



Investing in Early Childhood Development for the sustainability of the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)



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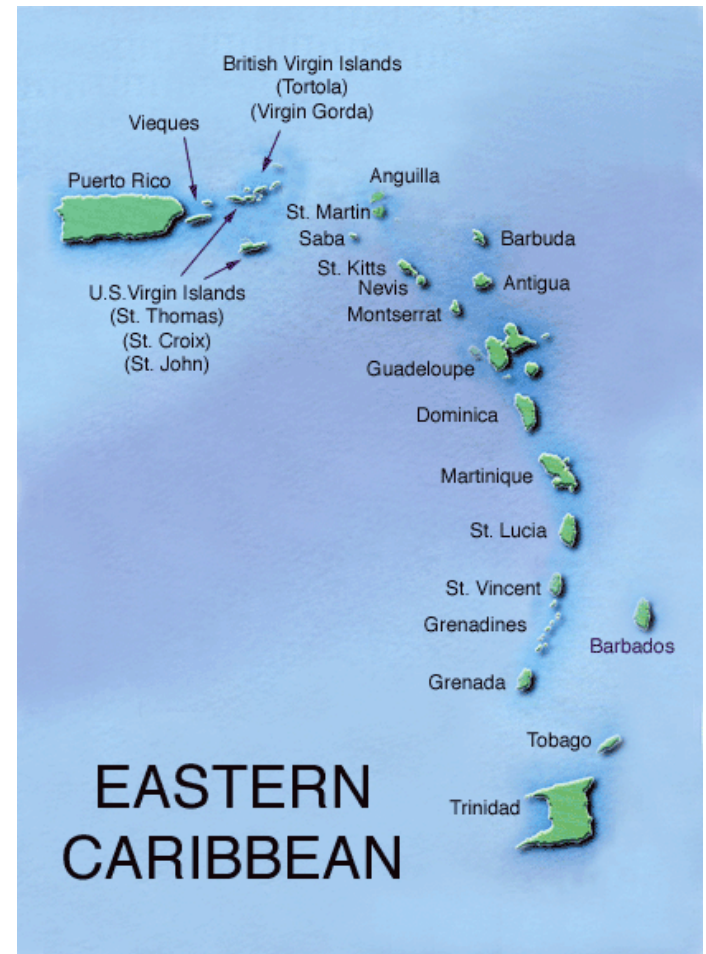
Aims of the Presentation:

- The OECS' goals of Early Childhood Development
- Types of investments in Early Childhood Development
- Benefits of investing in Early Childhood Development
- Major Investors in Early Childhood Development
- in the OECS
- Recommendations for investing in Early Childhood Development in the OECS



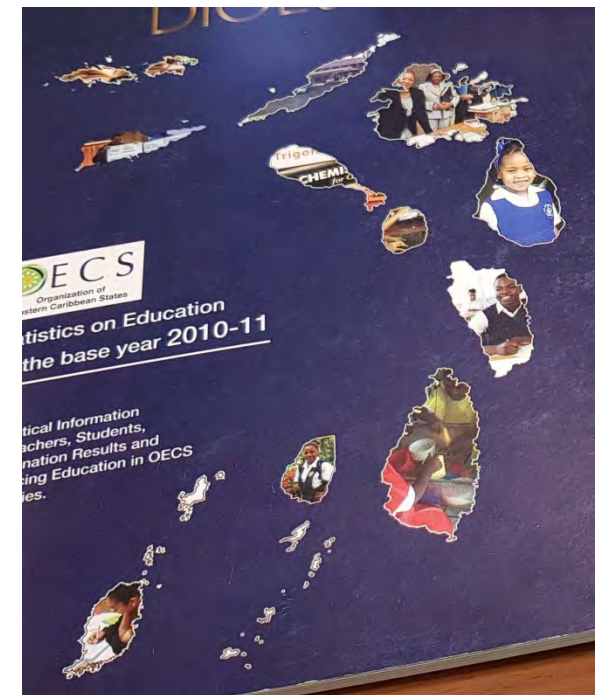
Where is the Eastern Caribbean?

- *The most easterly islands in the Caribbean island chain*
 - *Anguilla*
 - *Antigua & Barbuda*
 - *Barbados*
 - *Commonwealth of Dominica*
 - *Grenada*
 - *Montserrat*
 - *St Kitts & Nevis*
 - *St Lucia*
 - *St Vincent & the Grenadines*
 - *the Virgin Islands (British).*



The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

- **June 18, 1981 ... Treaty of Basseterre in St Kitts & Nevis**
 - economic harmonisation and integration, protection of human and legal rights, and the encouragement of good governance
 - Ten (10) independent and non-independent countries in the Eastern Caribbean
 - **Full Member States**
 - Antigua and Barbuda
 - Commonwealth of Dominica
 - Grenada
 - Montserrat
 - St Kitts and Nevis
 - Saint Lucia
 - St Vincent and the Grenadines
 - **Associate Member States**
 - the British Virgin Islands
 - Anguilla
 - Martinique
- (OECS, 2018).



Sustainability

- Dr Didicus Jules
 - Chair OECS Commission
 - 2014 - present
 - Registrar – CXC
 - 2008 - 2014
 - Feed, reproduce, educate



Goals of ECD OECS

- Region's sustainability
 - Quality early learning experiences
 - Facilitate the development of the whole child
 - Readiness for later learning and life
 - The development of the ideal CARICOM Caribbean / OECS citizen
 - Entrepreneurs
 - Effective leaders of tomorrow
 - Successful thriving economy
 - Feed themselves and citizens of the region

What does ECD mean in the Eastern Caribbean?

- *Early Childhood Development (ECD) refers to a “comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to eight years of age, their parents and caregivers. Its purpose is to protect the child’s rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential” (EDMU-OECS, 2012, p. 60).*



Background

- Young children received care and education
 - Family, extended
- Religious Missionaries (Moravians and Methodists) SKB – 1700s
- Philanthropists – Mico Charity 1837
- Bernard Van Leer Foundation 1960s 70s
- Concerned citizens and/or organizations – UNICEF, Bernard Van Leer Foundation (BvLF), religious denominations” (Charles and Williams, 2006, p. 5)

Investments

- **Investments**, more specifically financial, need to be **strategically planned** and **budgeted** as “maybe no other factor has a **bigger impact** on what” (MDE, 2018) early childhood development services can and cannot be delivered since “from a **macro level**, budgeting affects both **program quantity** and **quality**” (Minnesota Department of Education).



Investments in ECD help to

- *facilitate the development of Intellectual empowerment; Effective Communication; Respect for self, others and the environment; Wellness; Valuing Culture and Resilience of the region's young children.*
- *The ideal citizen of the Caribbean who*
 - *Creative*
 - *A critical thinker*
 - *Problem solver*
 - *Respects self, others and the environment*
 - *A team player*
 - *Full of national and regional pride*
 - *... secure the region's sustainability*

Benefits of investment in ECD in the OECS?

- *Ensure children have access to quality early childhood development services through available enabling environments*
 - *Cadre of high quality trained early childhood practitioners*
 - *Developmentally and culturally appropriate curricula*
 - *Safe developmentally appropriate physical environments including adequate resources*
- *Develop Ideal CARICOM/Caribbean citizens*

Revealed

- **Challenges**
 - Not very good at documenting
 - Very sparse
- **Myriad investments and investors**
- **Investments ... not only FUNDING**
 - Variety of **additional** resources
 - quantity and quality of Early Childhood Development in the OECS.



Technical input

Physical input

Funding

Material input



Types of investments made in ECD in the OECS

- *Financial: Monetary: **Funding***
 - *Grants*
 - *Donations*
 - *Salaries, wages*
- *Human resources: **Technical input***
 - *Educators*
 - *Create furniture*
 - *Policy and curriculum designers*
 - *Volunteers: share expertise*
- *Educational resources: **Material input***
 - *Curriculum, play equipment, basic needs*
- *Physical resources: **Physical input***
 - *buildings, spaces for outdoor activities*



Funding

- OECS ... equivalent of 5% of their GDP on education
- Eight member states
 - 2014 -15
 - an average of 2.9 % was spent on early childhood education alone
 - St Kitts Nevis spent 12.7%
 - Montserrat 11.2%
 - Another a mere 0.1%
- (EDMU-OECS (2016))



ECD Investors in the Eastern Caribbean ...

- *UNICEF*
- *Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)*
- *University of the West Indies – Cave Hill*
- *Education Development Management Unit – Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)*
- *Joint Board Teacher Education (JBTE)*
- *Foundation for the Development of Caribbean Children (FDCC)*
- *Concerned citizens, locally, regionally and diaspora*

Strategic Imperative V



Every
Learner
SUCCEEDS

2012
2021

OECS EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGY



- OECS - EDMU

- ECD – Priority for 2012 – 2021

- Collaboration with CDB, UNICEF, UWI, Private business, NGOs

- Activities

- Data management – Statistical Digests

- Regional planning

- Education and awareness

- Curriculum review



- UNICEF
 - Policy development
 - Training
 - Monitoring and evaluating quality
 - Curriculum
 - Conferences in collaboration with CDB and OECS: education and awareness
 - Budgeting workshop : 2008
 - Post disaster responses
 - Research



Monica La Bennett, Vice-President (Operations), CDB

- “CDB has taken a policy decision that early childhood education will be a priority for 21st century education. To this end, the Bank will deliberately work with our Borrowing Member Countries to reconfigure available capacity at the primary level to accommodate additional ECD places, establish standalone nursery schools and pilot model ECD centres to accommodate new classes in parallel with the training of early childhood teachers,”



- Caribbean Development Bank
 - Build ECD facilities
 - Gender Sensitisation Curriculum and training: 2015 – present
 - Training for practitioners
 - Resources for several centres / islands
 - Conference in collaboration with UNICEF, OECS – February 2018
 - Education and awareness
 - Variety of media



Benefits of Investments



- **University of the West Indies**

- Lecturer – Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor Degree – ECCE 2018/19

- **Joint Board of Eastern Caribbean**

- Associates Degree - ECE
- Collaboration among region's teacher education institutions

Going Forward



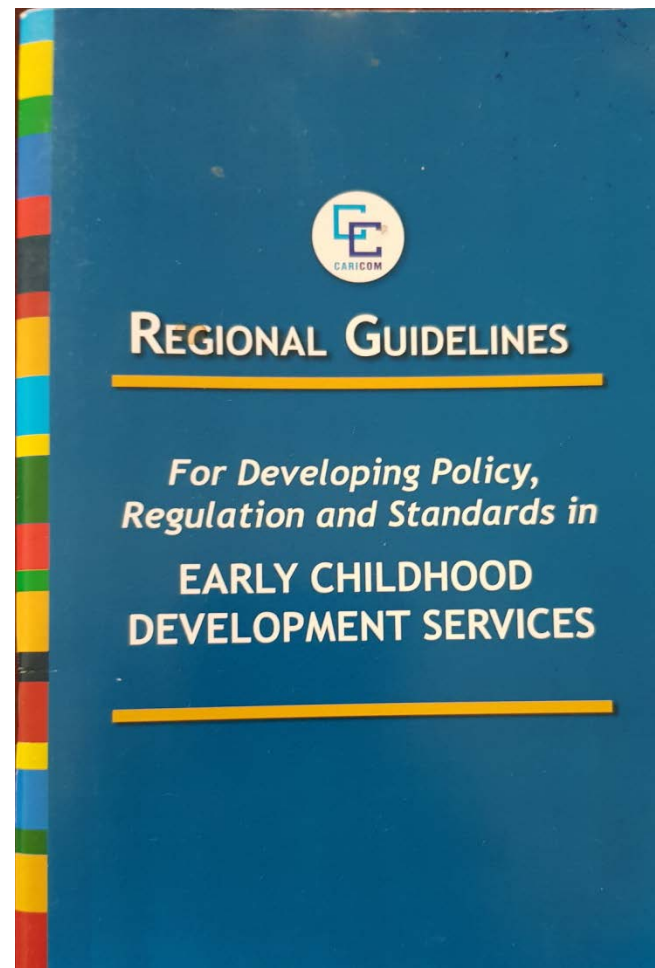
Non-financial investments are just as **vital**

- Planning
- Budgeting
- Documenting
- Creative ways to supplement existing investments
- Research: Data Driven Decisions
 - Avoid duplication of efforts
 - Collaboration among agencies/donors
 - Purposeful actions and investments
 - Alignment with curriculum and national goals



- *It's your turn now.*

- The Montserrat Oriole



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