your colleagues, your coach, the inspector and parents is of great significance. Talking about quality is the first and most important step for improvement!

We will gladly show you the opportunities that this monitoring tool has for your work. It goes without saying that there will be ample time for discussion.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**  
**SESSION 4/9**

**Francesca Vezzini**, Generali Foundation / The Human Safety Net onlus, Italy  
**Giorgio Tamburlini**, Centro per la Salute del Bambino onlus, Italy

**Strand 3**

**Beyond indicators: using a theory of change in designing and evaluating projects addressing children and families in their communities**

When designing a project and indicating monitoring and evaluation (M&E) indicators, the usual approach is to identify a list of expected input, activity and output measures: for example, the number of children and/or caregivers involved, the proportion of children under five years old whose development is as expected for their age. Of course, these indicators are necessary. However, they do not provide any insight into the assumptions implicitly made on the process steps which are supposed to lead to results.

To allow a sensible development of an intervention, and to conduct an evaluation exercise capable of producing lessons to improve the project design and possibly re-orientate its objectives, a theory of change (ToC)/log frame is needed, where each causal step along the sequence from activity to expected outcomes is assessed to identify possible (a priori) or identified (a posteriori) barriers and facilitators. Such an approach is particularly relevant for programs and projects aimed at providing nurturing environments for children and families within their communities.

In these contexts, the different types of inputs (workshops with children and their caregivers, ECD corners, parental education classes, etc.) may lead to quite different impacts in terms of parental information empowerment and practices, depending on the quality, the intensity and other intervention features. It is therefore crucial to assess, by mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative), the extent to which the different assumptions have been realized and which factors influenced the result. Examples of a ToC framework applied to projects addressing disadvantaged children in their early years and their families will be described, in order to stimulate discussion and an exchange of experiences.

The objective of the session is to build awareness of the usefulness of adopting a ToC log frame approach, not only for M&E purposes, but also for learning and designing interventions.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk**  
**SESSION 4/10**

**Krenare Lleshi**, Caritas Switzerland, Kosovo  
**Shukrije Lecaj**, Caritas Switzerland, Kosovo  
**Ivana Srepfler**, Caritas Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Strand 2**

**What are the main ingredients of creating stimulating environments where all pre-school children flourish?**

What do stimulating environments in pre-primary education look like? Is the best infrastructure sufficient for cultivating the learner's development, interest and curiosity? Or are there other crucial ingredients to be taken into account? This



presentation will answer these questions by providing an overview of the work being carried out by Caritas Switzerland both in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina where it has contributed to quality enhancement in pre-primary education. Two countries, two contexts, similar needs, and similar, yet, distinct approaches in creating opportunities for all children to grow and flourish. In this session, participants will have the chance to learn more about the work of CACH Kosovo in pre-primary education which has been taking place over the past ten years. Simultaneously, they will find out how CACH Bosnia and Herzegovina adjusted the accumulated experience and practice to their own context and needs. Through the projects implemented in both these countries, particular attention is paid in creating suitable learning environments and preparing teachers to maximize the potential of such settings. These two aspects will be at the center of the presentation, and a follow-up discussion will allow participants to compare and contrast the experiences coming from these two countries with their own context.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 11

### SESSION 4/11

**Alodia Santos, World Vision International, Philippines**



Strand 1

#### **Integrated Community Nutrition, Early Childhood Stimulation for the Improved Recovery of Children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition in Sudan – a Quasi Experiential Study**

In low-income countries, more than half of children under five years of age do not reach their full developmental potential due to malnutrition and poverty. Global acute malnutrition in Sudan is 16%, where childhood stimulation and protection from toxic stress remain un-prioritized. The literature suggests that integrated community health and nutrition and early childhood development (ECD) interventions have an amplified impact on child physical and psycho-social development. World Vision Sudan has implemented an integrated nutrition and ECD programme for 6–59 month-old children with moderate, acute malnutrition (MAM), assessing the effectiveness on their recovery rates. During the program, parental practices promoting age-appropriate play and communication, affectionate, sensitive and responsive parent-child interaction, and toy-making were integrated into the community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) program platforms. At supplementary feeding centers, the trained community volunteers conducted bi-weekly parental group sessions on ECD, toy making, in addition to nutrition and healthcare. They also paid weekly home visits for individualized support for parents to apply key nutrition and ECD practices. Randomly selected children (6–59 months) with MAM were assigned to control groups, receiving CMAM (n=213), and the intervention group receiving CMAM plus ECD (n=214) for a six-month period to assess their impact on nutrition outcomes.

A statistically significant difference was detected for the following: increased recovery rate; decreased defaulter and non-recovered rates; reduced length-of-stay for MAM treatment; and increased weight-gain/per day in CMAM+ECD group versus CMAM group.

It can be stated that combined nutrition and early childhood development (ECD) interventions for moderately acute malnourished children has a beneficial effect on malnutrition recovery rates. ECD integration is feasible, low-cost and requires minimum resources for integration and delivery. Further studies in similar contexts are needed to explore their impact on ECD outcomes, and for scaling up in other similar contexts.

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Alodia Santos, World Vision International, Philippines**

**Promoting Holistic Child Development in the Vulnerable Communities in West Bank, Palestine: a Quasi-experimental Study on Integrated ECD Model Effectiveness**

In Palestine, most communities don't have access to basic, quality health, and early childhood development (ECD) services, given the political environment, border closures and extreme poverty affecting young children's growth and development. Leveraging on maternal, child health and nutrition programming, World Vision in West Bank (WVWB) have integrated ECD into the Targeted Counseling (ttC) household model and the Community Action Groups (CAGs) community-level model, targeting pregnant women and children under 12 months old, to nurture the child's holistic development.

Key practices and behaviors on responsive caregiving, early learning, child safety and protection, maternal mental health support, have been integrated into ttC household visits. The trained Community Volunteers conducted monthly home visits to promote/support: maternal healthcare, including mental health; early identification of depression; support/coaching of mothers for playful, mother-child interaction; and age-appropriate child health, nutrition and development. The community action groups integrated ECD into their agenda to create an enabling environment for child holistic development at the community level. WVWB conducted research in Northern and Southern areas, comparing the ttC package with ttC plus ECD package in regards to MMH, child nutrition, health and developmental outcomes.

The research revealed a statistically significant change in the ECD plus ttC group: scoring higher on the Maternal Postnatal Attachment Scale compared to the ttC group; children having better communication, social-emotional, gross motor development compared to the ttC group; reduction in maternal depression levels compared to the ttC group. An integrated MNCH and ECD approach is feasible, effective in promoting children's holistic development, especially in areas where access to services is poor. The ttC plus ECD approach needs to be scaled up in the most vulnerable communities, in partnership with the Ministry of Health for sustainability.

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**DAY TWO: June 19<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday**

**Concurrent Sessions 5: 9:00-10:00**

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**

**SESSION 5/1**

**Facilitator:** Margaret Kernan, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI), The Netherlands

**Margaret Kernan, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI), The Netherlands**

**TOY for Quality: a tool to assess and improve intergenerational practice**

Intergenerational learning is actually the oldest method of learning. It is informal and multi-generational and typically involves learning that takes place naturally as part of day-to-day social life. A more formal definition of intergenerational

learning, which captures today's usage of the term is: 'a learning partnership based on reciprocity and mutuality involving people of different ages where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge' (ENIL, European Network for Intergenerational Learning).

Many early-years settings facilitate intergenerational learning on a small scale through occasional visits to local care homes for older adults or hosting grandparent days. During these visits, children and adults share experiences and have fun together. However, these one-off visits often happen without attention to the research on intergenerational learning or what constitutes good-quality practice.

This presentation will describe the TOY (Together Old and Young) for Quality Program. A central component of TOY for Quality is a participatory process of reflection, discussion and action leading to improved quality in intergenerational learning initiatives involving young children and older adults.

TOY for Quality has been developed by an international team of practitioners, researchers and policy makers and is based on research conducted in ten European countries (see [www.toyproject.net](http://www.toyproject.net)). In addition to supporting improvements in the quality of existing intergenerational initiatives and services, TOY for Quality is also intended to provide organizations with a method to enhance planning in the field of intergenerational learning and to raise awareness at the local and national levels about intergenerational learning as an area of professional and social action.

Through jointly viewing and discussing photos and video material from TOY actions involving young children (aged 0–8) and older adults, participants in this session will have the opportunity to explore what constitutes quality in intergenerational learning. They will also be introduced to key elements of the TOY for Quality Program and understand its relevance for the settings and contexts where they work.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*


 Strand 3

**Neeru Bhatnagar and Chirashree Ghosh, Mobile Creches, India**

**Community Engagement – from words to reality**

*'When survival is the pressing need with marginalized sections of the society, childcare becomes the least priority area leading to poor child indicators.'*

Mobile Crèche (MC), with its 50 years of experience has evolved its model on community engagement for nurturing families and communities in various vulnerable settings. This includes greater awareness and family-based intervention to adopt quality childcare practices. MC also facilitates linkages to access government services, create awareness and empower community groups to support and demand quality state provisions. It also influences the policy makers through alliance building with child rights and overlapping issue-based networks to bring transformation in the entire ECD ecosystem.

In India, 60 million children are still below the poverty line; 20% are emaciated, 43% are underweight and 48% children are stunted. Almost 80% are anaemic and 57 out of 1,000 children die before the age of four. We understand the importance of strengthening families' and caregivers' capacity to tackle malnutrition and improve upon the child indices. An enabling environment is needed: policies, programs and services that give families, parents and caregivers the knowledge and resources to provide nurturing care for young children. 'Community Engagement' is a key part of this environment, which must also consider the diversity of children and families.

The above model has been tried and tested in direct interventions, in partnership with government and other like-minded civil society organizations. MC has also developed standard operating procedures for community engagement that are customized to addressing the local context and culture. There is evidence of success while replicating and scaling up this model in different settings with migrant and settled populations across the country. It also has potential for learning and scaling up in similar contexts across emerging economies.

This approach has a positive effect on young children in terms of their being able to survive, thrive and realize their full potential in societal transformation, by creating enabling environments, strong monitoring systems and accountability mechanisms.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

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**MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal  
SESSION 5/2**

**Frank Gobel and Janneke Hagenaar**, Bureau Kwaliteit Kinderopvang (BKK)  
– Foundation for Quality in Childcare, The Netherlands



**Strand 2**

**What are your tastes? Exchanging recipes for a nurturing environment**

To create a nurturing environment for this workshop, and just for fun, we will serve small portions of typical Dutch food, in three courses.

During the short first course, the participants will introduce themselves.

Then, during the second course, we will discuss a subject that is important in early childhood services, like ‘healthy lifestyles’ or ‘attachment’. BKK will introduce the subject, explaining developments in the Netherlands, like new legislation and the scientifically based ‘curriculum for the young child’. The participants are then invited to formulate their opinion on aspects of the subject, using sources like pictures and quotes (some will be present), information found on the web, their own professional experience and maybe other sources.

The perspective of the practitioner will be that of leader, because (s)he is the key person when it comes to creating a nurturing environment. Using this perspective, participants can come to opinions like ‘we should only offer the children water and tea in our school’, ‘every meal should be prepared with the help of children in the daycare center’, ‘children should decide for themselves the moment when they want to eat’, etc. Participants will be motivated to surpass the idea that ‘we always work like that, so that must be the best way’. Peer learning like interaction, collaboration and mutual support, are important in the workshop. We will end the second course with a short sharing of some of the opinions.

The third, short, course will be used to introduce another theme and start exploring it.

Participants will be provided with place mats to make notes on.

The overall message will be: ‘prepare your nurturing environment with attention’.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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**MEETING ROOM 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer  
SESSION 5/3**

**Marko Pecak**, Roma Education Fund, Hungary



**Strand 3**

**Early Childhood Development Initiatives for Sustainable Results**

The purpose of the workshop is to share information on new developments and approaches of three international initiatives supporting the Early Childhood Development of Roma children to identify joint advocacy efforts for policy development.

During the session, the Roma Education Fund, ISSA and Eurochild will present their main activities and how they influence ECD practices at the international and national levels with the aim of building on each other’s work, identifying opportunities for partnership and harmonizing advocacy priorities.

The audience will have the opportunity to learn and discuss with the presenters the opportunities of a Europe-wide campaign on ECD. The campaign will specifically focus on leveraging EU funds and policy influence to support member-state investment in ECD, looking at which ECD interventions reduce the gap in outcomes for children in the lowest socio-economic quintile, and particularly vulnerable groups of children and families.

A major challenge will be to explain the relevance of ECD policies and investment at EU level given its limited legal competence in health, social and education policies at country level. How do core EU competencies such as monetary policy in the Euro zone, fiscal and economic coordination, and employment policies impact ECD? Having a focused policy intervention to support ECD is also about preventing the counter-productive impacts of broader socio-economic EU-driven policies, which may risk undermining public investment and exacerbating inequality.

In addition, the presenters will share some different approaches of national advocacy efforts, relying on the civil sector and on the power of community.

*Co-author: Anasztazia Nagy, Roma Education Fund, Hungary*

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer  
SESSION 5/4**

**Facilitator:** [Jerneja Jager](#), Step by Step Centre for Quality in Education  
– Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

[Suna Hanoz-Penney](#), Mother Child Education Foundation (ACEV), Turkey

**Strand 1**

**The Early Childhood Peace Consortium and an Impact Evaluation of a Turkish Parenting Intervention in Lebanon: Overcoming structural Disadvantage**

This session will link early childhood development and sustainable peace building in the global context, with the hope of translating for use in other countries.

It will start by introducing the Early Childhood Peace Consortium (ECPC), which emerged from an effort involving four agencies: UNICEF; Yale University, the Mother and Child Education Foundation (AÇEV); and the John E. Fetzer Institute. These agencies, individually engaged in finding links between early childhood interventions and peacebuilding, realized the potential of joining forces to create a much larger impact on the world community. The ECPC partners “create a legacy of sustained peace, drawing on the transformative power of early child development” and incorporate the broader social context in the promotion of evidence-based early childhood programming for social cohesion, justice, and peace. The ECPC is at the vanguard of creating transformative solutions to one of the greatest issues plaguing the world community – that of increased violence and conflict. An ACEV speaker will share the Turkish model of fostering social-cohesion and safe networks of support for children and families, aiming to provide a concrete example of an evidence-based program of implementation and research.

Children in refugee camps and peri-urban contexts are often exposed to risk factors which include poverty and overcrowding, among others. A randomized controlled trial has been conducted, assessing the impact of a school readiness and parenting intervention (MOCEP – Mother Child Education Program) designed by ACEV. Previous research has found that the program fostered children’s resilience by supporting stable and positive relationships between them and their parents, among other mechanisms. Using a mixed-methods approach, Yale University’s researchers have explored the impact of the Program on maternal, child, and community levels, associated with resilience in these structurally disadvantaged contexts. Participants are invited to discuss the impacts of ECD services on social cohesion and their implications for practice and policy.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Jerneja Jager, Step by Step Centre for Quality in Education**  
 – Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

### **Observation and Reflective Discussion: a Strategy for Deepening the Understanding of Pedagogical Concepts and Building Professional Learning Communities**

One of the activities with which the Step by Step Network for Changing Quality supports professional development of early childhood education and care (ECEC) practitioners is practice observation with a follow-up reflective discussion. This activity involves not only the observed ECEC practitioners, but also a group of peers and the organization's management staff. We have created a model approach of using observation tool to establish a common understanding of the quality pedagogy on a chosen focus area, followed with a reflective discussion as one of the approaches for building professional learning communities (PLCs).

The aim of this activity is to emphasize the value of observation in educational practice, as a strategy for deepening the understanding of pedagogical concepts and a manner of gaining authentic 'study material'. This material is key for ECEC practitioners to reflect on their own practice and design action plans, which serve to improve their work. Practising observations, followed by reflective discussion, is one of the approaches of establishing and strengthening PLCs at the organisation level. On one hand, by confronting practitioners with questions, such as: whether I take into consideration all families equally; what my everyday interactions with children and families are; how I support each child's development; do I take into consideration families' expectations for their children, etc. is an effective strategy for deepening their understanding of pedagogical concepts (and building PLCs), thus enabling them to develop nurturing environments for all children and their families. On the other hand, building PLCs develops supportive and nurturing environment for ECEC professionals.

Participants will learn about our experiences in developing and using this strategy as a way to deepen the understanding of pedagogical concepts and building a PLC, as well as about the observation tool which is used during observation and follow-up reflective discussion, developed based on the ISSA Professional Development Tool for Improving Quality of Practice (grounded in the ISSA's Competent Educators for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, a policy document that proposes ISSA's Definition of Quality Pedagogy).

The discussion with participants will focus on their experiences in deepening the understanding of pedagogical concepts which provides for nurturing environments for all children and their families, and also in the development of PLCs, providing for nurturing environments for ECEC professionals.

*Co-author: Mateja Rezek, Step by Step Centre for Quality in Education – Educational Research Institute, Slovenia*

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

### **MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal** **SESSION 5/5**

**Saar Wittevrongel and Ann Colombie, City of Ghent, Belgium**

### ***In the Picture*: a Hands-on tool for Observation of Children in Afterschool Programs and Communication with Parents**

*In the Picture* is a child observation and tracking instrument developed by the City of Ghent for children in out of school care (aged 2.5–12). Observing and following children in time, focusing on their well-being and involvement is key to this instrument. It is a hands-on tool for everyday use and provides an individual 'portrait' of every child based on observations of their behavior in different key-areas of their development.

*In the Picture* is also a helpful and supportive tool for reflection on the quality of care. It is built upon a reflection cycle: starting from concrete observations of a child, interpreting the behavior of the child in team, formulating actions to optimize the wellbeing of the child by adjusting the environment, activities, guidance style, organization and atmosphere,

and finally going back to observing the effect of the actions on the behavior of the child. Moreover, the portrait helps child minders to communicate with parents.

In this workshop, we present the instrument and through interactive discussions and reflective exercises, you will obtain information on using it, reflecting on its use, and receive tips for the implementation in your organization.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer  
SESSION 5/6**

**Karima Grant, ImagiNation Afrika, Senegal**

**Strand 3**

**Engaging Communities, Building Ecosystems: Innovative Early Childhood Advocacy in Dakar, Senegal**

What engages the attention of three year olds in their community? What is their lived experience as young citizens? How can their experiences be shared dynamically with a larger community for advocacy efforts?

Sub-Saharan African cities are experiencing explosive growth and some of the most rapid rates of urbanization in the world. Senegal in particular, on the westernmost tip of the continent, has seen its urban population almost double in the last few decades, rising from 23% in 1960 to 43% in 2013, and is projected to reach 60% by 2030. Yet, armed with this knowledge, major cities such as Dakar have not studied the impact on young children, and have not developed solutions to ensure that they can thrive and meet their full potential in these rapidly urbanizing spaces. To fully grasp which interventions could have the most impact for young children, we first need to tackle one of the major gaps facing rapidly urbanizing African cities: the lack of data and how to make that data accessible to affected communities.

ImagiNation Afrika, a Dakar-based NGO with the support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation and YUX, a user experience design technology company, set about gathering this critical data on the lived experiences of young children and their caregivers in Dakar. In addition to focus group interviews with community workers, parents, city officials, nutrition specialists and other key actors, ImagiNation Afrika followed three year olds Antou, Amadou and Soukeyna on video across three neighborhoods in Dakar as they went about their activities in the company of their caregivers. This workshop will use video to share innovative approaches to engaging communities and building ecosystems in support of children, including community co-creation workshops and interactive community exhibitions for children and adults. Workshop participants will examine the project's major outcomes and use ImagiNation Afrika's approach to design their own creative advocacy toolkits for their communities.

*Co-author: Chakera McIntosh, ImagiNation Afrika, Senegal*

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer  
SESSION 5/7**

**Facilitator: Manon Grevinga, TNO, The Netherlands**

**Manon Grevinga, TNO, The Netherlands**

### **Engaging parents in the process of monitoring the development of children**

In the Netherlands, the Dutch Developmental Instrument (DDI; in Dutch: Van Wiechenschema) is used by the Youth Health Care to routinely monitor the development of children. The objectives of the DDI are to systematically monitor the development of young children and to actively engage parents in this process. In other projects related to the DDI, we further develop the D-score, a quantitative measure that summarizes the development of a child, and investigate the potential of providing parents feedback on the DDI.

In a pilot study, we explored the possibilities of DDI assessment by parents. The aim was to investigate the experience of parents with the assessment of the development of their child, as well as to evaluate the agreement between parental scores and professional scores.

Parents with children aged 1–15 months filled in a questionnaire in which they were asked to assess a subset of the DDI milestones (N = 305, response 69%). Secondly, parents were asked about their experience with the self-assessment. Professionals assessed the DDI milestones as usual and their scores were compared to the scores of parents. 92% of parents indicated that they enjoyed assessing the milestones. Some parents indicated that the assessment gave them a new perspective on the development of their child. Moreover, the agreement in scores between parents and professionals appeared to be promising. Not all milestones were understood by parents, and more modern instructions such as short video clips, were suggested.

Our pilot study showed that parents enjoyed assessing the developmental milestones of their child and their new perspective on child development could contribute to more nurturing environments at home. Currently, we are conducting a large sample follow-up study in which we use video instructions on the DDI milestones for parents.

In the workshop, we will showcase some of the videos. Furthermore, we would like to exchange ideas with participants on how to optimally employ the videos to create more nurturing environments, both inside and outside the Netherlands. Moreover, we would like to discuss how our plans to give parents background information, or even feedback, on the development of their child could help create more nurturing environments.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Kimberly Alarcon-Rojas, Universidad Marcelino Champagnat, Peru**

### **Creating a nurturing environment for children in Ventanilla, Peru: a report of the use of rituals**

Families play a very important role in the protection, regulation and nutrition of children from their early days. With the high rates of childhood anaemia in Peru, the nutrition factor has focused mainly on improving the nutritional status of children from zero to five years old with national strategies like the provision of iron supplements. Less emphasis has been placed over the affective aspect of nutrition, which is also key for optimal child development.

This type of nutrition often goes unnoticed not only for decision makers in early childhood development policies, but also for parents or primary caregivers, especially in vulnerable populations, who require access to practical and useful quality information that allows them to generate the conditions for a safe and nurturing environment for their children. Nowadays, there is plenty of information online about the fulfilment of these characteristics, but they need to be adapted to the context of the families and, above all, they need to be put close to those whose access to quality information on the internet is limited.

Acknowledging this gap, I will share the experience of six work sessions with volunteer families in the district of Ventanilla, Peru, who were provided with ideas and alternatives to create a set of rituals to nurture their children with affection. These sessions were prepared using relevant information based on evidence about techniques of care and stimulation according to the age of the child aged from birth to five years old. In addition, I will share the results of this experience as an additional approach to understand better the factors that favor or limit the creation of nurturing environments for



children within families in vulnerable areas of Ventanilla, one of the districts in Peru that shows a high percentage of unsatisfied basic needs.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal**  
**SESSION 5/8**

**Jan Peeters**, Ghent University, VBJK – Centre for Innovations in the Early Years, Belgium

**Ana Janelidze**, UNICEF, Georgia

**Olha Dolinina**, UNICEF, Ukraine

**Tanja Rankovic**, UNICEF, Serbia

**Strand 2**

**An analysis of the quality of the early childhood services in Serbia, Georgia, Armenia and Ukraine**

In this panel discussion with representatives of four countries from Europe and Central Asia (Serbia, Armenia, Ukraine and Georgia), we will focus on early childhood education and care (ECEC) services as nurturing environments for vulnerable children. In all four countries, governments have taken important measures to improve the pre-school education context. UNICEF and Open Society Foundations have greatly supported this process, an example being the research on quality undertaken in all four countries using the European Quality Framework. Similar research has already been carried out between 2015 and 2016 in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro. More than 500 persons (policymakers, trainers, stakeholders, and with teachers' and parents' organizations) participated in interviews and focus groups in Serbia, Armenia, Ukraine and Georgia. During site visits, teachers, parents and children were consulted in discussions. An analysis of reports and policy documents in the four countries complemented the field research.

Using the results of this study, the panellists will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various aspects of the nurturing environments for vulnerable children. Concrete recommendations deriving from the research study on accessibility, workforce, curriculum, monitoring and evaluation and governance will be part of the moderated discussion with panellists and participants. Similarities and differences with other post-communist countries will also be explored with participants. Concrete questions to the panel members will be addressed on how the ECEC can contribute in middle-income countries to modelling inclusive, respectful and nurturing relationships among children, families and professionals.

*Panel discussion*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**  
**SESSION 5/9**

**Eva Deak and Flora Bacso**, Partners Hungary Foundation, Hungary

**Strand 2**

**Building stronger communities with restorative practices**

Restorative practices is a social science that focuses on building strong communities that are capable of making decisions and resolving conflicts on a participatory basis. Restorative practices range from informal to more formal tools, to prevent and tackle incidents that occur in various communities. When used systematically, these practices help to restore relationships, repair harm, reduce violence and bullying and strengthen communities.

In this workshop, we will explore the power of affective statements and restorative questions that can provide teachers and caregivers the foundations of a safe and caring environment even at challenging times.

Nurturing environments include creating open and accepting atmosphere even at tough times, when challenging behaviors occur. Punishment might seem an effective response to disruptive behavior but more and more studies show that they affect relationships in a negative way. Also, punishment teaches children how to avoid consequences rather than how to avoid bad decisions in the future. How can we talk about disruptive behavior without putting punishment in the focus? Real change can occur when the affected members of a community (victims, offenders and their respective supporters: family members, friends, other community members) come together to discuss how everyone has been affected by what happened and, when possible, to decide how to repair the harm and meet their own needs.

In our workshop, we plan to engage participants through real-life examples from kindergarten and school settings, explore how informal and formal restorative practices can be of help in preserving the relationship in difficult situations with children, parents and fellow practitioners.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## **MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk**

### **SESSION 5/10**

**Lynne Truelove and Sally Pearse, Sheffield Hallam University, UK**

**Strand 2**

#### **Nurturing Early Years Teachers to nurture children**

For the last four years, we have embedded practical relational pedagogy in our initial teacher-training program to build positive relationships and support the social and emotional learning of our Early Years trainee teachers. These nurturing approaches model the way we want our trainees to work with young children, families and communities.

To assess the impact of this work, we undertook a small-scale research project which used recorded promoted conversations between pairs of trainees which revealed powerful insights into how this approach was received. Relational pedagogy is a method of working with children which incorporates the growing understanding of the neuroscience behind feelings of safety and readiness to learn and how this can be developed through positive, consistent relationships. Our experience of training teachers has informed our view that this form of relational pedagogy is as relevant to Early Years Initial Teacher Training as it is to early years practice. Our qualitative research project explored how the practical relational pedagogy that we encourage trainee teachers to use in practice is embedded in our teacher training. The strategies used have included attuning to trainee needs, validating feelings, providing containment and, when necessary, calming and soothing to promote optimal social engagement.

Initial indications are that embedding this approach has had a positive impact on retention, engagement and trainee feedback. This was confirmed through the Listening Rooms approach, whereby two participants who know each other well, are put together and provided with prompt cards to support an hour-long discussion on relevant aspects of their training experience. Their conversations were recorded and subjected to group thematic analysis.

We will present a brief overview of the elements of practical relational pedagogy embedded in our course and the impact this has had on trainees. We welcome the thoughts and ideas of our international colleagues, and pose these questions for discussion.

- How can we model nurturing care for trainee practitioners / teachers?
- What are the relational skills required for nurturing care?
- Can relational skills be taught?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 11**  
**SESSION 5/11**

**Facilitator:** **Salman Ali**, Rupani Foundation, Pakistan

**Strand 3**

**Gianluca Merlo**, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche Istituto per le Tecnologie Didattiche, Italy

**Monitoring the English reading and spelling skills and off-task behavior of children with ADHD using the AHA Augmented Reality System: a pilot project**

The AHA Augmented Reality (AR) Pilot Project system is an innovative online Web-AR application designed to deploy and measure both learning and behavioral observation processes, tested on children diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 8–12 years old. Initially, a clinical assessment determines the learning profile of the participating students and then tracks and measures the students’ performance using AR with an online educational program to provide research data for the potential use of AR content. The AHA system was developed to examine whether AR can help students to stay focused, make fewer mistakes and finish learning assignments at school, as well as at home. The ultimate goal of this project is to investigate whether AR can make a positive impact and contribute to the creation of nurturing environments at home and school for students diagnosed with ADHD. The AHA system integrates two separate educational tools.

1. The online WordsWorthLearning© reading and spelling program has been ‘augmented’ with image-based AR objects, designed to provide 3D animated aids to enhance students’ attention and learning engagement (e.g. learning speech sounds, syllabication and unique reading and spelling rules).
2. The behavioral monitoring tool based on the adaptation of WHAAM to allow parents and teachers to participate in the observational and teaching process. Parents and teachers use the monitoring system to facilitate formative evaluations about their children’s literacy and engagement progress using the data collected during the Project, at home and school respectively.

The results of pilot project will give indications to teachers in the classroom and to parents at home with the management of learning and attention disorder of children with ADHD. The AHA system creates a web-based virtual community as a tool to support the learning of English, both as a mother tongue and as a foreign language.

*Co-authors: Giuseppe Chiazzese, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche Istituto per le Tecnologie Didattiche, Italy  
Eleni Mangina, University College of Dublin, Ireland  
Rita Treacy, Words Worth Learning Limited, Ireland*

*Poster presentation  
Duration: 30 minutes*

**Strand 3**

**Waseem Samad and Salman Ali**, Rupani Foundation, Pakistan

**Agah-Walidain (Informed Parents) Rupani Foundation**

Rupani Foundation is a non-governmental organization established in 2007, which aims at creating employment opportunities, promoting equity participation, and reducing poverty in the marginalized communities of Pakistan. RF’s focuses on Early Childhood Development and Skills Development for improving socio-economic conditions for the people living in inaccessible areas. So far, Rupani Foundation has established a wide range of early childhood development (ECD) learning and resource centers in remote areas of Gilgit Baltistan and Sindh, Pakistan, with the help of communities and other stakeholders.

ECD interventions are cross-sectoral in nature, requiring integration across multiple sectors, including health, nutrition, early stimulation, education and child protection. Equally important is the inclusion of parents, family members and communities at large to ensure the holistic and optimal development and growth of children. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2017 revealed that only 22% of children aged 3–4 were attending pre-school in Gilgit-

Baltistan; in addition, health and nutrition indicators showed that 46% of children were severely or moderately stunted, with one in every five being underweight. Coupled with conventional child-rearing practices, unfriendly home and community environments, and limited learning and stimulation facilities, the problem intensifies for children living on the periphery.

The Rupani Foundation flagship Agah-Walidain program focuses on providing lasting solutions targeting or involving vulnerable segments of society including expectant and lactating mothers and their infants, from conception to three years of age along with grandparents, other family members, and communities at large through cost-effective, sustainable and multi-sectoral models in early childhood care and development. Focusing on the crucial first 1,000 days of life, home and community-based intervention will work on the holistic development of children by creating early-learning and stimulation facilities, improving parenting and nurturing skills, sensitizing communities to basic health and nutrition. The programs encompass marriage counselling, prenatal care, health and nutrition, family counselling, informed parenting, child rights and protection, and community awareness.

The Foundation initiated a community-based approach by involving local organizations in implementing the model. Support in terms of full resources including teaching and learning materials, the physical environment, along with technical training for the teaching staff and continued academic support are provided by the Foundation; whereas the community-based organizations take responsibility for running and managing the day-to-day affairs of the center at the level of the village.

*Poster presentation*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

## Concurrent Sessions 6: 11:45-12:45

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**

**SESSION 6/1**

**Nektarios Stellakis**, University of Patras, Greece

**Rojena Tatour**, Refugee Trauma Initiative, Greece

**Strand 2**

### **Planting the Seeds of Hope**

During this session, two programs for young refugee children in Greece, supported by the Early Childhood Program at the Open Society Foundations will be presented.

The first programme is the 'Early Childhood Education on Greek Islands' program. It took place in four Aegean islands (Leros, Samos, Chios and Lesbos) during the summer of 2018 and was enabled by a partnership between ISSA and the University of Patras. The main purpose was to offer an educational program based on play, warm interactions, creativity, language and early literacy learning to young refugee children who reside in Reception, Identification and Hospitality Centers. When public kindergartens were closed during the summer, students from the Early Childhood Education Department of the University of Patras kept them open for children living in challenging and outside child-friendly environments. In this session, we are going to discuss the various benefits to children and families but, also, the challenges and obstacles faced by students and future teachers. Special attention will be paid to the lessons they learned about their profession and working with diversity.

*Baytna* – Providing Psychosocial Support to refugee children through ECCD is the second program to be shared and discussed.

In 2016, with the support of Help Refugees, the Refugee Trauma Initiative set up an Early Childhood Care and Development program for refugee children aged 0–6 called *Baytna* ('our home' in Arabic). *Baytna* is a unique early-years program that has been designed to provide key emotional support alongside high-quality early-years education for refugee children. During the session, we will showcase how by providing culturally-sensitive, long-term care, support and guidance informed by psychological principles, refugees can be helped to process their experiences, integrate into society and rebuild their lives. We will also discuss the main principles of *Baytna*, learning environments and activities, as well as capacity of the program to be scaled up and used in different contexts. We focus on how we can make long-lasting changes for children on the move through relationships.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal SESSION 6/2

**Anke van Keulen**, MUTANT, The Netherlands

**Didi Deshaies**, Neohumanist Education Association, Romania


 Strand 2

### **Peace in your hands: an educational package nurturing children's inner and outer development**

This workshop is designed for professionals in early childhood services and primary schools who wish to proactively enhance children's resilience and abilities to actively create a peaceful, happy environment around them. Skills in self-regulation, conflict resolution, as well as values based on peace can be taught from the early years and create a strong foundation for life.

'Peace in your hands' is an educational package for preschools and primary schools aiming to help children understand what peace is and to show what you can do to experience peace within yourself and to pass it on to others.

Peace in yourself, in the classroom and in the world are the key themes of the package.

'Peace in your hands' was created in response to teachers' need for learning materials on how to create peace at school, in the class and in the community. Many schools in many countries have used and shared this pack with each other. The pack provides lesson plans and working methods to meet the peacemakers in the world around you, to create peace in the classroom and to experience peace within yourself.

A safe and peaceful educational environment in the group, both inside and outside the school, is important for children's learning and development. 'Peace in your hands' provides activities that support calmness and concentration, both individually and for the whole group. It introduces skills that children need: empathy, standing up for yourself, standing up for others, thinking positively and thinking in terms of solutions.

Citizenship education helps children's social development in personal relationships in their community and society. This pack shows what democratic citizenship is, possibly in addition to the program the school already uses.

MUTANT and Amurtel exchanged their experiences with the package and developed an Early Years Supplement. In this interactive workshop, the vision, aim and content of the (free downloadable) package will be shared, as well as possibilities to implement peace education into (pre)schools.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer SESSION 6/3

**Willeke van der Werf, Utrecht University, The Netherlands**

**Building blocks for inclusive intercultural childcare centers**

Many questions arise when it comes to inclusive practices in an intercultural childcare environment. To address some of these questions, especially regarding the impact of strategies and policies at the level of the childcare organization, we conducted two studies to explore diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies at the organizational level in childcare centers in the Netherlands.

In the first study, D&I in childcare centers was explored by questioning which measures at the organizational level had been taken to handle a diversity of staff and clients, and to ensure that all persons involved would experience a sense of belonging. From in-depth interviews amongst 13 location-managers and 26 practitioners in 13 childcare centers, the relevance of D&I in organizations was examined in different strategic contexts. We obtained information on the interaction between the organizational context, culture, D&I climate, management and leadership. We found different D&I strategies, connected to different types of organizations, showing several relations between inclusive organizations, D&I management and the application of different inclusive practices.

In the second study, a quantitative approach was followed to corroborate the findings. Based on data collected within the Dutch national childcare quality monitor, we conducted a cluster analysis on the structural and cultural characteristics of 117 childcare organizations to identify different types of organizations. The analysis yielded a number of organization types that differed remarkably in D&I strategies. Moreover, these differences appeared to be related to inclusiveness as perceived by the staff, to the implementation of intercultural practices as reported and to the quality of the daily interaction processes in childcare as observed.

In the second half of the session, we will kindly invite participants to make suggestions for inclusive policy and practice. We look forward to creating building blocks for D&I together, and to discuss conditions for inclusiveness.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer  
SESSION 6/4**

**Chrystal Holt, Save the Children, UK**

**Integrating child protection and gender within ECD programmes for caregivers of children aged prenatal to three years old**

Tuwekeze Pamoja is a five-year integrated early childhood development (ECD) program for children aged pre-natal to six. The project will provide an integrated continuum of support for girls and boys in Mbozi district, Tanzania, to achieve the goal of improved learning and development outcomes.

This innovative program considers how poor parenting negatively impacts upon children’s development. It focuses on developing strong, positive relationships between the caregiver and the child (linked to the WHO Nurturing Care Framework), recognising the importance of caregiver wellbeing and the building of healthy, household relationships, regardless of a family’s makeup (for example, within polygamous families). Additional innovative practices come through determining the cultural, social, and environmental barriers and enablers for a caregiver’s behavior. Through initially researching and therefore, coming to a better understanding of community and individual beliefs, specific targeted messaging and outreach activities can be conducted accordingly.

Integrated activities seek to maximize not only caregiver opportunities to interact or play with their children but endeavor to: a) reduce intra-partner violence and violence against children through the promotion of respectful and appropriate communication and the introduction of simple positive parenting coping strategies, focusing on longer-term goals rather

than short-term solutions; and b) address gender norms within the household and community through mainstreaming gender activities throughout.

The presentation will focus on how gender and child-protection factors are effectively integrated within all activities on play and learning; the challenges encountered in development and implementation of activities and review preliminary results on how this is ultimately supporting the young child's overall development.

Interactive discussion will center around the following questions.

1. What successes have others had in implementing an integrated ECD program specifically relating to gender and violence against children?
2. What challenges have others had in implementing an integrated ECD program specifically relating to gender and violence against children including specific reference to cultural and traditional beliefs?
3. What experiences do others have in combining a child-focused project with looking at intra-partner relationships including results from research or end line surveys?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal  
SESSION 6/5**

**Tanja Rankovic**, UNICEF, Serbia

**Zlatko Grusanovic**, Institute for Improvement of Education, Serbia

**Ljiljana Marolt**, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD), Serbia



**The New Preschool Curriculum Framework – Years of Ascent in Serbia: from Curriculum to Practice**

The adoption of the new Preschool Curriculum Framework (PCF) marked a cornerstone in 2018. As part of a comprehensive reform process, it was based on the understanding that it has a cultural value and meaning only if it represents and supports a step up from the current program and practice. It provides a common foundation for curriculum development in nursery, preschool and preparatory preschool programs and promotes a coherent approach to young children's learning and development from their enrolment in early childhood education and care (ECEC) until they enter elementary school. The new PCF is relational-based, and oriented to: the wellbeing of the child and the quality of relations and mutual participation of children and adult; play as the backbone of the program; respect for differences; understanding of learning as a process of co-construction through exploration and experiences in joint activities; collaboration, partnership and participation and empowerment of children, families and community.

To support its national roll-out, standards of competencies for preschool teachers and minimum-resources standards were developed. Furthermore, UNICEF supported a study on preschool initial education, whose recommendations the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) will use for the modernization of preschool teacher pre-service training. To increase the demand for ECEC, a communication strategy and materials were developed and will be continue to be used by the Ministry in the coming years.

These achievements create a platform for the wider reform of preschool education led by the Ministry of Education and supported by the World Bank aimed at the expansion of 17,000 preschool spaces for children and roll-out of a comprehensive capacity-building program (training, mentoring, coaching, horizontal learning) for 12,000 preschool teachers (almost 70% of all preschool teachers) on modern preschool pedagogy, to which UNICEF will contribute.

During this panel, the Serbian team will present the 'Years of Ascent,' experiences from the pilot phase and plans for scaling up. The panel moderator will stimulate discussions related to different modalities of efficient in-service, capacity-building modalities of professionals in ECEC, including blended learning (combining classical and online training), mentoring, communities of practice, etc.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer  
SESSION 6/6**

**Alodia Santos**, World Vision International, Philippines  
**Rithy Prum**, World Vision Cambodia

**Strand 2**

**Dynamic Tools to Promote Nurturing Early Learning Environments – Digitizing and Adapting the Measuring Early-Learning Environment Tool**

This workshop will share the adaptation and digitization process of the Measuring Early-Learning Environment (MELE) tool into a mobile application with the purpose of providing practitioners with a framework to promote inclusive and nurturing environments based on evidence-based quality standards. Through a user-friendly and digitized version of the MELE tool, systems-wide assessment can be carried out and leveraged for coaching and continuous improvement of early-learning environments that are inclusive, respectful and promote nurturing relationships among children, caregivers, teachers and communities.

To effectively assess the quality provision of nurturing environments of pre-school aged children, World Vision has adapted the MELE tool, developed by Brookings, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank into a branched, digitized version to be used in a mobile platform. In alignment with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological framework, the digitized tool goes beyond classroom environments to assess nurturing environments at home and at the community level based on internationally recognized quality standards. Results from assessments are organized into dashboards to empower practitioners, managers and policy makers to leverage data for reflection, adjustment of the program design and investments towards supporting system-wide nurturing learning environments. For example, structured learning environments are assessed in five dimensions: (a) physical condition; (b) teaching and learning materials; (c) joyful and inclusive interactions; (d) teaching skills for learning; and (e) integration of services.

This session will be an interactive ‘learning lab’ where international quality standards will be examined, country adaptations and results from Cambodia and Bangladesh will be shared, and the digitized tool ‘experienced’ and critiqued by practitioners to analyze applicability in a variety of contexts (developed, developing, fragile and emergencies).

Session co-hosts will document inputs from participants to further improve the tool and share partnership opportunities to apply the tool in ISSA-focused countries.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer  
SESSION 6/7**

**Vikram Jain**, FSG Advisory Services, India

**Strand 2**

**Transforming Early Education through Activity-Based Learning**

86% of low-income families in urban India spend a disproportionate amount of their income on sending their children to affordable private schools (APSS) as they believe APSS provide better English-language education than government schools. Unfortunately, learning outcomes are poor. Only 22% of children in Grade 1 in APSS can read three-letter words (e.g., ‘sat’, ‘pin’ or ‘mug’). A key reason for this is the rote-memorization technique used in the early years.

In 2015, FSG launched the Program to Improve Private Early Education (PIPE) to replace rote memorization with activity-based learning (ABL) in around 300,000 APSS in India. ABL has powerful impact in terms of improving the learning environment and as well as providing children with a wide range of early development benefits including socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive.

There are barriers to adoption of ABL on both the demand and supply sides. On the demand side, parents, APS administrators and teachers are unaware of the benefits of ABL and on the supply side, solution providers don’t see an



opportunity to sell to APSs. PIPE works to address these barriers by getting eight solution providers to supply high-quality ABL solutions to thousands of APSs and by getting parents to aspire, demand and pay for ABL.

Today PIPE partners are providing ABL in some 400 APSs. A recent assessment showed that PIPE APSs had a 54% higher score than APSs with no interventions. Children in PIPE APSs have better learning outcomes as they benefit from: a more interactive learning environment, access to appropriate materials, improved staff–child interactions, and a more fun and engaging classroom environment. These changes could mean a dramatic move away from rote learning and direct positive impact on around a million children from low-income households seeking a quality early education.

Questions we propose participants for discussion include the following.

- What are the different ways of influencing parents to demand more activity-based learning (and not rote learning) in schools?
- What are effective ways to monitor and track implementation in thousands of schools?
- How can we motivate low-paid teachers to improve the implementation of activity-based learning in the classroom?
- How can we improve the quality of implementation in classrooms beyond improvements to the activity-based learning solution?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## **MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal**

### **SESSION 6/8**

**Sandra Van der Mespel**, VBJK – Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium

**Jerneja Jager**, Step by Step Centre for Quality in Education – Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

**Sabine Van Houte**, Karel de Grote Hogeschool, Belgium

**Katrien Van Laere**, VBJK – Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium



**Strand 2**

#### **VALUE diversity in care and education**

Inclusive early childhood education and care (ECEC) services asks for a collaborative approach in which different practitioners, involved in the care and learning process of young children, work and learn together. In most European countries, it isn't only preschool teachers or pedagogues (the 'core' practitioners) that work with children and families. Many other (mostly lower qualified) practitioners are directly involved in the care and learning process, e.g. teacher-assistants, childcare workers, Roma assistants, special needs assistants, etc. Especially in large cities, these 'assisting' practitioners tend to have more an ethnic-minority background or a lower socio-economic position in society. In other words, their inclusion in ECEC adds diversity to their teams.

This existing diversity within the ECEC workforce can be an important resource in creating inclusive practices. However, in order to use this as a resource, we need to overcome some challenges. A NESET II study (European Commission, 2016) shows that these 'assisting' practitioners are often not involved in planning and professional development activities. Recent research indicates that they mostly work in a 'one teach/one assist' approach, whilst other team teaching strategies are better able to cope with the diverse needs of children and families.

In this workshop, we focus on strengthening the collaboration between all the ECEC practitioners involved in the care and learning process of young children. Special attention is paid to the role and position of lower qualified practitioners: how can we strengthen their professional role and identity? How can we involve them in professional development and planning time? We present the experiences and insights we're currently developing in *VALUE*, an Erasmus+ project on valuing diversity in care and education. In dialogue with participants, we explore the collaboration of core and assisting practitioners in ECEC systems in different countries: what are the strengths and pitfalls? What can we learn from the different systems and collaborative practices?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**

**SESSION 6/9**

**Strand 2**

**Paul Kocken and Renate van Zoonen, TNO Child Health, The Netherlands**

**MOCHA Project: Assessment of European Union Primary Child Healthcare Systems – Stances for System Change**

The Models of Child Health Appraised (MOCHA) project ([www.childhealthservicemodels.eu](http://www.childhealthservicemodels.eu)) is a Horizon 2020 Research Project which aims to describe and appraise various models of primary child healthcare in Europe. One of the aims of the MOCHA project was to analyze stakeholders' views on imaginary scenarios of primary child healthcare systems. Results of an online questionnaire about three future scenarios on imaginary components of child healthcare systems, filled out by stakeholders of 22 EU countries and of group interviews with experts from eight EU countries will be shared during the session.

The results indicated that stakeholders gave priority to improvement of the following primary child healthcare system components: public access to information about vaccination, open access to services, coordination and continuity of care, continuity of information on children's health status using electronic health records, and increase and training of the workforce. Transparent policy making and an increase of resources could benefit system changes. Stakeholders identified the current healthcare system and service provision as the major barrier for implementing the optimal scenarios.

Statements that exemplify the conditions for good system components in the fields of specialized preventive health services and working in multidisciplinary teams will be brought to the discussion.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

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**MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk**

**SESSION 6/10**

**Szilvia Pallaghy, Open Society Foundations, Early Childhood Program, UK**

**Luke Heinkel, Results for Development, USA**

**Milena Mihajlovic, CIP – Center for Interactive Pedagogy, Serbia**

**Bozidar Nikolic, Romanipen, Serbia**

**Marina Videnovic, Institute of Psychology, University of Belgrade, Serbia**

**Strand 3**

**Which family policies, and what programs with which unit costs are responsive to the social, cultural and economic challenges that marginalized families face today in Serbia?**

3–5 months' gain in development in less than a year. Why and how did *Strong from the Start* work? What are the major challenges in working with parents and how can they be addressed? Why and how can children benefit from this? What can we learn from an impact evaluation? What are the impacts on parent and child outcomes?

We measured evidence and impacts through IDELA\* in a Roma early childhood program. There are opportunities for adapting this model to other contexts.

Studies suggest that investment in early childhood education and care are 4–10 times more effective in improving the life outcomes of people from poor and marginalized groups than any other investment. It is also known that unfavorable early environments adversely affect children's development and school readiness. Early childhood interventions, including efforts to improve access to and quality of pre-school, parental empowerment and involvement in early childhood

education and care (ECEC) can mediate these unfavorable early experiences and support children’s optimal development, with the greatest benefits being for vulnerable children.

During this panel, we will share findings from an early childhood intervention in Serbia. Founders and policymakers will be addressed and we will discuss: how we can ensure the child’s healthy development and well-being in adverse conditions; and what program has competently addressed the increasing demand for support from parents, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized in Serbia.

We will discuss the context, the intervention, and how findings – with the IDELA tool – can be used for programming, advocacy and for creating better policies.

Program implementers from Serbia and evaluation experts will share their experiences and invite the audience to join the discussions.

\*IDELA is a measurement tool for children’s learning outcomes and for primary caregivers’ parental practices, developed by Save the Children.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## Concurrent Sessions 7: 13:45-14:45

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**

**SESSION 7/1**

**Dragana Koruga, UNICEF, Serbia**

**Jelena Zajeganovic, UNICEF, Serbia**

**Dragana Sretenov, Open Society Foundations, UK**

**Snezana Ilic, Belgrade Psychological Center, Serbia**



**Strand 2**

### **Starting an Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) model relying on routine-based child/family-centred support**

Parents’ daily interactions with children in a safe and stimulating environment have a great potential to influence child’s development and their life-long trajectories. This also applies to parents of children who are at risk of developmental delays and with disabilities. As a system of professional services for young children from 0–3 or 5 years of age with special needs and with different environmental or biological risks, ECI is offering an effective interdisciplinary response determined by the family’s priorities and the child’s needs and typically delivered in the child’s natural environments. Multiple studies have demonstrated that ECI services are highly effective in improving child development, preventing the occurrence of developmental delays and improving parenting skills and knowledge.

Since there was no data based ECI system in place in Serbia, Open Society Foundation, the Early Childhood Program in London and UNICEF Serbia, in partnership with national partners, supported the ECI situation analysis (SA) with the aim of exploring the feasibility of a national ECI system development. The analysis focused on opportunities and barriers to implementation and sought to identify pockets of emerging best practice within the country. At the moment, partners are providing support in two locations to pilot ECI, with the model specifically tailored for Serbia, relying on existing systemic mechanisms and capacities, and including all required improvements in regulations, knowledge and practices among professionals and caregivers.

The findings from this SA and the ECI pilot preparation has raised the following questions.

- Which strategies are effective for changing the current, predominantly rehabilitation-based intervention model, and for strengthening the role of parents as lead ‘interventionists’ for their children?

- Can we align the efforts of different services that belong to different sectors around the ECI approach?
- Can we support highly trained professionals in utilizing their expertise through a transdisciplinary service-delivery model?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal  
SESSION 7/2**

**Angela Alimi and Marta Kecskes, Roma Education Fund, Hungary**

**Strand 3**

**Toy Library Installation: a Community for Roma Parents and Young Children**

The Roma Education Fund (REF) is a network of foundations established in 2005, with an active and growing network of representative offices across Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey. REF dedicates its mission to closing the gap in the educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma through provision of grants to non-governmental organizations to work with pupils in kindergartens, primary and secondary school. Also, REF directly awards merit-based secondary and tertiary education scholarships to talented Roma university students.

Through this session, the Roma Education Fund will showcase, in an interactive manner, one of its best practices within the first model for educational intervention, which pertains to early childhood education and development, namely the *Toy Library*. Since this is a valuable community practice, requiring small investments of money and resources, it could be multiplied in other countries and tailored for the needs of other vulnerable communities.

We view the installation as a model of a mobile room featuring three walls, with the fourth wall open so people can enter; it is full of toys and soft ground (e.g. carpet or foam).

During the session, participants can try the toys and experience the joy of playing. The Toy Librarian can explain the skills they can develop through the Toy Library activities. In case of high interest from conference participants, the Toy Librarian can organize a community 'Play and Stay' session which can well demonstrate the use of the Toy Library by the entire family, including mothers, fathers and children.

*Co-author: Anasztazia Nagy, Roma Education Fund, Hungary*

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 3 – Cornelis Schuytfoyer  
SESSION 7/3**

**Karolien Nijs and Lieve Deboscher, City of Ghent, Belgium**

**Strand 2**

**Human Resources (HR) Policy for Happy Employees**

With 30 years' history and experience of high quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC), our organization has changed over the years; it has grown in quality and capacity, but unfortunately not in HR policy.

To be resistant to political, financial changes and influences, we have been investing in a responsive and innovative organization over the last two years. But still, our daily challenges are a fruitful marriage of HR policy and quality in childcare.

The City of Ghent's childcare service invests in the well-being and involvement of 800 employees, spread over 70 locations. We struggle and we learn; our service is an on-going progress investing in innovative work organization and experimenting

with more participation and autonomy for our childcare teams. This workshop tells an honest story about the HR challenges and the innovative organization structure, and the positive influence of the involvement of our employees. After an introduction to our organization, this workshop proposes table discussions and reflections on consequences, challenges and opportunities regarding HR action and exchanges possible future HR strategies and policies relating to high-quality childcare.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer  
SESSION 7/4**

**Luis Manuel Pinto**, Learning for Well-being Foundation, The Netherlands

**Strand 3**

**Participation and Well-being: Strategies for involving the youngest**

This session makes a holistic case for the participation of young children as co-creators of their own environments. Participation, and partnership between children and their families or supporting staff, can be a foundational aspect of their development and well-being, but can also contribute to better relationships, more efficient services and transformative learning.

Through analyses of cases in which children were involved in designing, running and evaluating their services and experiences, we will address the questions below. The cases are from sectors such as health, education, and social services. The examples being presented come from the Center for Well-being and Involvement (CEGO) associated with the University of Leuven (Belgium) and Children and Young People's, Services Committees (CYPSCs) in Roscommon (Ireland).

- What concrete strategies can be put in place to treat children as competent partners?
- What are the necessary conditions – cultural, structural, behavioral, attitudinal – to cultivate environments in which children can be heard and taken seriously?
- What core capacities should practitioners develop in order to enable children's participation?

The session introduces the Learning for Well-being framework and principles as a perspective on how to create nurturing environments in which children can flourish through engaged participation. The Learning for Well-being framework is derived from Living Systems perspective on human development, and supports holistic and systemic action. The principles can be summed up in single words: (1) Wholeness; (2) Purpose; (3) Diversity; (4) Relationships; (5) Participation; (6) Systems; and (7) Feedback. They are briefly described at: [www.learningforwellbeing.org/our-approach/7-principles](http://www.learningforwellbeing.org/our-approach/7-principles)

The last part of the session will introduce the international initiative ACT2gether, a movement for promoting partnerships between generations, for a fair and sustainable world. Within this, we will explore with participants these societal questions about children's participation and well-being.

- What are the societal obstacles to young children's participation as competent partners?
- What actions need to be taken to create change?

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal  
SESSION 7/5**

**Facilitator: Bjorn Martens**, City of Ghent, Belgium

**Bjorn Martens and Roswitha Gerbosch, City of Ghent, Belgium**

Strand 3

**Pop-up Childcare Center: a Tool for Flexible and Occasional Childcare**

The city of Ghent designed and developed a mobile childcare center for 14 children, aged from birth to five years old. Able to be transported in a van, it can be fully deployed and operational in about an hour. Play, cook, eat, sleep, nurse and repeat: all the functions of your local daycare center are present. Curious? We outline the European PACE project (Providing Access to Childcare and Employment), the settings in which we use it and present the challenges and solutions in logistics and pedagogical quality we had to overcome in designing it.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**Stefanie Decock and Leni Vandenbroeck, City of Ghent, Belgium**

Strand 3

**Improving Access for Vulnerable Children and their Families in the City of Ghent**

Investing in social inclusion means investing in a strong, meaningful and considerate policy on every level: policy makers, local neighborhood and childcare centers.

We permanently expand and improve our expertise and policy on accessibility, diversity and participation by:

- a proactive inclusion policy – a central registration system with priority for vulnerable families;
- investing in structural partnerships with local social welfare actors: such as family centers with integrated services, community workers, social mediators, other childcare providers, a community health center;
- organizing in-service training for our childcare professionals, such as tools and coaching on how to reflect on being a connecting partner between the parent and caregiver, and between parents.

This presentation aims to be an inspiration and introduces concrete tools for ensuring sustainable high-quality social inclusive childcare into daily practice. We take time to discuss the role of the childcare center in being a connecting partner and how to become a full member of the community in your local context.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer  
SESSION 7/7**

**Claudia Mandrile, Compagnia di San Paolo, Italy**  
**Arianna Spigolon, Compagnia di San Paolo, Italy**  
**Cristina Basciano, Philanthropic organization, Consultant, Italy**

Strand 3

**The challenge of nurturing educational communities: lessons learned from *Programma ZeroSei* in Piedmont, Italy**

Early childhood is a fundamental phase for the cognitive, mental, physical, linguistic and social development of the individual. Investing in early childhood development is a priority for Compagnia di San Paolo, an Italian philanthropic organization that launched the *Programma ZeroSei* in 2014, with the aim of promoting integration and coordination within early childhood care and education systems following a holistic, multi-disciplinary, inclusive approach, in Turin and in the Piedmont region (North West Italy).

*Programma ZeroSei* uses community-based planning, with the aim of building nurturing environments, working with the entire educational community, nurturing a supportive system, caring about childhood throughout its duration. Places with

a high educational potential, either formal or informal, represent the stepping stones for responsive care. *Programma ZeroSei* was implemented through specific projects.

In the *Altrotempo* and *Porta Palazzo* projects, community-based planning allowed the promotion of networks of integrated services for early childhood, encompassing care, education and socialization, linking public policies, institutions, associations and non-formal groups of parents. We supported local communities with capacity-building activities and mentoring on planning, monitoring, team building and fundraising. The goal was to make the groups self-determined in all respects within five years, working hard on long-term sustainability.

What support, paths and opportunities have proved to be effective in responding to the needs of vulnerable families and at the risk of reproducing poverty careers in their children? Within the *Opportunità ZeroSei* project, families in need applying for an economic contribution to a philanthropic institution are provided with the opportunity to follow training and develop experience on family development and work-life balance as well as family finance management. Informal places already present in the territory provide the pivot for strategies to enhance neighborhoods as nurturing environments in disadvantaged areas of the city, looking at how the local environment can play a central role in bringing families closer to educational services and support the first processes of socialization of their children.

Was it worth it? We will present our outcomes and discuss whether the educational opportunities provided, alongside the mediation of entrusted professional (doctors, educators, psychologists, pedagogists, cultural mediators, etc.) and peer-learning enriching relationships for parents and carers, was sufficient to feed the desire of a self-directed and long-term use of these and other nurturing places.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal  
SESSION 7/8**

**Ana del Barrio Saiz, Ana del Barrio Training & Consulting, The Netherlands**



**The Critical Question Ladder: a tool for reflection to support teams and families ‘reconnect’ in the contexts of growing diversity and complexity**

What do we know ... about the families visiting our centers?

What do we know ... about their strengths, their dreams and daily challenges (especially of families in contexts of poverty, with low education or from diverse cultural backgrounds)?

Do we work in order to have a positive image of parents? Do we make it clear that we are interested in their background? Valuing and strengthening identity aspects and experiences of parents and their communities can support parents to develop their ‘self-confidence as a parent’, and can support parents and children to reconnect personal and cultural stories in a positive way while living in contexts of growing diversity and complexity.

At the same time, professionals themselves need a safe space in which to reflect on their own experiences, values, feelings and attitudes in order to reconnect them. The *Critical Question Ladder* tool supports ECEC professionals to develop a permanent reflective attitude about their role and practice, and thereby to increase the quality of interactions with children, families and colleagues. It stimulates a space for dialogue and a research attitude into practice.

The *Critical Question Ladder* shows five levels of reflection: on the context, the self perspective, the perspective of the ‘other’, the learning community perspective and the critical power perspective.

In this workshop, participants will have the opportunity to work with questions within these different levels and discuss how they can use this tool in their own praxis. In the workshop, we will focus on cooperating with families.

The *Critical Question Ladder* tool for reflection has been developed by Ana del Barrio Training & Consulting to deepen the ‘Permanent learning in teams’ (PLT) method and to promote inclusive values in early years practice. PLT has been implemented in ECEC provisions in the Netherlands and integrated in the Utrecht Quality Framework and different Pedagogical Bachelor programs.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**

**SESSION 7/9**

**Gerda Sula**, University of Tirana, Albania

**Joan Lombardi**, Early Opportunities LLC, USA

**Strand 2**

**How to use the *Early Childhood Matters* and other materials for professional development on global early childhood issues**

The goal of *Early Childhood Matters*, the annual journal of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, is to serve as a forum for a diverse group of scholars, leaders, teachers and other stakeholders invested in early years around the world. As in years past, the journal highlights promising developments and new opportunities in the field and includes articles by prominent leaders, examples of scaling and innovation, as well as snapshots of new reports and initiatives. Articles this year include such topics as the promotion of fatherhood and male involvement, support for the early childhood workforce and the development of community systems.

The journal, along with examples of other new research and other emerging research, provide a wealth of new material to stimulate new thinking as part of training programs and university and college classes and to open new horizons for students and those already in the field.

This interactive session will be an opportunity to talk about how to use journal articles to reinforce concepts, introduce students to new ideas and stimulate discussions of a range of issues important to the growing number of people that make up the early childhood workforce. Participants will be encouraged to share lessons they have learned while helping teachers, home visitors and emerging leaders to feel that they are part of the global early childhood movement.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk**

**SESSION 7/10**

**Ronah Lubinda**, Mulumbo Early Childhood Care and Development Foundation, Zambia

**Beatrice Matafwali**, University of Zambia

**Amina Abubakar**, Pwani University, Malawi

**Carolyn Ng'eny**, Firelight Foundation, USA

**Strand 3**

**How community-based organizations navigate the 'implementation space' of early childhood development programs in sub-Saharan Africa**

Community-based organizations (CBO) are grounded in and deeply familiar with the realities and needs of their own communities. They are also uniquely positioned to interact with and influence key systems and stakeholders shaping children's lives – from the family and school to civil society and government agencies. As a result, they are ideally situated to partner with their communities to respond to children's and families' needs and improve their wellbeing. Indeed, in recent decades, CBOs in sub-Saharan Africa have played a leadership role at the grassroots level in developing, implementing, and advocating for services and supports for the youngest and most vulnerable children at the community level. However, we know that CBOs face significant challenges in accessing resources and often have limited capacity in organizational management and child-centered programming.



In this presentation and panel discussion, we learn from and reflect upon the experiences of CBOs implementing early childhood development (ECD) services in Malawi, Zambia, and Tanzania with the support of the Firelight Foundation.

We will first share brief presentations describing findings from:

- CBOs’ experiences, successes, and challenges in implementing the Care for Child Development (CCD) curriculum in Tanzania and Zambia;
- CBOs’ experiences, successes, and challenges in improving the quality of care and learning at community-based childcare centers in Malawi;
- an in-depth analysis of how CBOs navigate the ‘implementation space’ in the ECD programs they implement, and the ways in which their programs can be more relevant, responsive, impactful, and sustainable.

Following the presentations, the panelists and audience will engage in an interactive discussion to generate shared learning and reflection around how to:

- build a deep understanding of ECD at the community level;
- find a convergence between global and local ECD knowledge, values, and practices;
- use participatory methods to strengthen the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of ECD programs at the community level;
- balance the need for adaptation/contextualization/responsiveness against standard or minimum implementation recommendations in evidence-based ECD packages; and
- learn about and document programs and actions that look very different which are carried out in very different contexts, and may change or adapt over time.

*Co-author: Sadaf Shallwani, Firelight Foundation, USA*

*Panel discussion*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## Concurrent Sessions 8: 15:00-16:00

**MEETING ROOM 1 – Grote Zaal**

**SESSION 8/1**

**Ceren Guven-Gures, National Committee for UNICEF, Germany**



**Strand 3**

### **The Child-Friendly Cities Initiative in Germany**

The Child-Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) is a UNICEF-led initiative that supports municipal governments in realizing the rights of children at the local level, using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as its foundation. How a city justifies making children a priority is the crucial question for kicking off with. First, because it is a legal obligation: under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, states, and by extension local governments, have an obligation under international law to ensure that the child’s best interests are a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.

Beyond the legal imperative, there are other compelling reasons to put children first. During this session, Germany’s journey with the Child-Friendly Cities initiative will be introduced, focusing on the planning and implementation phases, key achievements, lessons learned, and the 21 German cities that have been recognized as child-friendly.

Participants will be asked, through an interactive poll, about the extent to which the city they live in is child-friendly and why. Answers will be noted, and at the end of the presentation, we will explore the preliminary steps that need to be taken in order to transform our communities into more child-friendly ones.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 2 – Cornelis Schuytzaal

### SESSION 8/2

**Henriette Heimgaertner**, International Academy Berlin (INA) /  
Berlin Early Years Institute for Quality Development in the Early Years, Germany

Strand 2

#### ***Bridging Diversity – an Approach to Educate Young Children and Develop the Quality of Their Services***

The session introduces the second revised edition of *Bridging Diversity*, published in English in early 2019. It dwells on the core features of educating young children amid the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*Bridging Diversity* deepens and broadens the interfaces between health and education, introduces education for sustainable development and details the dimensions of prejudice-aware education. A new chapter on the integration of children with disabilities and a stronger focus on working with children under the age of three have been added. This edition of *Bridging Diversity* sets out quality requirements and criteria for professional guidance for the first time.

Participants of the session will be invited to work with a small set of requirements and criteria and relate these to their own work context and experiences. By working with the requirements and criteria, the principles and methodology of internal evaluation will be shown and how internal evaluation is therefore, the core feature of developing and improving quality of the entire early-years system in Berlin.

Since 2008, internal evaluation is compulsory for all of Berlin's 2,600 early-years centers. The session will close with results from on-going meta-evaluations that specify how practitioners use internal evaluation to guide and improve their work.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 4 – Jan Willem Schaapfoyer

### SESSION 8/4

**Arne van Schoors and Samira Castermans**, De SLOEP, Belgium

Strand 1

#### **Father Projects in Family-Support Services**

De SLOEP is an open house for families with young children in the city of Ghent, in Belgium. Most of the families experience poverty and social exclusion. De SLOEP offers them individual aid, group meetings, Dutch conversation lessons, sports lessons, play and meeting moments for children and parents, family activities, all with an integrated approach. De SLOEP aims to support families in leading a better life.

In 2006, when the organization had a predominantly maternal service and barely reached any fathers, it decided to look for ways to better reach fathers. But are fathers waiting for such a parental support service? Do they have questions about parenting and other family issues? If fathers are not visible in preventive family support, does that mean that there is no involvement with the child?

The benefits of father involvement for children are indisputable. Several academic researchers have already shown that higher father involvement positively influences cognitive, emotional and social development, and that it also has positive effects on the mother and the relationship between the two parents. Enough reasons to roll up our sleeves and look for the right guide to get started with fathers, we thought.

De SLOEP has now been organizing a tailor-made service for fathers for more than ten years. With results! Though, when we started, things did not go smoothly. Where could we find these fathers? What does a tailor-made service for fathers mean? Is our organization at a low enough threshold and do fathers feel welcome in our organization? We will present

our experiences and the lessons we've learned. To inspire organizations, we will show a 20-minute documentary made by De SLOEP, in which several experts and fathers explain the importance of preventive family support in their lives and the importance of specific father groups.

This documentary is intended to be an inspiration for organizations to look at fathers from a different perspective and to think outside the box. It does not intend to tell others how to do it, but mainly wants to open a debate about how we view the family today as a system that also gets influenced by fathers. Because dads do count.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 5 – Breezaal

### SESSION 8/5

**Milena Mihajlovic**, CIP – Center for Interactive Pedagogy, Serbia

**Szilvia Pallaghy**, Open Society Foundations, UK

**Bozidar Nikolic**, Educational Cultural Union of Roma “Romanipen”, Serbia

**Jadranka Ivkovic**, Open Society Foundations, Serbia



Strand 3

#### ***Strong from the start – Dam leh phaka: Roma early childhood development and education initiative in Serbia***

In Serbia, only around 6% of Roma children aged 3–5 years from the poorest ghettoized communities attend pre-school education and, according to UNICEF MICS (2014), their development index in early childhood is way below that of their peers. Research shows that the early years are the most significant formative period in children and that an encouraging environment and adequate early stimulation allow for the development of their full potential.

How is it possible to advance the quality of the environment and early lives of children from marginalized groups and socially disadvantaged communities? What knowledge and skills does it take to become a ‘good enough’ parent who, despite grave existential difficulties, improves their own parenting competences and supports the learning and education of their children? What does it take to develop an inclusive institutional culture, mitigate the discrimination practices and provide services allowing for an equal start to the weakest and most disadvantaged? Can a longer-term inclusive institutional policy be drawn from practice, and can a multi-sectorial community of practising professionals dedicated to early education and development of children be formed?

We sought the answers to these questions working on the program *STRONG FROM THE START – DAM LEH PHAKA*, implemented in 15 local communities in Serbia. The model we developed supports a stimulating family setting for children’s development and strengthens preschools’ capacities to advance their inclusive values and quality of education, and introduce diverse programs to enhance Roma children’s access to early education.

We hope that our experience and results will inspire a lively discussion on methodologies and modalities to stimulate improvements in the development, learning and social inclusion of children from disadvantaged groups. We will initiate a discussion on partnerships and alliances connecting expertise and activism, proactively working in favor of the welfare and future of the children.

Participants will have the opportunity to see two short films illustrating the activities in local communities, as well as test (through interaction) the activity materials for families.

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## MEETING ROOM 6 – Waalse Kerkfoyer

### SESSION 8/6

**Marije Magito, Stichting Jonge Kind Centrum, The Netherlands**

### **'Playing' is the Key**

Playing is, for young children, a condition to develop themselves well. When parents are provided with sufficient knowledge and skills about 'playing', it helps them to stimulate the development of their child and it is also of great value for the bonding between the child and his parents. Under the guise of 'having fun together', parents at the Jonge Kind Centrum (Young Child Center) playfully learn the importance of playing in the development of their child.

This 'doing together' in an environment with other adults, who are in the same phase of their life (being parents of a young child) also provides an excellent opportunity to build up a social network which helps and supports parents to raise their children without engagement from professionals.

Learning from and with each other in a social context has always been a powerful mainstay during the educational parenting period. By reinforcing the social network, it is not necessary to call on a professional in the first place. It prevents dependences and high costs: we think, a win-win situation.

The parent-child programs of the Young Child Center, with its weekly programming, contributes to this. What it looks like, which challenges we had and have to deal with and the experiences of participants of the workshop are what we would like to discuss during this interactive workshop.

The workshop is based on informing and sharing knowledge and experiences.

*Co-author: William Buijs, Stichting Jonge Kind Centrum, The Netherlands*

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

## **MEETING ROOM 7 – Aalmarkt garderobe foyer SESSION 8/7**

**Katrien Van Laere, VBJK – Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium**  
**Zorica Trikić, International Step by Step Association (ISSA), The Netherlands**

### **Lowering the Compulsory School Age (without compromising the quality): a Means to What?**

In many countries, policymakers are debating lowering the compulsory school age. It is generally believed that this juridical parental obligation will provide access for all children to kindergartens/preschools and create equal opportunities for the most vulnerable.

Although this sounds quite evident, we would like to discuss the premises of this assumption.

To start a debate, a Belgian case study will be presented. Since the 1960s, policymakers started with lowering the compulsory school age and Belgium is internationally known as a country having one of the highest enrolment rates of toddlers in ECEC. At the same time, Belgium is one of the OECD countries with the most pronounced educational gap, which is related to the home situation of the children (OECD, 2013, 2016).

How can we clarify this paradox? Will making preschool mandatory at an early age improve the situation of socially disadvantaged children and families?

After a short discussion in a large group, we will divide ourselves into discussion groups around the following questions. Are ECEC today providing nurturing environments for all children and families? To what extent is the environment of ECEC flexible, capable and ready to ensure the wellbeing of the most vulnerable and at-risk families and children? What are your ideas and experiences in this debate, in your country and beyond? How do policymakers and the ECD community approach this issue in your country? What are the pros and cons of lowering the compulsory school age? What are alternative pathways for policy advocacy to provide high-quality ECEC environments that can support and include children

and families living in disadvantaged circumstances? The results of this work will serve for further debate during the session.

*Debate on a controversial issue*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 8 – Aalmarktzaal**

**SESSION 8/8**

**Mehnaz Akber Aziz**, Member National Assembly and Founding Director  
Children's Global Network, Pakistan

**Strand 2**

**Creating Legislative Framework for Institutionalization of ECCE in Pakistan**

The concepts of child development and child welfare have so far not received due priority in a number of developing countries, including Pakistan. Resultantly, the status of children and institutional arrangements for their holistic development have not improved. A legal framework in such developing countries can help accelerate the process for protection of rights of children and creation of opportunities for their well-being. The Convention on Rights of Child (CRC) obligates the governments to undertake legal, administrative and other measures for implementation of child rights. The Moscow Framework of Action resolved at the end of the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (2010) also reiterated the need for 'legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms' for the implementation of the rights of children to ECCE.

During this session, current efforts being undertaken in Pakistan for developing a legal framework of child rights, a country where indicators of child development are dismal, will be presented. There are over 22 million children aged below five in Pakistan. Mortality for this age group is 74 (per 1,000 live births), whereas 38% of children are stunted and 23% are underweight. Affordable quality ECCE services are missing. Policy makers lack an understanding of the development needs of children and commitment to meet these needs.

As an elected parliamentarian, I will elaborate on the prevailing gaps and on-going efforts to legislate for protection of child rights, challenges faced and lessons learned. The main purpose of the session is to brainstorm the role of and need for a national framework and strategy for ECCE in developing countries. Participants are expected to extend strategic guidance to boost efforts for child rights in Pakistan. Discussion may also lead to the creation of an international forum to support Pakistan towards the institutionalization of ECCE.

*Discussion forum*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 9 – Balkonfoyer**

**SESSION 8/9**

**Andrea Lanfranchi**, University of Applied Sciences of Special Needs Education (HfH), Switzerland

**Strand 1**

**Effective early intervention in high-risk families: Evidence from the randomized controlled trial ZEPPELIN 0–3**

In this interactive workshop, we discuss how an evidence-based early-intervention program has been implemented in Switzerland for effective support for at-risk families, particularly immigrants (86% being refugees from Kosovo and Eritrea, migrant workers from Portugal, Turkey, etc.). ZEPPELIN is an intervention study with two objectives. The first is an interdisciplinary early detection of children who are in jeopardy in their development for psychosocial reasons. The second is intensive and case-related early support of these children in order to increase their long-term educational opportunities. Within the framework of a home- and partially center-based approach, a qualified female childcare specialist at a

counselling service for young children visits families from the target group at home twice a month, and invites them to monthly group meetings in the family center. The specialist applies the 'PAT – Parents as teachers' home visiting program for children from birth to age 3, to raise parents' awareness of the age-specific needs of their children, to prepare them for a close collaboration with the educational institutions and to support the children's language development.

ZEPPELIN 0–3 was carried out with 252 families randomized into an intervention (132) and a control group (120) living in 14 communities in the agglomeration of Zurich. The results have been quite promising. The greatest impacts were found in the children's language, cognition, and behavior (Bayley III, SBE-KT, CBCL). The analyses indicate that the positive impacts were mainly associated with a more stimulating environment at home (HOME). After just one year, mothers receiving PAT support were significantly more sensitive (CARE-Index), indirectly enhancing language development (Bayley III). Finally, Parents receiving PAT support were better connected to community resources.

Since many of the families with social burdens are immigrants, we invite you to discuss some challenges and controversial issues: how to reach these families; how to avoid stigmatization; and how to deal with the problematic term 'high-risk family'.

*Interactive workshop on a specific topic*

*Duration: 60 minutes*

**MEETING ROOM 10 – Waalse Kerk  
SESSION 8/10**

**Sally Pearce, Sheffield Hallam University, UK**

**Strand 2**

**Room for Love? Early childhood teachers' perceptions of loving relationships**

In England there is a tension in early childhood education (ECE) policy between the needs and experiences of children and the drive to ensure that children are 'school ready'. This tension impacts on practice so that the focus is shifting from being child-centred to being data-driven – a process Robert-Holmes and Bradbury (2016) refer to as the 'datafication' of early years. Despite this, there is still a commitment to professional practice that provides a nurturing environment that meets children's social and emotional needs. In this session, I intend to present my initial findings from my research on teachers' perceptions of loving relationships with the children in their care within a Reception Class context (children aged 4–5 in UK schools). I have undertaken a small-scale study with teachers as they map their relationships with the children in their class over the space of a school year. During the year, they also met to share stories about their feelings of love and care for the children in their classes. This research is based on a participatory methodology and the participants have contributed to and shaped its development. This study builds on a body of research about the role of 'professional love' in early childhood (Page, 2015), but takes it out of the nursery and into a school setting to explore why love may be important, particularly for vulnerable children.

I welcome the thoughts and ideas of our international colleagues, and pose these questions for discussion.

- Is love a relevant concept for current ECE practice?
- How do practitioners manage the emotional demands of their role in ECE?
- Do we feel more comfortable talking about love if it is qualified with other terms?

*Presentation followed by discussions*

*Duration: 60 minutes*