



Ministry of Education

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Zambia Open Community Schools would like to thank all those who contributed for the completion of this research

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Zambia Open Community Schools

1. Mrs. Cleopatra Muma – Executive Director
2. Hector Swazi - Project Manager
3. Christian Njobvu - Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
4. Fredrick Kaluwele - Project Officer (Choma)
5. Tryness Mbao - Project Officer (Chisamba)

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Report on the Feedback from the field

1.0 Introduction

ZOCS, in partnership with the University of Zambia and Makerere University, is implementing a Scaled School Readiness Initiative (SSRI) for a period of 22 months. The project's overall goal is to strengthen the capacities of schools, communities, and early education systems in Uganda and Zambia to adopt play-based learning (PBL) to promote children's holistic development and prepare them for their smooth transition from pre-primary education centres. The project is supporting a thorough review of play-based learning in the ECDE curriculum frameworks of Uganda and Zambia and supporting the design of an enhanced learning framework for ECDE including the identification and development of contextually relevant learning materials with the involvement of teachers, parents, and children.

Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) Joint Monitoring And Assessment of Effectiveness of Play-Based Learning

The Ministry of Education through the support from Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) conducted a Joint Monitoring and Assessment of the effectiveness of PBL framework in improving teachers efficacy to implement Play based learning (PBL). Learners Mathematical, Literacy as well as social and emotional development. The Project Title was Scaling the School Readiness Initiative, Strengthening School and Community capacities for adoption of play-based learning in Uganda and Zambia: (SSRI). Other Partners were researchers from the University of Zambia and Makerere university, Uganda.

The project was sponsored by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

It is with this background that from 14th August to 25th August 2023, ZOCS, UNZA and ministry of

Education officials conducted a joint monitoring to assess the effectiveness of PBL framework in improving: teachers' efficacy to implement PBL, learners' mathematical, literacy as well social and emotional competences. The joint monitoring took place in Central province (Kabwe, Kapiri Mposhi) and Southern province (Choma).

The joint monitoring focused on the availability of ECE documents in targeted districts and how teachers were using them to implement Play-based learning, as well as preparing children for their smooth transition to Grade 1. It was indeed a very wonderful experience as many lessons were learnt starting with what was working well as well what was not working well. Recommendations were made and areas of collaboration were identified which resulted in institutions being given action points to consider as a way of resolving what was not working well and strengthening what was already working well.

2.0 Team composition

The monitoring team comprised the following members:

- i. ZOCS (Projects Manager, SRI Manager, 2 Monitoring and Evaluation officers and 2 SSRI project officers)
- ii. UNZA (2 researchers)
- iii. Ministry of Education HQ (Directorate of ECE - Assistant Director, Principal Education Officer, Senior Education Officer, Directorate of Primary Education – Assistant Director, Directorate of Teacher Education and Specialized Services – Senior Education Officer, Directorate of Open and Distance Education and Curriculum Development Centre – ECE Curriculum specialist.)
- iv. Ministry of Education provincial and district officials (SEO – Special, ESO ODL, PRCC, DRCCs) DRCCs)

The team visited the schools tabulated in the table below

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL VISITED	DISTRICT
1	Mwashi Primary School	Kabwe
2	Munga Primary School	Kabwe
3	Neem Tree Primary School	Kabwe
4	Ben Kapufi Primary School	Kabwe
5	Gombe Primary School	Kabwe
6	Hilltop Primary School	Kapiri Mposhi
7	Lukomba Primary school	Kapiri Mposhi
8	Kapiri Primary School	Kapiri Mposhi
9	Luachele Primary School	Kapiri Mposhi
10	Mpunde Primary School	Kapiri Mposhi
11	St Patricks Primary	Choma
12	Nahumba Primary School	Choma
13	Adastra Primary School	Choma
14	Nakeempa Primary School	Choma
15	Siamambo Primary School	Choma
16	Harmony Primary School	Choma
17	Choma Primary School	Choma
18	Mbabala Primary School	Choma
19	Chilalantambo Primary School	Choma
20	Batoka Primary School	Choma

Findings from the project

What is working well in schools

- Most ECE teachers had basic knowledge on play-based learning
- Some teachers are well qualified
- There is gender balance in enrolments of the learners in ECE centres
- Most teachers are able to organize classrooms, make teaching and learning materials using local materials.
- Some schools have facilities such as healthy rooms, age appropriateness furniture and play parks though with inadequate equipment.

Challenges found in most centres

- Teachers upgrading from ECE teaching to primary teaching due to poor conditions in terms of remuneration.

- Lack of guidelines on school readiness to grade 1
- Failing to link teaching through play based learning and assessing through play based learning.
- Lack of knowledge on some ECE documents such as screen tool
- There is no holistic approach to assess learners as the focus is on language and literacy
- Lack of school readiness assessment tools in schools
- Lack of ECE spaces in schools
- Lack of trained ECE teachers
- Inadequate infrastructure for ECE
- No infrastructure for LSEND
- Lack of specialised teachers to attend to LSEND children
- Lack of ECE documents



A joint team consolidating the findings

- Play corners are not visible due to limited spaces in classrooms

Recommendations

- Strengthen capacities through training and orientation of teachers
- Need to strengthen school transition systems and use assessment records to make informed decision
- Need to engage the communicates in infrastructure development and management
- Curriculum development centre to redistribute the books to ECE centres both in urban and rural
- Ministry of education to continue working with partners to enhanced monitoring of ECE centres, sensitisation of ECE programmes
- Ministry of education should put up a mechanise of bonding for staff upgrading
- Government to increase funding to ECE
- Strengthening internal and external monitoring on the usage of ECE documents.
- Need to make all ECE documents and materials accessible



Inadquate ECE furniture at one of ECE Centers in Choma



A newly constructed health room at one of the ECE centres

Photo Focus 2023



Interaction between the researcher and ECE Teacher at Harmony Primary School in Choma District



ECE play park constructed using local materials



ECE classroom built using local materials in Choma District



ZOCs official interacting with officers from Ministry of Education on community involvement during the construction of play park using local materials in Choma



ECE classroom with age appropriate chairs and tables



Headteacher Kapiri Mposhi Primary School explaining to the officials on the ECE documents available at her school

Photo Focus 2023



Dr. Kalinde (standing) from the University of Zambia a Researcher updating the team on the monitoring tool



ECE classroom with locally made learning and teaching materials



ESO - ODL and District Resource Centre Coordinator interacting with the officials at DEBS Office, Kapiri Mposhi



Assistant Directors (ECE and Primary) from Ministry of Education, a researcher and ZOCS official



The joint team from Zambia Open Community Schools, University of Zambia and Ministry of Education officials at DEBS Kapiri Mposhi

Photo Focus 2023



ECE teacher at Batoka Primary School with the researcher at the play park



Senior officer from Ministry of Education interacting with ECE teacher at Batoka Primary School



A team consolidating the findings in Choma District

Photo Focus 2023



Officers heading to ECE centers in Kapiri Mposhi Rural



Nakemba Primary School, Choma Rural



ECE Teacher Mpunde Primary School interacting with the monitoring team



Officials paying courtesy call to DEBS office, Kabwe



Senior officers from Ministry of Education arrived at Mpunde Primary School, Kapiri Mposhi rural



Senior officers from Ministry of Education interacting outside DEBS office, Kabwe

Photo Focus 2023



Madam Josephine Kabila for CDC leading the interview with the head teacher at St. Patrick's combined school



Senior officers from Ministry of Education paying courtesy call to PEO Southern



The joint team paying courtesy call to DEBS Choma

Photo Focus 2023



ECE class at Neem Tree primary school in Kabwe



An ECE class at St. Patricks combined school in Choma



Shop corner in an ECE class at Neem Tree Primary School

Photo Focus 2023



Interview with an ECE teacher at Ben Kapufi Primary School in Kabwe



Dr Mambwe from UNZA, Florence from ZOCS and Mr. Walubita Choma DRCC interacting with an ECE teacher at Choma Primary School



Dr. Mambwe interacting with an ECE teacher at Neem Tree primary school in Kabwe

Photo Focus 2023



Assistant Director Evelyn Simfukwe interacting with an ECE teacher at Luanchele primary school in Kapiri