The South African ECD Census

Building data and systems for Early Learning

Dr Nicholas Dowdall, LEGO Foundation
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE
Proposed ECD Function Shift
Need for comprehensive data

- In 2013 DSD conducted and Audit of ECD provisioning, services, staffing, resources, governance and infrastructure across the country.
- Since then, various initiatives were introduced to improve the quality of ECD including:
  - Adoption of the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy
  - Roll-out of the National Curriculum Framework for Birth to Four-Year-olds
- No accurate sense of size of the sector – estimates ranged between 18,000 – 40,000
- There was no masterlist, no Education Management Information System and no unique identifiers for ECD programmes
Purpose of the Census

- Locate and map out all ECD programmes in SA
- Develop a national Masterlist of programmes and ultimately an EMIS for ECD
DATA COLLECTION
No Ward Left Behind

For every ward (over 4000), enumerators had access to addresses and contact details of:

- “Known” Early Learning Programmes
- DSD district officials
- Ward councillors
- ECD networks

93% on more than one day

240,000 GPS locations captured
Data Collection & Quality Control

Data collection: August 2021 – March 2022
Mobile data capture on tablets
Dedicated online fieldwork portal
Online dashboard for progress tracking and preliminary results
Real-time data checks and alerts (Slack)
Ward completion protocol: maps and data check by office staff before move to next ward
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contacts</th>
<th>ECD Programmes</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free State</td>
<td>Mangaung</td>
<td>Mangaung</td>
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**Ward Councillor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone 1</th>
<th>Phone 2</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cr Rasile (Motsumi Manase)</td>
<td>(063) 699-3055</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Manasse.Rasile@mangaung.co.za">Manasse.Rasile@mangaung.co.za</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**DSD District Officials**

- Maki Qamkana (0785959583)
- Bongi Phendhl (0834437783)
- Shiteon Banj (0627247421)
Coverage
42,420 PROGRAMS COUNTED
Enrolment & Attendance

- **Enrolment**: 1,660,317
- **Usual Attendance**: 1,476,536
- **Staff Count**: 39.1
- **Ave. Children per Programme**: 39.1
- **Ave. Staff per Programme**: 4.7
- **Staff Count**: 198,361
Key Results
R509

MEAN MONTHLY FEES AMOUNT (MAXIMUM)
Registration with DSD

- Registered: 28%
- Conditionally Registered: 12%
- In process: 16%
- Not Registered: 42%
- Don't know: 1%

ELPs Receiving DSD Subsidy

- Subsidy: 33%
- No Subsidy: 67%
Qualifications of Practitioners

- NQF 6-9: 10%
- None: 22%
- NQF 4-5: 42%
- Skills Programme: 26%
ELPs per 1000 Children (Municipalities)
Average Time Spent on Free Play

- 34% do not have access to an outdoor playground with suitable equipment.
- 56% have access to age-appropriate books for different age groups.

Learning Materials: Subsidised vs Not Subsidised

- 14 materials are subsidised.
- 11 materials are not subsidised.

Daily Programme vs Outdoor Programme:

- 13% of daily programme is 30 min. or less.
- 33% of daily programme is up to 1 hr.
- 12% of outdoor programme is 30 min. or less.
- 44% of outdoor programme is up to 1 hr.

- 54% of daily programme is over 1 hr.
- 45% of outdoor programme is over 1 hr.

- 25% of daily programme is 30 min. or less.
- 50% of daily programme is up to 1 hr.
- 75% of daily programme is over 1 hr.

- 68% of outdoor programme is 30 min. or less.
- 0% of outdoor programme is up to 1 hr.
- 32% of outdoor programme is over 1 hr.
Lessons
Key lessons for similar undertakings

- Work closely with stakeholders on the ground
- Create awareness
- Branded collateral
- Small teams are better
- Use tools effectively
Impact
So what has happened since?

- Data made publicly available and being used
- DBE released masterlist
- EMIS development ongoing
- Data used to make business case to Treasury
- Govt, funders, NGOs using data to prioritise most vulnerable
Thank You

For More Info:
www.ecdcensus.co.za