



**ECD thematic group meeting notes**  
**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014, Stromme foundation**

**Welcoming**

FENU secretariat welcomed the members and thanked them for sparing time to attend the meeting. James (FENU Secretariat) explained what the ECD thematic group engages in and thanked Stromme foundation for hosting the meeting. Members introduced themselves.

**NOTES**

**Policy update**

Update on the status of the ECD in education policy and the national integrated ECD policy. (Lydia Mubiru – National Council for Children)

The meeting was informed that the ECD in education policy will be completed when the money for GPE comes through.

The meeting was also updated on the National Integrated ECD Policy. The national integrated policy is meant to be a framework to bring the different networks together. The policy involves all different departments and is led by the Ministry of Gender. This policy was developed in the ECD working group, and is currently at the top management waiting for the final review. NCC explained that it would be presented to the top management, on 17<sup>th</sup> March.

**Issues raised**

- Members who asked to be able to feed into the above policies were informed that the national integrated policy has passed that stage, although the ECD in education policy will need consultations during its review.

**ECD and Local Government (Lydia- NCC)**

NCC in conjunction with local government runs a pilot study that advocates for ECD to be included in the budget and work plan. Though the local government acknowledges this is important, it faces the challenge of lack of specific funds for ECD. The pilot study suggests that to encourage local governments to prioritise ECD in their budgets, ECD indicators should be included in the national assessment of local government. The ECD group came up with some indicators which have been accepted by the Local governments:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>No.</b>
Number of centres registered	2

Number of centres licensed	2
Number of centres inspected, monitored and supervised	3
Inclusion of ECD activities in the plans and budgets	3

Though the indicators have been included in the assessment manuals to start working, they have to be rolled to all the districts before so that districts are aware they will be assessed against these indicators. The districts that perform well in these indicators will get funds from the government. The indicators will soon be available and all districts will have to report on them.

#### Issues raised

- FENU members were called upon to join hands and see how they can help speed up the process of rolling out the indicators.
- In rural areas, the salary for ECD teachers could be difficult. Stromme shared their experience in Tanzania. Many rural communities lack ECD centres and the salaries are a problem. This has been handled through economic empowerment of the community like SACCO groups. The SACCO groups help people save money for personal development and school fees.
- Linking ECD centres to primary schools encourages a steady continuation.
- Katutandike shared their project of providing ECD centres in the market places (Gaba Market at the moment) which brings the ECD centre nearer to the child.
- The group agreed on the importance of knowing the districts that have already been funded by UNICEF and PLAN in the process of rolling out the indicators.
- It was suggested that NGOs should involve districts during projects so that there is sustainability even when the projects are over. The members also suggested that community should be engaged.
- It was suggested that member NGOs could hold meetings to know where each works so that there is better cooperation.
- Members were informed of the ECD communication pack launched by the 1<sup>st</sup> lady in 2012, UNICEF has been engaging with media to see how to roll this out through ECD songs, fliers, videos, among others.
- NCC informed the group about an ECD retreat scheduled for the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup>. The annual event is organised by the ECD forum to look at what has been done. For the last three years, the event looked at increasing investments while this year the event will look at preparing for the implementation of ECD policy and see how other countries have done this.
- The group was informed about the ECD cost investment study conducted in 2012. The study gives cost benefit analysis, consulting on ECD. NCC with support from UNICEF has been disseminating the study. The study has been presented to the ECD and other working groups and the findings were accepted. The group was informed that this study would soon be presented at the ECC.
- The group discussed the possibility of a meeting between ECD and Members of Parliament as this would be a good strategy since ECD thematic group is an advocacy group. It was agreed that

those interested in this meeting should plan an introductory meeting with Hon. Kabahenda Flavia Rwabuhoro.

### **GPE (Anya- FENU)**

GPE is a big pot of money (100 million dollars) by donated by donors, countries, banks, etc, that countries apply for to help them meet the Millennium Development Goals for education. Uganda applied for this money and the FENU membership has been involved in this process. The application was accepted and one of the outlined guideline for the GPE money is that a country should not cut the budget on education during the GPE fund duration. FENU membership is now working to make sure that Uganda does not decrease on its education budget.

However, there are still some challenges in this process as the MoES work plan that was supposed to be submitted last Friday is incomplete. The ECD working group has done its bit and is waiting for the rest of the ministry to finish the work plan before the money comes.

### **Issues raised**

- NGOs who were asking how to be engaged more in this process were informed that this is unclear as there hasn't been a LEG meeting for some time.

### **Advocacy updates**

The group was asked whether dates for ECD meetings should be set at the beginning of the year or whether the next meeting date should be set at the end of each meeting as we have always done. It was agreed that meetings should be scheduled at the beginning of the year for better planning. It was also agreed that the host of any of the scheduled meetings should also chair.

### **Suggested dates for meetings this year**

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014

### **AOB**

- UNHCR invited the group to the regional out of school study validation meeting on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 10 am at UNHCR.
- STROMME foundation informed the group of a study looking at reasons why some children do not enrol or complete school. The study was conducted in all the four regions of Uganda and findings have already been shared. The group was informed that regional meetings would take place in Kampala, Gulu, Hoima, and Mbale.

### **Action Points**

Action points	Responsible person/ organization
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Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda (FENU)

Website: [www.fenu.or.ug](http://www.fenu.or.ug) E-mail : [info@fenu.or.ug](mailto:info@fenu.or.ug) Phone : +256 312 262154/5

Circulate ECD education Policy + NIECD to all members	NCC
send concept on local Government Indicator roll out	NCC
circulate and call for funding	FENU secretariat
Look at a meeting to map activities of NGOs	NCC + FENU
During the next meeting, use some of the session sharing an experience in ECD (Include funding, accessibility e.t.c)	
GPE follow up – discussion on letter raising concerns if retreat postponed	

### **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2013 at Plan International.