



EDCOM2

The Second Congressional
Commission on Education



**EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND
DEVELOPMENT (ECCD)**

Governance and Financing of ECCD

PRIORITY AREA #4



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The Green Paper aims to stimulate discussion on priority areas being considered by the Second Congressional Commission on Education. It hopes to invite concerned stakeholders and the general public to participate in the debates surrounding specific areas, and to submit relevant research, as well as specific comments and suggestions.

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1. Introduction

This Green Paper is an opportunity to comment on the Governance and Financing of ECCD. It seeks to identify the specific barriers that hamper the mechanisms of governing and financing Early Childhood Care, Development, and Education. The goal is to:

- understand the priority area, its underlying issues, and research questions;
- shed light on the country's ECCD services; and
- propose solutions and connect them to improved learning outcomes of Filipino students.

2. Priority

The system of governance and finance of ECCD is **complicated and unclear**. Republic Act (RA) No. 10410 or the Early Years Act of 2013 mandated the ECCD Council as the main government agency to support ECCD services nationwide. The Council has a Governing Board composed of:



Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd)



Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH)



Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)



Executive Director of the ECCD Council



Executive Director of the National Nutrition Council (NNC)



President of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)

and one private individual who is an ECCD practitioner expert

This multisectoral approach to ECCD service delivery makes coordination challenging. The roles were divided among the agencies based on the age of the children. The ECCD Council, DOH, and DSWD are responsible for children aged 0–4 years old, while DepEd is responsible for those aged 5–8 years old. However, this interagency collaboration makes accountability difficult.

As for the financing of ECCD, Section (Sec.) 7 (b) of RA 10410 states that Local Government Units (LGUs) should use their Special Education Fund (SEF) and Gender and Development (GAD) Fund, in addition to other local funds, to support their ECCD Program (*Republic Act No. 10410 | GOVPH, 2013*). This means that LGUs, including the barangay, are primarily in-charge of the provision of basic ECCD services in the community. This implies that the availability and quality of ECCD services depend on the size and financial capacities of LGUs.

Ten years following the passage of the Early Years Act, LGUs continue to lack awareness, while policies have been existing on the use of local funding for ECCD, i.e. Revised Guidelines on the Use of the SEF (DepEd-DBM-DILG Joint Circular No.1 s.2017) and Guidelines on the Localization of the Magna Carta of Women (PCW-DILG-DBM-NEDA Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2013-01).

3. Current Situation

One gap in the governance structure is the absence of a required local ECCD coordinating committee to bridge the LGU and the ECCD Council. The LGUs have taken on the responsibility of implementing the law according to their own political will and interpretation. Thus, LGUs struggle to convert existing barangay Day Care Centers into Child Development Centers (CDCs). Although funding assistance is provided to the LGUs, only a small number of LGUs avail of it (ECCD Council, 2022). Reported challenges include:



absence of funding from LGUs' annual budget programming,



incomplete perimeter fence and playground, and



inability to submit required documents, e.g., the full liquidation report of the National Child Development Center (NCDC) building construction.

Very little of the SEF is used by LGUs for ECCD. **In 2018, only Php 141,600 was allocated to ECCD from the total 32 billion SEF** (Synergeia Foundation, 2021). There is an apparent lack of attention and awareness on the importance of early childhood education (ECE) at the local level. Although Sec. 10 of RA 10410 states that priority funding should be given to poor and disadvantaged communities, there are no NCDCs in BARMM and only one or two CDCs per 10,000 children aged 3-4 years old in 6th-class municipalities (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2023). Furthermore, there are no subsidies or any contracting schemes provided for pre-kindergarten students enrolled in private CDCs at present (Bustos-Orosa, 2022).

Given the heavy task of coordinating, the ECCD Council, with only one office and 46 personnel, lacks the capacity to monitor its service delivery for ECCD beneficiaries across the entire country.

4. Link to Learning Outcomes

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests attendance in preschool/daycare makes a positive impact on later learning. In a longitudinal K-4 study in the Philippines, children who attended preschool/daycare for 10 months or longer scored higher in literacy, mathematics, and socio-emotional skills, more than their peers who did not attend preschool (UNICEF et al., 2022). Preschool has also been proven to give disadvantaged children leverage over richer peers. In one study in Argentina, the effect of preschool attendance on Grade 3 students' scores was twice as high in poorer households as compared to their non-poor counterparts (Zubairi & Rose, 2017).

5. Issues Under this Priority



ISSUE #1: Mechanism of finance

Funding for preschool education is little and its **sources are unclear and inconsistent**. LGUs have varying interpretations of SEF-allowed spending and most allocation is given to basic education. There is very limited data on the specific breakdown of LGU spending on ECE. A big obstacle is the absence of a fixed ratio spending for ECCD activities or a separate budget line for reporting ECCD-specific expenses (UNICEF Philippines, 2019). Thus, LGU spending on ECCD is greatly varied and difficult to measure.

On paper, quality preschool education gives every child a head start through school readiness and improved understanding and behavior. However, without greater funding and attention, ECE will continue to be sidelined by LGUs. One of the initial thoughts of EDCOM II to resolve this issue is to raise awareness on the use of local funds for ECCD implementation. Education for local chief executives should include reiteration and highlight spending for CDC teacher and staff salaries, procurement of learning materials, building construction, and site acquisition. Another proposal is the bill for institutionalizing compensation for Child Development Workers.

Questions of the Standing Committee on the matter:

1. How could the government more effectively and efficiently fund ECCD programs?
2. Given finite resources, what should the government strategically focus investments in in the short-term (e.g. developing resources for home and community based ECCD; focusing on early childhood education for children aged 3-4)?
3. How could the national government ensure equity in the availability of ECCD services?
4. How can LGUs be further empowered and incentivized to support and strengthen their CDCs?
5. What are best practices in the governance and financing of ECCD at the local level?



ISSUE #2: Addressing governance challenges

Ten years since the passage of the Early Years Act, the ECCD Council has been struggling to meet its targets and fulfill its herculean mandate. Coordinating with four different, highly politicized agencies is a significant challenge for the Council. Many gaps in coordination with the LGUs also exist, where an ECCD Focal Person in each municipality may not be able to fulfill their responsibilities.

Young children need good health & nutrition, safety & protection, early education, and responsive caregiving to reach their full potential and develop in all areas of life. It makes sense to provide holistic programs for children and their families. However, without strong governance structures, social services will be erratic and unsystematic. A thorough review of the realities on the ground may result in a proposal to reorganize the ECCD Council to help it work more effectively and seamlessly.

Questions of the Standing Committee on the matter:

6. What have been the challenges of the ECCD Council in fulfilling its mandate?
7. Is the ECCD Council adequately set up to perform its functions (vis-a-vis rightsizing of agencies)?
8. Has it been able to effectively coordinate with DepEd, DOH, and DSWD? Why or why not?
9. What agency/organization could best ensure the link between the ECCD Council and local government units?
10. Are there other stakeholders that should be included in the ECCD Council?

6. Outlook

Reiterating the recommendation of EDCOM I, it is important to ensure equal opportunities for ECCD. Therefore, the government should prioritize and allocate funds to rural and poor communities. The vision is to establish a comprehensive, integrated, and sustainable ECCD National System for every Filipino child. Children living in the farthest and poorest areas are most disadvantaged in accessing good education and success in life. **Since the most critical stage of a child's development is from birth to 5 years of age, it is vital to provide pre-kinder education.** Early education has a significant impact on a child's future education and adult life. Supporting early learning is the best investment for the Filipino child and the country.

7. How to Take Part in the Consultation

This green paper launches a 8-week public consultation. Submissions should be received by **July 25, 2023**. The Commission invites concerned stakeholders to submit their contributions using the electronic form, which can be found through this link: <https://bit.ly/EduKonsultasyon4>

The Commission will consider all contributions in its future work and provide feedback on the results. All submissions will be made publicly available by the Commission unless the respondent indicates otherwise, or requests that part of the submission be kept confidential and provides acceptable reasons.

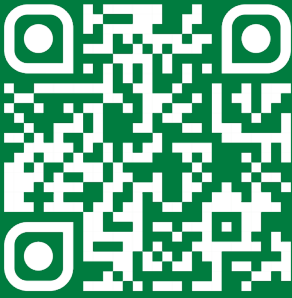
The directions outlined in this paper are for consultation purposes only and no final decisions have been made by the Government regarding the reforms presented.

The Commission is subject to the Freedom of Information law and submissions may be required to be disclosed in response to requests made under that Act. The Commission reserves the right not to publish any submission or part of a submission that in its view, contains potentially defamatory material, or for confidentiality reasons.

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SCAN TO PARTICIPATE!



About EDCOM 2

The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) is a national commission tasked to undertake a comprehensive national assessment and evaluation of the performance of the Philippine education sector.



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