



# CATALYZE Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Together For Early Childhood Evidence (T4ECE)

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CIES  
March 2024



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# CATALYZE Together for Early Childhood Evidence (T4ECE)

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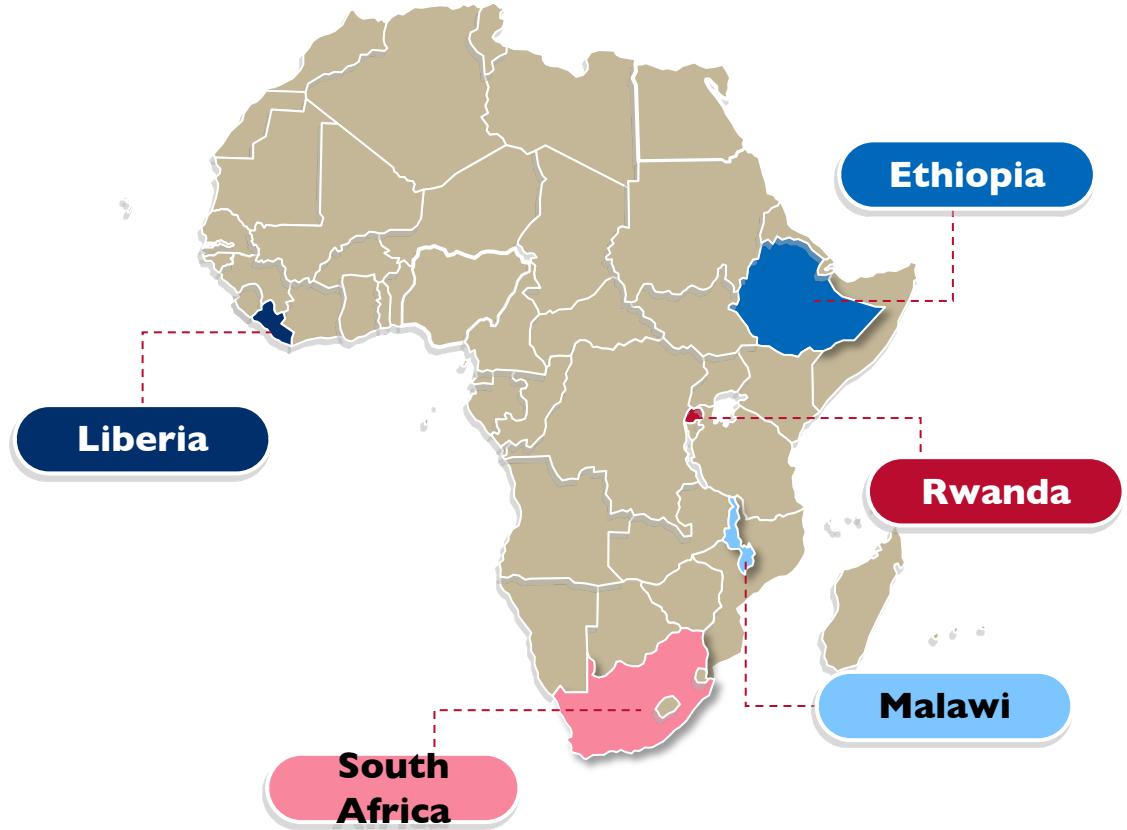


USAID Ethiopia





## Together for Early Childhood Evidence (T4ECE)

- Funded by USAID since 2018, Together for Early Childhood Evidence (T4ECE) accelerates progress toward data-driven early childhood education systems in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Under CATALYZE ECCE, led by Palladium
- Convenes government officials, researchers, and other stakeholders interested in pre-primary data and measurement
- Facilitates cross-country learning on how pre-primary systems can better use data to improve young children's early learning experiences.

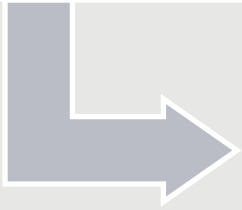
T4ECE Task Force Teams are working in 5 countries to explore early childhood data can improve their national ECCE systems



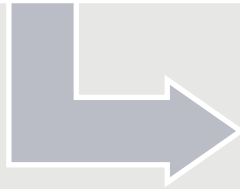
# T4ECE Research Projects

Country	Project	Presenter
 <b>Ethiopia</b>	<b>Establishing a Knowledge Hub for Early Childhood Evidence and Resources</b>	
 <b>Liberia</b>	<b>Piloting a national early childhood measurement tool in Liberia</b>	<i>Bart Pogue, USAID Liberia</i>
 <b>Malawi</b>	<b>Mapping early childhood data use and gaps in Malawi</b>	<i>Heather Rice, USAID Malawi</i>
 <b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Measuring early childhood learning quality in Rwanda</b>	<i>Theoneste Niyonzima, USAID Rwanda</i>
 <b>South Africa</b>	<b>Establishing an early childhood information ecosystem</b>	<i>Dr. Felicia Wilson Young, USAID South Africa</i>

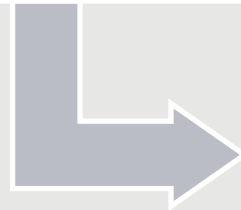
Defining which data  
you need



Determining how the  
data should be used



Outlining how to get  
those data



Building a sustainable  
system



Steps To A Data-Informed ECCE System

A white SUV is driving across a makeshift bridge made of several wooden planks laid across a river. The bridge is surrounded by dense, lush green vegetation and trees. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The SUV has a spare tire mounted on its roof rack and a license plate that reads '11122 L'.

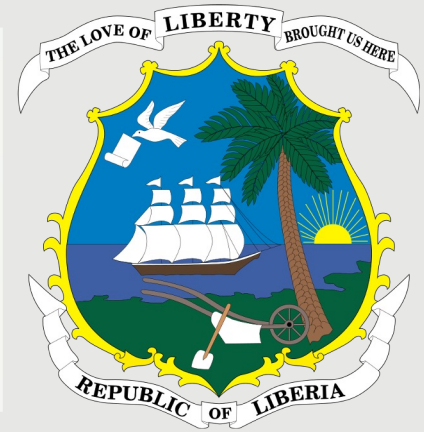
# Piloting a national early childhood measurement tool in Liberia

Barton Pogue  
USAID Liberia

# Background: Early childhood education system in Liberia

Liberian education system: 3-6-3-3-4, but implementation is inconsistent.

- School fees are a barrier
  - Inadequate domestic budget
  - Limited instructional focus on foundational skills
  - Learning environments lack engagement
  - Lack of regular data
  - No large-scale parenting programs
- 
- +Early learning curriculum in 2014/15
  - +Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS)
  - +Tests at G3, G6, G9, and G12





## Identified gap in data/evidence

ECE data collection by the Ministry of Education is limited to the **annual school census**.

No measures of **school readiness** through direct assessment in Liberia.

No measures of **child learning and development outcomes**.



## Research Objective

To **pilot test** the adapted International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) tool to ensure it is relevant and workable in Liberia.

First step to developing a **national early childhood assessment tool for Liberia.**

Will support the T4ECE goals to build a **data-informed early childhood system.**



## Building capacity of local research team

**Dr. Cecelia Cassell** – Dean, William V. S. Tubman College of Education, [University of Liberia](#): *Project lead, proposal development, management of data collection and reporting*

**Mr. Alphonso Wright** – Child Development Specialist, William V. S. Tubman College of Education, [University of Liberia](#): *Data collection and reporting*

**Ms. Jestina T. Sartee** – Director, Bureau of Early Childhood Education, [Ministry of Education](#): *Data collection and overall quality assurance*

**Mr. Edwin G. Myers** – Director for EMIS, [Ministry of Education](#): *Quality assurance, data entry and analysis*

**Mr. Gabriel L. Nelson** – Consultant/Early Childhood Development Manager, [ADARA Research and Management Consultancy](#): *Proposal development, quality assurance and data interpretation*

# Goals for data informed early childhood system

**Vision:** A scaled-up, nationwide ECD data collection system to measure school readiness and child outcomes.

**Longer term:** Contribute to a national integrated and cross-sectoral ECD data collection and management system.



A photograph of a classroom in Malawi. A woman in a white shirt and a patterned skirt stands in the background. The wall is light blue and features educational posters for shapes (Circle, Triangle, Rectangle, Square) and numbers (0-9). Children are sitting on the floor, some looking at the camera and others engaged in activities.

# Mapping early childhood data use and gaps in Malawi

Heather Rice  
USAID Malawi

# Background: Early childhood education system in Malawi

- “We shall provide and make it a priority for every child to go through early childhood development”- Malawi’s Vision 2063
- According to the National Education Sector Investment Plan 2020-2030 (NESIP):
  - Low access to ECD, including for orphans and vulnerable children and those with special education needs
  - Lack of infrastructure and TLMs
  - Reliance on volunteer caregivers
  - Poor coordination between responsible Ministries and other stakeholders
  - Objectives: to increase access to ECD services, to improve quality of ECD learning and teaching, and to improve governance and management of ECD

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2019 baseline</b>	<b>2030 target</b>
ECD net enrolment rate (NER)	48%	100%
Operational ECD centers	12,220	17,220
Percent caregivers trained	50%	100%
Caregiver to child ratio	1:69	1:25

# Background: Early childhood education system in Malawi

- Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) both have roles:
  - Community based child care centers under MoGCDSW are one of the main structures for providing education to 3-5 year olds
  - MoE developing plans for a pilot preparatory class for 5-year-olds in 18 schools, as a step toward introducing in all schools to develop foundational learning skills before Standard I enrollment at the age of 6
- There are National and District level technical working groups
- The curriculum needs to be aligned to primary to promote school readiness
- USAID's flagship national reading program activity, the NextGeneration Early Grade Reading Activity, includes a pre-primary pilot targeting 100 pre-primary sites which are public, community-based, and private, focused on pre-literacy and SEL for 5-year-olds

## Data:

- The government of Malawi recognizes the importance of data on ECD programming; the NESIP's 3rd ECD objective, for example, includes the development of an Early Childhood Development and Management Information System (ECDMIS) and use of the data for adaptive programming as a priority action
- The World Bank funded Investing in Early Years for Productivity and Growth Project (IEYP) is developing an ECDMIS for their 13 selected districts (out of 32). The ECDMIS system:
  - Is within the MoGCDSW
  - Collects caregiver and ECD center data
  - Should be scaled up to all 32 education districts
- The primary EMIS system collects transition-related data (which primary school entrants come from ECD centers)

## Building capacity of local research team

- The researchers are early childhood development and education (ECDE) specialists from the University of Malawi (UNIMA)
  - Mrs. Loveness Musiyapo, MA in Early Childhood Studies from the University of Roehampton, UK
  - Mr. Happy Nkhonya, Master of Early Childhood Education from Macquarie University, Australia
  - Dr. Mayeso Lazaro, Interdisciplinary PhD in Human Geography and Social Sciences from the University of Hull, UK
- Research guided by the National ECE Taskforce, which is co-chaired by MoE and MoGCDSW
- Through T4ECE, research team will use frameworks for building data-driven early childhood systems, and draw on international expertise/thought partners to address their research questions



## Identified gap in data/evidence

- The establishment of a harmonized system for ECD data collection, analysis and dissemination is necessary
- Data is needed for informing programming and advocacy about formalization of ECD
- Evidence-based planning and programming in ECD interventions is limited due to:
  - Lack of a coordinated data system
  - Lack of understanding of what data is available and how it is used by various stakeholders
  - Current ECDMIS system that does not include all districts

# Research Objective

- To strengthen the ECDMIS into a “comprehensive data hub” which provides information related to access, quality, and efficiency, addresses the current data gaps, and is accessible for all ECD stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making.
- **Diagnostic early childhood education data mapping:**
  - Interviews at the center/community, district, and national levels, and document review, will be carried out and will identify:
    - Which data is collected and available, including:
      - ECD center details - location, accessibility, staffing, infrastructure and sanitation, availability of play and learning materials, school feeding, community involvement, financing arrangements
      - Child details - enrollment and attendance, transition to primary school, developmental and learning outcomes
      - Caregiver details – education level, training received
    - Data collection, access, and use patterns of stakeholders
    - Data needs, including those that are unmet
    - How data is used to inform decisions
    - Gaps in the link between EMIS and ECDMIS
    - Recommendations about how to strengthen the ECDMIS

## Goals for data informed early childhood system

- To have an ECDMIS system “capable of capturing access, quality and efficiency indicators to inform decision” making
  - By providing guidance to strengthen the ECDMIS, the activity will promote evidence-informed decision making and improve ECD service provision
  - The ECDMIS will be a data hub for researchers, policy makers, and others
- To inform upscaling of the ECDMIS system by the MoGCDSW to all districts

# Measuring early childhood learning quality in Rwanda

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Theoneste Niyonzima  
USAID Rwanda





# Identified gap in data/evidence



- **Limited Data on quality**
  - Limited data on curriculum and classroom Instruction Delivery by teachers as well classroom environment quality /Qualification of pre-primary teachers /caregivers
- **Limited data on early Learning outcomes for young children.**
  - There is no data collection systems in place to inform policy makers in real time and no tool is in place to measure early learning outcomes nationally like EGRA/LEGRA/ LARS tools are used in primary schools.
- **Oversight for Children with Disabilities as a cross - cutting issue**
- **The T4ECE is trying to bridge this gaps by conducting a research project entitled : Measuring early childhood learning quality in Rwanda. The project is spearheaded by Save the Children. The Measurement tool is IDELA**

# Research Objectives



- To avail a nationally agreed tool with adapted Benchmarks to measure Early Learning Outcomes,
- To determine the emergent skills children have when they complete pre-primary schools in numeracy, literacy, socio-emotional, gross and fine motor, socio-emotional development domains
- To determine factors of classroom quality that correlates with school readiness
- To build the capacity of the GoR to effectively monitor, evaluate ECD programs in the country.

# USAID's RESPONSES



## Support to T4ECE.

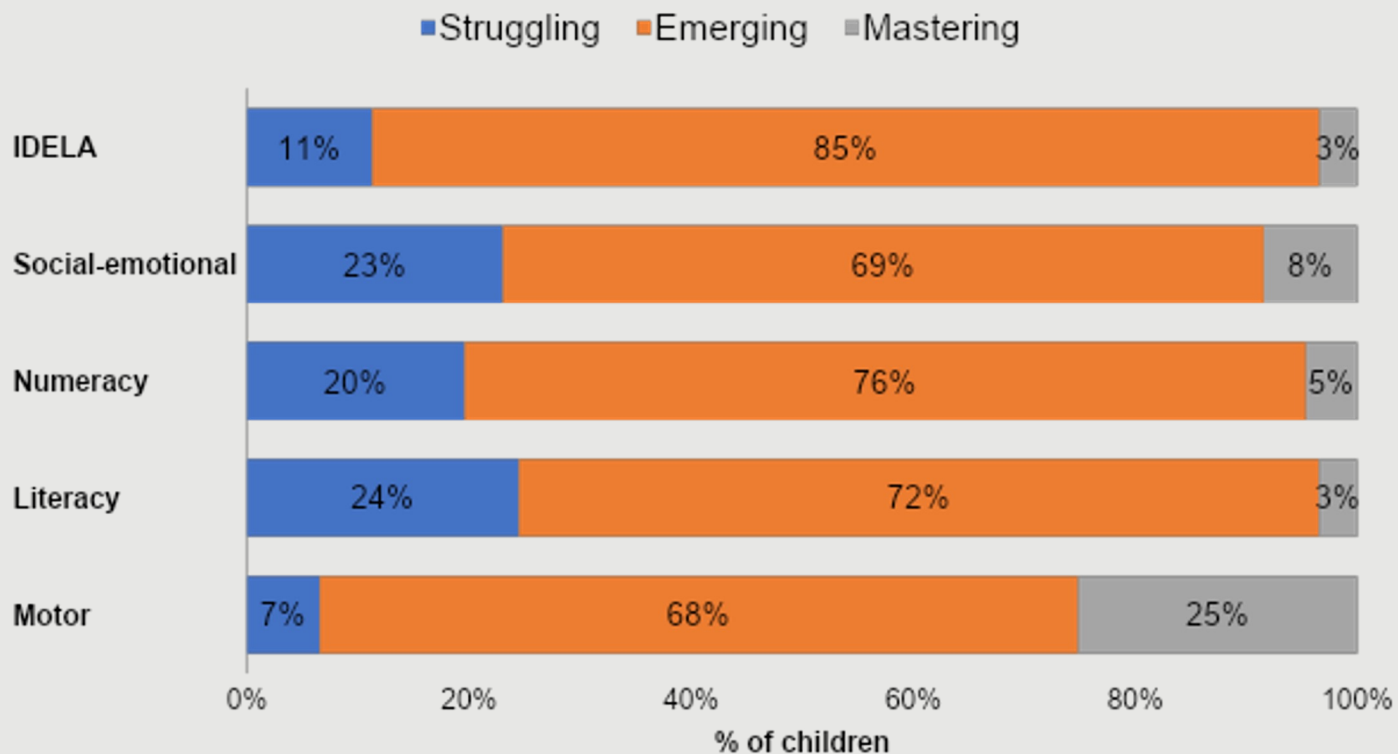
- Support the GoR through Establishment of T4ECE Task Force ( CO-chair )  
– USAID, MINEDUC, UNICEF, StC, URCE, WVI, REB and NCDA
- Hosted African Consortium Workshop of CPDMA in Kigali in 2019 and the development of Country Level Action Plan ( 2019).
- Contributed funds to the ( \$20K) for Save the Children to conduct Early Learning Assessments at National Level.

## Key Results

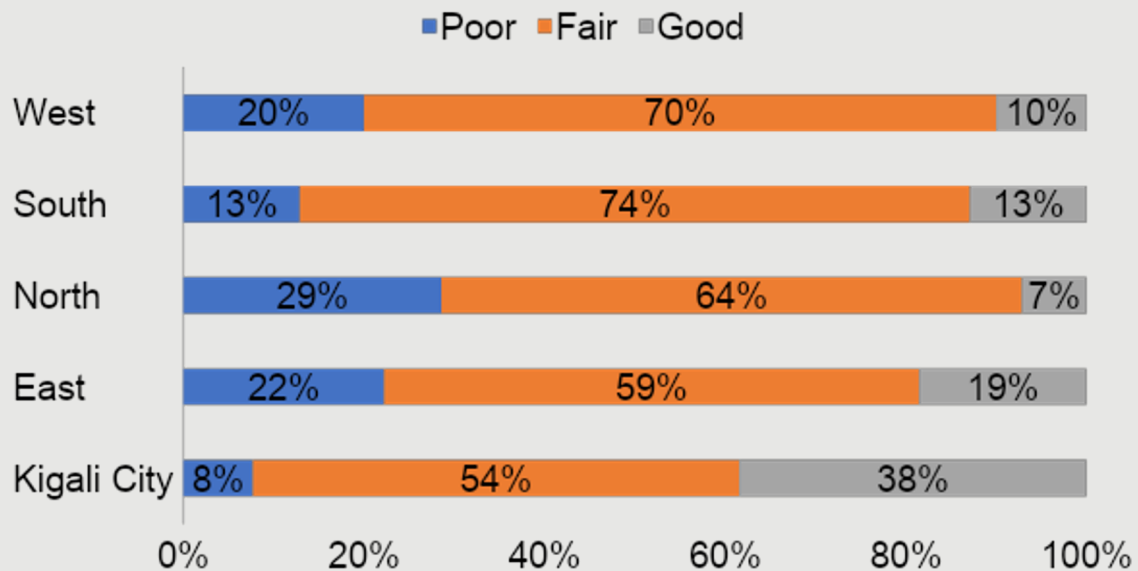
- **Higher quality** classrooms were associated with the **presence** of more **experienced** teachers, teachers' **network** support, and presence of a **nutrition** program at the school
- Higher quality classrooms were associated with stronger **learning and development skills** for children
- Resources and teaching related to literacy and numeracy, as well as interactions between teachers and children were most highly correlated with children's skills. Classrooms rated as having **poor quality** were associated with particularly **low student learning scores**.



## Proportion of PPE students mastering IDELA content, by domain



### Proportion of classrooms by IDELA-CE Total score categories, by province



# Building capacity of local research team



- The research team include skilled and Experienced Save the Children Rwanda's IDELA benchmarking and research team.
- The project will provide training to government personnel.
  - Staff of NESAs : DG, SEIs, preschool teachers and caregivers
  - MINEDUC: Statistics departments specialist, DG for M&E
  - REB staff: DG, District Education Officers
  - NCDA: DG and its M&E specialist
  - T4ECE Staff
  - Enumerators for data collection.
  - DPs and other stakeholders in the country.

The Task Force's road map after the training : (1) Approval of IDELA age adapted Benchmarks, (2) Recognition and Institutionalisation by GoR, (3) National Use by Stakeholders.

# Goals for data informed early childhood system



- Bridge the gap of limited access to real-time ECD data in the country
- To avail data on ECD programs and making it accessible to all stakeholders in the Country
- The IDELA benchmarking aims at establishing performance standards for pre-primary learners
- The IDELA institutionalization: started by USAID Schools and System to foster ownership of the tool by the GoR
- The Task Force hopes that the results and learnings from contributes to the global corpus of evidence in ECE measurement.

A map of South Africa is shown in a dark blue silhouette against a light grey background. The text 'SOUTH AFRICA' is written in white capital letters across the lower part of the map.

# Establishing an early childhood information ecosystem in South Africa

Dr. Felicia Wilson Young  
USAID South Africa



# Background: Early childhood education system in South Africa

## Understanding the current context

- The Department of Basic Education embarked on three strands of research to inform the planning for increasing access and improving quality of ECD provisioning:

### 2021 ECD Census:

To support the planning and monitoring for expanding access to quality ECD programmes for children in South Africa

**42,420**  
**ECD Programmes**

Access

### Thrive by Five:

To monitor trends over time in the proportion of young children who are developmentally on track for age in key areas of development

**45% of children in ELPs**  
**are developmentally**  
**on track**

Quality

### Public Expenditure and Institutional Review:

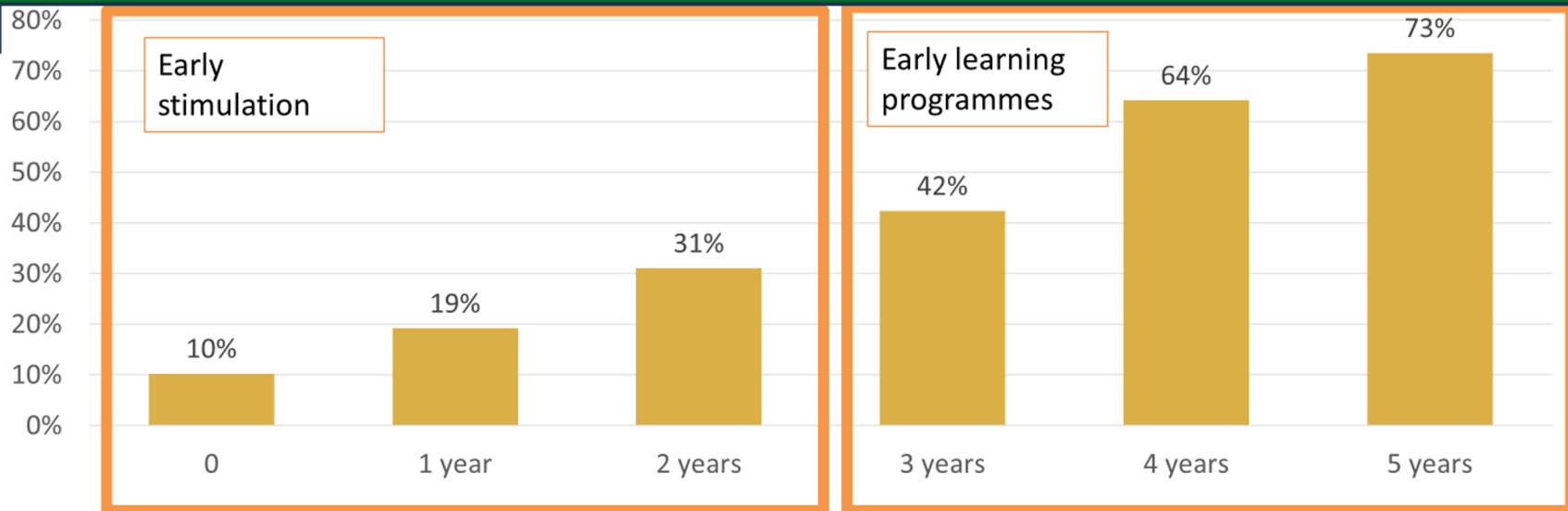
To determine the extent to which spending across government departments and spheres is aligned with ECD priority outcomes.

**Need to invest in key**  
**interventions with**  
**highest expected returns**

Funding

# Context: The access and quality challenge

Integrated services for all:  
Early nutrition, health, safety and social protection



**Access:** 830,000 children aged 3 – 5 **not yet** attending any form of early learning.

**Quality:** Only 45% of children in early learning are developmentally on track (Thrive by Five)

# The situation of children (our operating context)

Ensuring redress



## The children...

Two-thirds of 0-5 year-olds (4.5 million children) live in the **poorest 40% of homes**.

Nearly half of all 0-5 year-olds live in **rural or low infrastructure areas**.

## The ELPs...

Nearly **40%** of ELPs are run from **homes** (5% in state-owned venues).

The average no. of children enrolled in an ELP is **39** (33 for home-based).

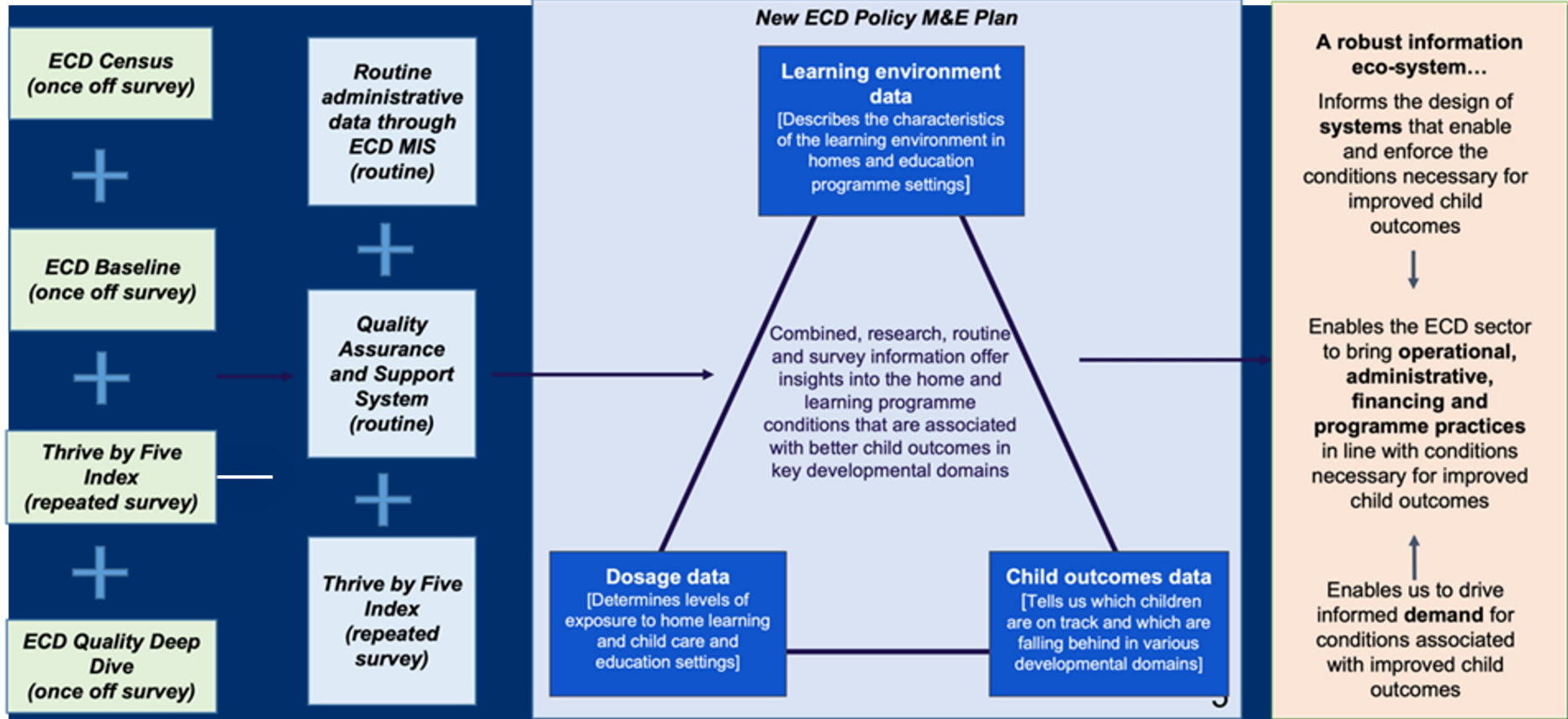
## The gap...

**66%** of the **poorest** children (Q1) are not in ELPs compared to **36%** of the **wealthiest**.

About **80%** of **0-5s in poor rural areas** do not attend ELPs.

About 800,000 children receive the per child **ECD subsidy** – but about **4.7 million 0-5s** are eligible to receive it.





# Early Learning Information Ecosystem

# Building capacity of local research team

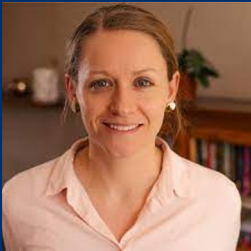


**Dr. Sonja Giese (ECD Measure)**

**Founding Executive Director Data Driven 2030**



**Dr. Colin Almeleh (Ilifa Labantwana); -Innovation Edge -Executive Director  
Director of Knowledge, Information and Data Solutions (KiDS) at Ilifa  
Labantwana, A CATALYZE T4ECE South Africa Task Force member.**

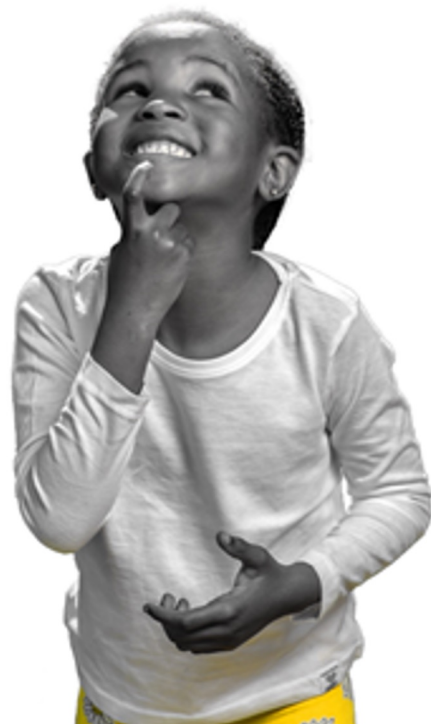
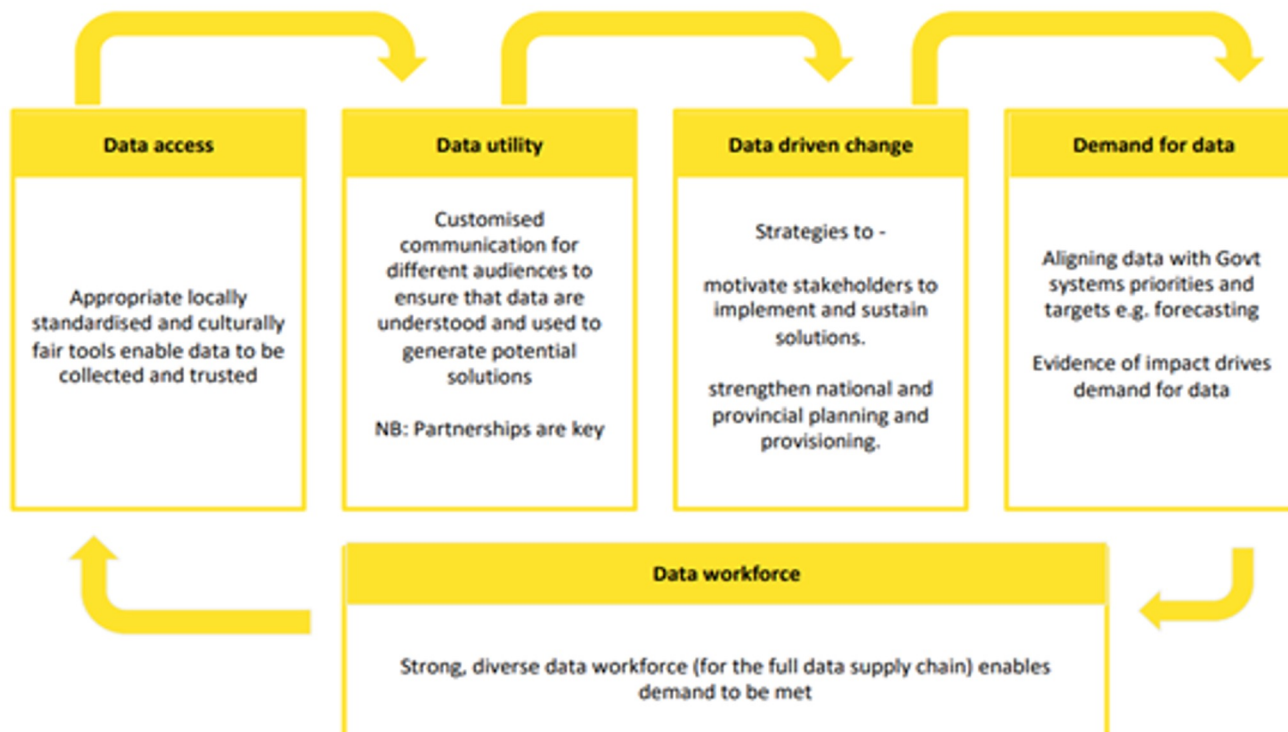


**Dr. Janeli Kotze (Department of Basic Education) Monitoring & Evaluation  
Division/ Director: Early Childhood Development at Department of Basic**

# Goals for data informed early childhood system

## Lessons on data sharing and feedback, to drive change

What has worked, and what needs more work?





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Thank you

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[together4ece.org](http://together4ece.org)