

Steps of Advocacy

Impact of the advocacy (e.g. changes made through advocacy) is intrinsically related to the process being followed all through the advocacy endeavors. There are certain steps which need to be followed in the process of developing advocacy plan, although they may overlap at the time of actual implementation.

First step is to identify issues, determine its causes & consequences. Once causes and consequences are determined, then prioritise the issues and begin to identify possible solutions. Based on the present situation of early childhood education, the issues which may be prioritised in the advocacy agenda of the NCER.

✧ Universal access ✧ Infrastructure development ✧ Quality enhancement ✧ Capacity building of functionaries ✧ Strong monitoring and evaluation system ✧ Mother tongue early education opportunities to tribal children ✧ Policy framework ✧ Legal framework ensuring ECCE a Right of the Child.

Second step is to formulate objective that aims to change policies, programmes, position of decision makers, practice. Objective is to be determined on the basis of what to be changed; for whom; who will make change; by how much; and by when. **Third step** is to undertake research and analysis to make advocacy evidence based. Study and research is very much necessary to review the policies & programs; identify the gaps; recommend ways and means to address the gaps. Information for research may be gathered from government report & statistics; academic research; judicial order; community record; media articles; etc. **Fourth step** is to identify advocacy stakeholders who have power and influence to change the policy. **Fifth step** is to undertake the activities as per action plan and make periodic evaluation of the progress of the action plan with the output, outcomes, and impact matrix.

Types of Advocacy

Advocacy may be made with different institutions (legislature, executive, judiciary, and media), at different level (micro, meso, and macro), and different forum (public and political). However, advocacy is broadly classified as Legislative Advocacy, Executive Advocacy, Judicial Advocacy, Media Advocacy, and Public Advocacy.

Strategies of Advocacy

There is no uniform strategy for advocacy. It may vary depending on the issue, scope and political environment. However, for the issue of ECE, strategies need to be pursued must include Research; Networking; Mass mobilization; Media mobilization; Policy dialogue; Judicial action.

Stakeholders Mapping

Before undertaking advocacy work, it is important to identify the prospective stakeholders who have power and influence to change the policy. It is also essential to scale the importance and influence of each of the stakeholders. Stakeholders mapping and power analysis will provide essential information to build an effective advocacy planning. For the purpose of policy advocacy on ECE, the potential stakeholders would be, Government (preferably Ministry W & CD, HRD, Tribal Welfare), Political Parties; Constitutional & Statutory Commission (preferably Commission for Protection of Child Rights; Commission for ST, Planning Commission), Local self government; Parliamentary committees; Law commission; People forum; Media, Judiciary; International bodies; Civil Society network.

Workshop Methods

The workshop has been designed in such a way that it provides ample opportunity to the participants to share their views, opinions, and also practical experiences. Combination of participatory, interactive and consultative methods will be followed throughout thematic sessions of the workshop. Aid and appliances such as projector, board, marker, drawing chart, resource handouts shall be used in the workshop.

Outcomes

By the end of 2-days Perspective Building Workshop, the participants will be able to further their knowledge on present situation of early childhood education; know the key techniques of advocacy; understand the importance of the issues to each stakeholders and their level of influence; understand the stages in advocacy planning; have ideas about different levels advocacy; and able to make advocacy plan.



Prepared by National Campaign for ECCE Right
(A Juridical Advocacy Initiative of CLAP)
Under IDC Project



Workshop Brochure

Perspective Building on Policy Advocacy for Early Childhood Care and Education

The National Campaign for ECCE Right (NCER) was set into motion by CLAP in the year 2007 under In Defence of the Child (IDC-IV) Project with the support of Bernard van Leer Foundation to undertake evidence-based advocacy to influence state institutions for bringing policy reforms and developing legal framework on early childhood care and education in conformity with Article-45 of the Constitution of India which directs that *'The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education to all children until they complete the age of six years'*. The campaign began with a mission to build a national network (e.g. civil society consortium on ECCE) to carry forward the advocacy endeavour through network approach. In the initial years, NCER laid focus to hold public debate on the legal position of the provision contained under Article-45 of the Constitution of India and to generate demand for legal framework for early childhood care and education so that opportunity for accessibility to child care and early education service shall be guaranteed to all children without discrimination. NCER made successful networking with 140 CSOs including NGOs, Network of NGOs, and Academic Institutions, etc covering 22 States and 3 Union Territories of India. Dialogues and debates on the legal position of Article -45 were held with network partners through Regional Consultations held at Ranchi, Shillong, Goa as well as National Consultation organized at Bhubaneswar during 2008-09. Seminars were organized at the academic institutions to capture scholastic views on the necessity of a statutory back up for article-45 of the Constitution of India. NCER also commissioned a research on ECCE whereby the legal position of article-45 was examined, and gaps & inadequacies in the existing service delivery systems were critically reviewed. Issues, concerns and recommendations that had been drawn from the consultation, seminars, research etc were brought to the attention of the government through media, memorandum, issue-based representation, paper presentation etc. The advocacy endeavour of NCER between the period of 2007-10 had resulted success with incorporation of early childhood care and education provision under section-11 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 which states that *'with a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education and to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years, the appropriate government may make necessary arrangement for providing free pre-school education for such children'*. Whereas section-11 of the RTE Act has put obligation on the part of the state government to make necessary arrangement for free pre-school education, NCER strives to promote and engage a network of NGOs to undertake advocacy for bringing policy and practice reforms in ECE in Odisha State so that successful model of advocacy practiced by Odisha ECE Network shall be shared with NCER network of other States for replication. With the implementation of IDC-V Project from August 2010, NCER strategically stretched its networking programme to develop a network for promotion of social activism for early education issue in Odisha State. Network building process was started with network research for identification of potential partners followed by online membership drive, district level network promotion workshops and state level network consultation. In order to promote social activism among the network partners, NCER came out with an idea to hold perspective building workshop for enhancing existing knowledge, capacity and expertise of the network on advocacy methods to bring reforms in policy and practice of ECE.

What is ECCE?

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) foster holistic development and learning of young children from birth to eight years of age. “Care” includes health, nutrition and hygiene in a secure and nurturing environment. “Education” includes stimulation, socialization, guidance, participation, and learning and developmental activities. “Care” and “Education” are inseparable: both are needed and reinforce each other to create a strong foundation for children’s subsequent lifelong learning and wellbeing. (www.unesco.org)

Early childhood is an all-important period embedded with issues of ‘care ‘ and ‘education’. All these concepts are integrated in a nomenclature called “Early Childhood Care and Education”. The term ‘care’ in the nomenclature requires that the health, nutrition, psychological and emotional needs of the children have to be met adequately for their holistic development. The term ‘education’ covers learning, a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, habits, and attitudes in order to prepare the young child to enter the formal education system. (NCERT; National Curriculum Framework-2005 Position Paper; National Focus Group on Early Childhood Care and Education).

Early childhood care and education assumes great significance for holistic development of child, which helps children to develop readiness (i.e. in terms of physical and cognitive readiness) for primary schooling. ECCE is central to the lives of every young child. (*Edward Melhuish. Konstantinos; ECCE- International Perspectives, 2006; Ruteldge Publication*).

Why is ECCE important ?

Early childhood years set the foundation for life. (*Education International, Early childhood education: A Global Scenario, 2010*)

Early childhood is period where fundamental values are fostered and practised. (*Ethics and Politics in early childhood education, Gunila Dahiberg and Peter Moss, 2005*)

ECE results in easier transition to primary school and better completion rates. (*UNESCO*)

ECCE is crucial for nurturing healthy, strong bodies and minds and optimal wiring and functioning of the brain; has a beneficial effect on school preparedness and later learning, and leads to higher school enrolment, particularly for girls; is cost-effective in that it serves as preventive measures, saving cost for later compensation and remedial interventions; yields higher investment returns than in any other levels of education. (www.unesco.org)

International Instruments

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which is the most extensive international treaty on the rights of the children commits the state parties to ensuring the rights of the children on the principle of Best Interest of the Child, and Non-discrimination. ECCE is Goal 1 of the six Education for Goals agreed by 164 Governments in Dakar, 2000 (internationally called as Dakar Framework for Action, 2000) which speaks for ‘*Expanding and Improving Early Childhood Care and Education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children*’. Moscow Framework of Action, 2010 reaffirms states obligation to address health, nutrition, security, social and emotional development, language and learning for holistic development of the children.

Legal and Policy Provision for ECCE in India

The Government of India recognizes the significance of ECCE, which has been included as a constitutional provision through the amended Article 45 (The Constitution Act, 2002) which directs that “*The State shall endeavor to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years*”. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) which came into effect from April 1, 2010, has also addressed ECCE under Section 11 of the Act which states, “*with a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education and to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years, the appropriate Government may make necessary arrangement for providing free pre -school education for such children*.”

National Policy on Education, 1986 recognizes ECCE as a critical input in the strategy of human resource development, as a feeder and support programme for primary education and also as a support service for working women. The policy aimed to bring about a full integration of childcare and pre-primary education in order to feed and strengthen primary education. National Plan of Action for Children, 2005 set out plan for early childhood care and education to universalize early childhood services to ensure children’s physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.

At present, ECCE services in India is rendered by the government through ICDS programme which provides comprehensive package of services through anganwadi centres.

Country having ECCE Policy/Law

Ireland	Child Care (Pre-school Services) 1996	Mongolia	National Policy on Integrated ECD
Brazil	National Plan of Action for ECCE	Nigeria	National Policy for mainstreaming ECCE
China	National ECCE Policy	Philippines	Early Childhood Care and Development Law,2000
Srilanka	National Policy on ECCD		

ICDS Programme: A Critique

ECE service under ICDS programme is inadequate, often inappropriate, in poor quality, and unaccountable. ICDS programme does not have the balance linkage between health, nutrition and pre- primary education. ICDS is a programme of basic health (i.e. immunization, health check-up) and supplementary feeding rather than a programme for early childhood education (i.e. pre-primary education). From policy approach to actual implementation, there are plenty of problems ICDS particularly related to pre-school activities. Pre-school education at Anganwadi centers is hampered largely due to (i) lack of basic infrastructure (i.e. building, space, play & game materials, learning kits), (ii) untrained or inadequately trained pre-school instructor (AWW), (iii) absence of standard pre-school curriculum indicating learning methods for pre-school activities, language to be used for communication; (iv) lack of monitoring and supervision; (v) absence of community participation.

The Evaluation Report on ICDS prepared by Programme Evaluation Organization, Planning Commission of India has thrown up number of gaps in the ICDS programme in Odisha such as ✧ 53.5% of AWCs have own building. 26.2% of AWCs are placed at AWWs house, Community place, or open place; ✧ Odisha is the 11th ranked state in terms of performance of ICDS Programme in Infrastructure Facility; ✧ In-service training on pre-school education is inadequate; ✧ Odisha is catalogued as Low Performing State in providing appropriate pre-school education; ✧ More than 50% of AWWs have education qualification of matriculate or below.

A study conducted by CLAP in the year 2009 has brought out some critical gaps in ICDS programme in Odisha in the context of pre-school education service. The study revealed that, ✧ Anganwadis have lacked with minimum infrastructure; 52% AWCs do not have own building, 78% have no toilet facility, 70% of AWCs are not provided with electricity connection; ✧ 75% of AWWs responded that job course training and refresher training did not have much impact in improving their pre-school teaching skills; ✧ DuetolackofconceptualclarityaboutwhatisECEandwhatisnotECE,AWWsaregiving more stress to conventional method of teaching and formal learning such as reading, and writing; ✧ PSE Curriculum called Arunima is available, but it is not followed uniformly due lack of orientation to facilitator; ✧ TLM supply is insufficient as per requirements.

Need of Perspective Building Workshop

In order to promote social activism among the network partners, NCER came out with an idea to hold perspective building workshop for enhancing existing knowledge, capacity and expertise of the network on advocacy methods to bring reforms in policy and practice of ECE. This 2-days long workshop will be helpful for the participants to learn about the advocacy agenda of NCER, present situation of early childhood education, advocacy strategies, advocacy methods, potential stakeholders and institutions to be influenced, and how to prepare advocacy plan.

Workshop Module

The workshop has been designed to cover the followings components. A brief notation of the components is given below for ready reference for participants. It is pertinent to mention that the description given below is illustrative which can be elaborated by the resource persons.

What is Advocacy ?

Advocacy is usually about influencing public policies. Hence, advocacy requires a systematic and organized effort to use the state institutions to bring policy and legal reforms. Advocacy does not happen in vacuum. It needs scope and space of the political system to influence the government to improve policies, enact law or to bring structural and operational reforms for better implementation of law, policy and programmes.