



Highlights of the activities in year 2010:

This year MAPECE participated actively in several activities related to early child care and preschool organized by the Curriculum Development Division. These included the validation of ELDS indicators for children of 4 years of age and below, supplementary materials for the national curriculum for children below 4 years of age which is scheduled to be implemented in 2012 and the writing of the National Pre-school Assessment Standard.

MAPECE was invited to many government meetings and took an active part in the National Preschool Conference 2010. This Conference was held on the 29 Jun–2 July 2010. MAPECE was a member of the Organizing Committee and manned the registration desk together with PTM. Prof. Chiam Heng Keng presented the paper, “Mastering Numeracy Skill: Why and How?” in the plenary session while Ms Oh Year Choo was a speaker in the parallel session. Ms Eveleen Khoo conducted the Music Workshop. Both Datuk Dr Chiam Heng Keng and Ms Wong Ming Tsuey presented Best Practices Across The Nations in the Pre-Conference Session.

MAPECE which spearheaded the formation of the Early Childhood Care, Development and Education Network continued to take a leading role. MAPECE is leading the ECCDE Network from July 2010 to June 2012. Professor Chiam is the current Chairman of the Network while Ms Eveleen Khoo is the Secretary.

MAPECE conducted two National Preschool Curriculum Standard (NPCS) Workshops to help preschool teachers understand NPCS and how to use the Curriculum effectively. MAPECE felt that it has the capability to help preschool teachers because all the workshop facilitators (who are MAPECE members) were actively involved in the development of NPCS. One workshop was in Kuala Lumpur while the other was in Johor Bahru.



NPCS Workshop held at Kuala Lumpur.

Forum on World Trends in Early Child Care and Education (ECCE)

A forum was held on Saturday 5 March 2011 in Hotel Midah, Kuala Lumpur in conjunction with MAPECE'S AGM. The forum was to enable its members and guests to be cognizant of the early child care and education scenario globally and locally. The speakers were Mr Victor Karunan, Deputy Representative of UNICEF to Malaysia and Dr Ng Soo Boon, the Head of the Early Childhood Care and Education Sector, Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education. In the afternoon, Datuk Dr Chiam Heng Keng, who is EPP1 Champion, provided some deeper insights into EPPI by giving a critical analysis of the EPP1: The Ramping Up of Early Child Care and Education.



MAPECE
7th AGM
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Developing Capacity in Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) through Public-Private Partnership: The Malaysian Experiences

*Presented by Datuk Dr Chiam Heng Keng at the UNESCO First World ECCE Conference on 27-29 September 2010, Moscow**

This paper acknowledges the importance of quality early childhood care and education (ECCE), especially for vulnerable children. ECCE provides children in their formative years with a sure start for development and capacity building. This capacity building is not only for the child's sake but also for that of the nation. It cannot be denied that quality ECCE is expensive and the government cannot shoulder the burden alone; it needs the participation of the private sector.

In recent months, the Government of Malaysia, under its Government Transformation Programme, has initiated the ramp up of quality ECCE known as Entry Point Project 1 (EPP1) as one of several projects to raise Gross National Income (GNI) to enable Malaysia to achieve developed country status by 2020. The target of EPP1 is to achieve 97% preschool enrolment by 2020 and to raise the percentage of children in childcare centres from the current 4% to 25% by 2020.

To build up the capacity of these children, we also need to build up the capacity of childcare providers and preschool teachers. Though preschool teachers in the Ministry of Education have to have bachelor in early childhood education (ECE), the vast majority of the preschool teachers in the private sector are non-graduates and have on-the-job training, short-term and unaccredited courses. One of the enablers of the EPP1 is the establishment of training centres throughout the country to enable early childhood educators to acquire at least a diploma in ECE.

To increase human capital or capacity building of children in their formation years, quality ECCE must be both affordable and accessible. To achieve affordability and accessibility, EPP1 needs 6 other enablers besides teacher training. These are:

- (i) Expanding the voucher scheme not only to increase the current financial assistance but also to extend it to lower middle income families;
- (ii) Enhancing corporate participation. There are three proposals: setting up childcare centres in the workplace; setting up ECCE funds for their employees to subsidize the cost of childcare; and outsourcing childcare service for their employees to ECCE vendors.
- (iii) Revising the licensing process to harmonize the application procedures across local governments and to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.
- (iv) Providing ECCE operators with preferential soft loan.
- (v) Partnering with property developers for land acquisition or leasing: for developers to set aside land for setting up childcare centres and preschools and to sell the land below market price say 70-80% of the market price.
- (vi) Setting up the ECCE Council for professional certification and development of early childhood educators, childcare centres, preschools and training institutions.

Through this Public-Private Partnership, it is hoped that every child will have equal opportunities for capacity development, thus providing each of them with a sure start for the development of his/her potential to the fullest possible. This is the right of every child.

*This Conference was organized by UNESCO in conjunction with the City of Moscow, Russia. About 1000 participants comprising Heads of States, Ministers or Deputy Minister of Education/Social Welfare, Director-Generals, Senior Government Officers from 65 Member States and UN Representatives, ECCE experts and civil society were brought together to assess the progress towards the goal of expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education (ECCE), especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.