

UPDATE

PROGRAMME FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)



DW DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP

CHILDREN

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Development Workshop Namibia (DWN) is implementing an Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme in 5 towns, involving 229 ECD centres (Kindergartens) with some 8,000 children. It is currently funded by UNICEF, EU, MTC and the Twin Hills Trust (for Omaruru).

MAIN RESULTS TO DATE

The programme has five main intervention areas, with following main results over the last months:

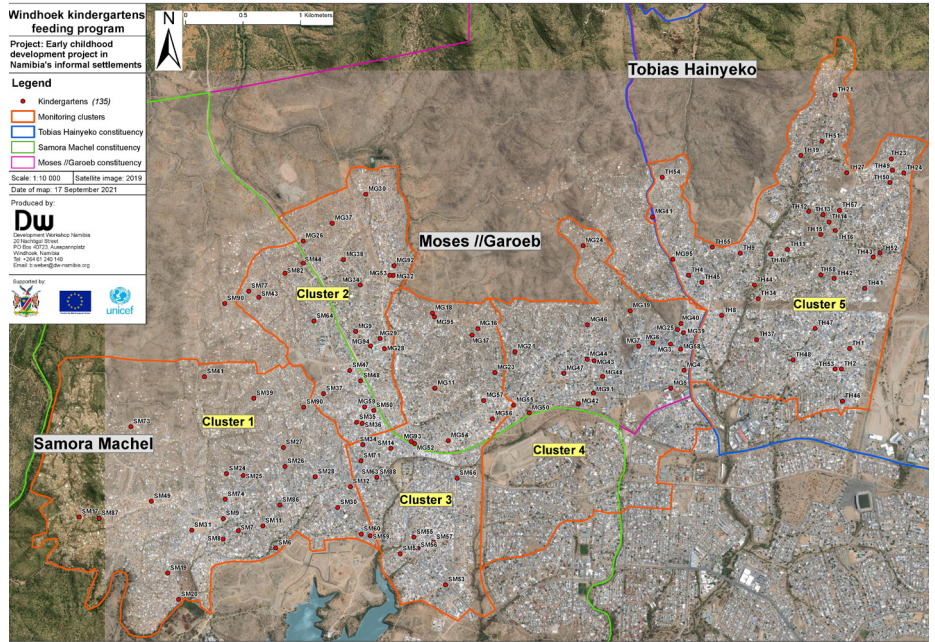
1. **Feeding programme:** 5,500 children receiving a meal every day in 135 ECD centres in Windhoek and an additional 128 children in Omaruru;
2. **Teacher training:** 26 courses with 415 teachers and educators trained;
3. **Learning and teaching materials:**
 - Over 17,000 stationary items distributed to 229 ECD centres



- 315,215 pages of learning materials printed and distributed
- 4 ECD centre libraries equipped with age appropriate children story books, in Omaruru, Oshakati and Katima Mulilo

- 4. Physical improvement of ECD centres:** 5 toilets built and 5 under construction;
- 5. Parents engagement:** 17 workshops held with over 400 parents.

Right: GIS map of the location of the 135 ECD centres that the programme is supporting in Windhoek



FEEDING AND NUTRITION

Any large-scale feeding programme is challenging, especially when done through the physical distribution of food items. Often, a considerable amount of available funds is used for transport and other logistics, and keeping effective control of the distribution chain can be difficult. Additionally, when food is bought centrally, it does not contribute to local economies.

Cash based relief systems, as used worldwide under many and different circumstances, are often considered more efficient and effective:

1. By providing cash to those in need, food can be purchased locally and stimulates local economies;
2. It gives the recipients choice, according to local preferences and needs;
3. It costs very little to administer.

It is for this reason that DWN is currently testing a cash-based feeding programme with 135 ECD centres in Windhoek and 4 ECD centres in Omaruru, with the hope that a similar system can possibly be scaled in the future. The system works as follows:

1. A bank account has been opened for each centre in Windhoek. In Omaruru, payments to the ECD centres are done via e-wallet;
2. Each ECD centre receives a monthly payment based on the number of children;
3. Nutritional and bookkeeping training has been given to teacher-parents committees, created for this purpose. The committees also jointly control all expenditure;
4. A DWN monitoring team visits each centre every two weeks and checks on hygiene, nutritional indicators, and bookkeeping.



DWN staff member revising the bookkeeping records at an ECD centre

TEACHER TRAINING

Trainings have now been provided to a total of 415 teachers in Windhoek, Katima Mulilo, Opuwo, Oshakati, Omaruru and Opuwo. The training has been delivered by private sector ECD practitioners with a wealth of knowledge and experience within the field of ECD. Training content includes **holistic child development, learning through play, planning and assessment, parental support and classroom management.**



ECD teachers who successfully completed a training have received a certificate of attendance.



ECD teacher training

LEARNING AND TEACHING MATERIALS

A large amount of teaching and training materials have been developed through the project. Also, trainings for teachers and educators have been continuously improved. The programme is therefore now consolidating much of the materials, producing a series of guides and manuals. These include:

1. **Learning at home guide:** A resource book with over 200 interactive and engaging activities including stories to support parents and children with early stimulation at home;
2. **Parental book:** A summary guide on the importance of parental support to children;
3. **ECD centre-based learning guide:** A resource book for ECD teachers and educators for daily activities with children, fully aligned with the 3-4 years and 5-6 years curriculum from both ministries (Gender & Education);
4. **Teacher participant manual:** A consolidated training manual for ECD teachers, based on the teacher training course content;
5. **Teacher training guide:** For those ECD experts that provide trainings to the ECD centre teachers.

ECD CENTRE PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT

During July, DWN conducted a detailed physical structure assessments of all ECD centres in Windhoek supported by this project. Results showed that 32 centres have unsafe or no toilets. 15 ECD centres were then selected for the construction of toilets.



Toilet Construction (left) The new toilet is then painted with messaging about the danger of open defecation (right)



GIS MONITORING

All ECD centres are registered with a GPS position and can be viewed online on DWN's datahub: <https://development-workshop-data-hub-dwn.hub.arcgis.com/>.

Information on the ECD centres is continuously updated. By clicking on an ECD centre in the online app, all information of that specific centres pops up in a window.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. Encouraging parental involvement is a central topic covered in teacher training workshops. During these sessions, teachers explore:

- The importance of parental involvement
- Ways to involve parents in learning
- Recognising and addressing child abuse and neglect
- Positive discipline and alternatives to punishment

The teachers then conduct parents workshops at their respective ECD centres, jointly discussing these topics with parents.



NEW PUBLICATIONS & INFORMATION HUB

DWN has embarked on developing publications with Namibian content, specific for ECD aged children. The publications have the aim to help children understand, imagine and appreciate their own country.

My Namibian Picture Atlas: An interactive Atlas for children. Currently in the final stage of development, it will be launched early 2022 as schools open.

My Namibian Wildlife and My Namibia Adventure: Two other children's books in development, with the aim to introduce children to the resources of their country.

ECD Online Resource Hub: A one stop shop for ECD related resources and materials for families and ECD centres. Currently in development, the content will for example include children story books, nutrition, caring for pregnancies and learning activities. It will be available freely to all.

