



Save the Children

CHALLENGES and OPPORTUNITIES for ECCD in Floating Communities

An Experience-based Study by Save the Children in Cambodia



AGENDA

- A glance at the current status of ECCD in Cambodia
- Gaps and barriers to ECCD services
- Options for addressing ECCD issues in floating communities
- Conclusion and recommendations
- Reference

A Glance at Current Status of ECCD in Cambodia

Policy context:

- MDG/SDG
- ESP 2014 - 2018
- Policy on ECE
- National Policy on ECCD
- ECE M & E Framework
- National Action Plan on Early Childhood Development 2014 - 2018
- National Committee on ECCD



Current status

Access to ECCD by children, aged from zero to under-six

Indicators	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
	Target/Actual	Target/Actual	Target/Actual
Core Break Through Indicators			
Percentage of 5-year old children in all aspects of ECE	62%/59.93%	66%/61.40%	71%/64.07%
Sub-sector Outcome Indicators			
Percentage of 5-year-old children attending school	62%/59.93%	66%/61.40%	71%/64.07%
Percentage of 4-year-old children attending school	28%/24.47%	33%/29.07%	37%/28.29%
Percentage of 3-year-old children attending school	23%/16.65%	27%/16.61%	32%/19.79%

Source: ECE Department, 2016

What are the gaps and barriers to ECCD to children in floating communities?



Gap in ECCD services in the areas

Access to ECCD services in Kampong Chhnang province

In eight districts of Kampong Chhnang:

- total children aged from zero to five in the eight districts = **76,646** (37,411 girls).
- **only 23%** (17,401 boys and 8,720 girls) of children aged from zero to five can **access early childhood education services**, through home-based, community-based and government pre-school interventions (*Kampong Chhnang Provincial Office of Education, Youth and Sport, 2017*).



Gap in ECCD services in the areas

Access to ECCD services in Pursat province

In **6 districts** of Pursat province:

- total of **56,666** (29,067 girls) children aged from zero to five.
- only **26%** (15,222 boys and 7,463 girls) of children aged from zero to five can **access early childhood education services**, through home-based, community-based and government pre-school interventions (Pursat Provincial Office of Education, Youth and Sport).



Difficulties in access to ECCD Service

- Boat is the only means of transportation;
- Individual family has its own small boat for fishing and traveling;
- Big boat is available for rental but with higher fee;
- Some parents were afraid that one of their children would fall into the water;
- Danger of drowning is still very high especially during times of strong winds, floods and high water level;
- No school boat;
- Pupils find it hard to go to a secondary school, because it is very far from their floating community,



Gap in ECCD services in the areas

Gaps in supply:

- **lack of facilities** (for pre-school class and community-based ECCD center),
- **lack of pre-school teachers** and community-based ECCD center facilitators,
- **lack of budget to cover salaries** for teachers/facilitators,
- **lack of materials** for learning and teaching



Challenges for Child Development in Floating Communities

Lack of space for movement and interactions

- The majority of households do not have caregiver at home;
- The majority of floating households **bring along their young children in the boat when going fishing;**
- Some parents even **tied their young child's foot to the boat to prevent him or her from falling down into the water** while going fishing (Ses Slap floating community in Kampong Chhnang)



Consequences of limited space for movement and interactions on child development

Limited stimulation for development of:

- gross and fine motor skills
- language and cognition
- socio-emotional skills

Limited socialization in community



No space for movement, communication and interaction with others, via:

- one-to-one play
- group play



Trapped in the boat and floating houses, prevented from exploring their surroundings



Challenges for Child Development in Floating Communities

Limited access to nutritious food for child development

- **Fish is the main source of food** for adults and children in floating community since all of them make a living from fishing
- **Vegetables, fruit and other meats**, even sometimes available in some floating communities, are **extremely expensive**
- Poor households prepare and eat food on the boat **just to survive**;
- Many of them **drink unboiled/unfiltered** water from the Lake, and children often suffer from **diarrhoea and intestinal worms**.



Limited access to nutritious food for child development

Links between poor hygiene, lack of nutritious food and malnourishment

Preventable disease infection, causing children to frequently suffer from water-borne and food-borne diseases,



A large number of children suffering from malnourishment, physical and cognitive stunting:

Pursat has the largest percentage of children under the age of five suffering from stunting, at 18.4%, (Cambodia demographic and health survey in 2014).

Poor hygiene and polluted water

Expensive food and Lack of Nutritious food

- Lake is the source of water for cooking, drinking and washing for villagers;
- Lake is the space for dumping all sorts of waste.



Challenges in Implementing ECCD programmes

Experience from Save the Children

1. Difficulty in travelling in the area:

- sometimes by boat and on foot
- sometimes boats are not available even fee is high
- rain and storm

2. Time unavailability amongst floating villagers:

- two weeks in each month, before, during and after the full moon, all floating villagers go fishing away from community
- floating villagers bring along their children to farms on island for some days and weeks.

3. Lack of pre-school teachers or parenting facilitators

- most of teachers there are from onshore areas

Challenges in Implementing ECCD programmes (cont)

Needs for clarity, support and adaptation

in line with the government's delegation of authorities to district and commune levels:

4. Designing the structures, roles and responsibilities of :

- mechanism for monitoring and following up parenting and parents' practices;
- roles and functions between commune council, health center and school for ECCD services

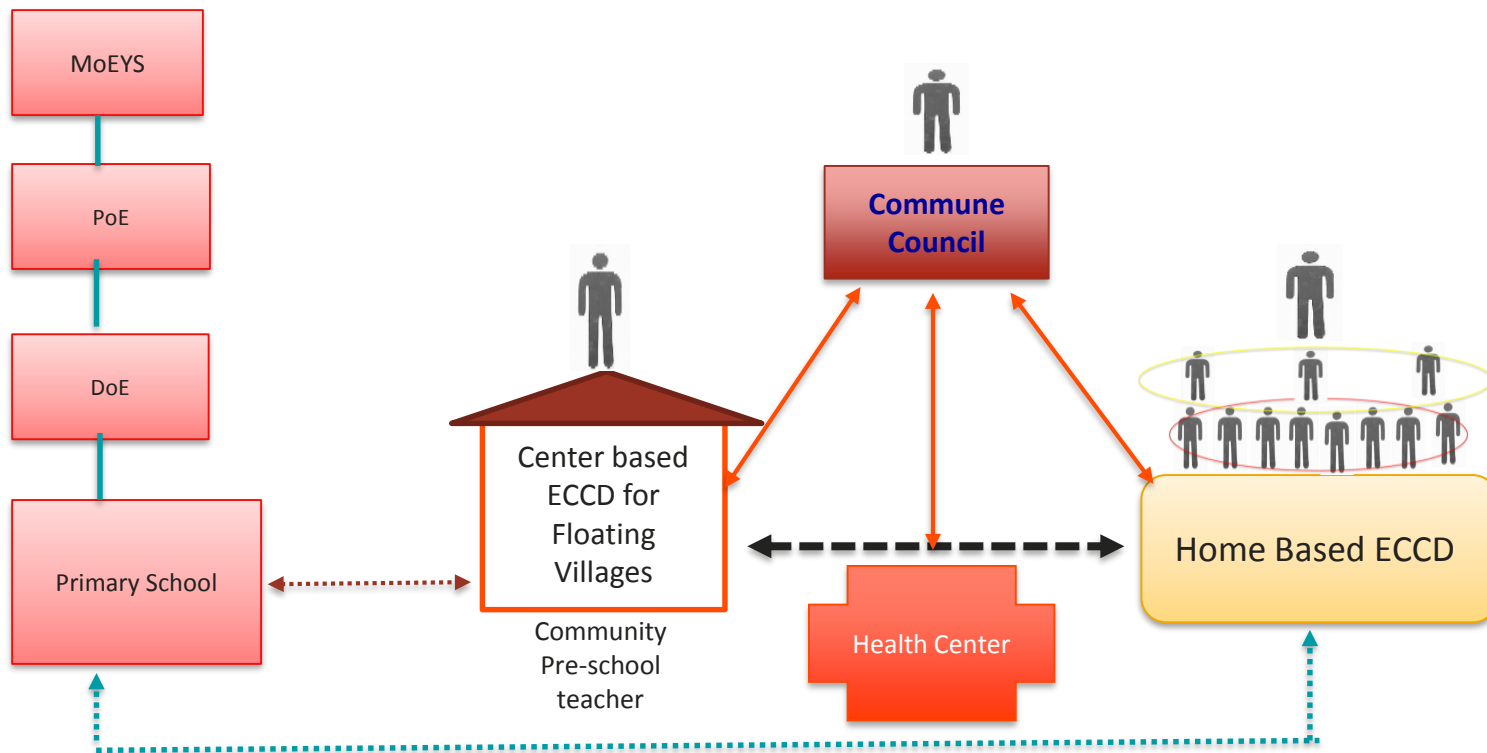
5. Coordination and Integration

- amongst related sectors that support the functions of ECCD services: WASH, health and nutrition and protection as there are lots of challenges encountered by local commune councils



What would be the best options to address ECCD issues in floating community?

OPTIONS: Operation of Home-based and Center-based ECCD



Option 1: Implement home-based ECCD

Home-based ECCD needs minimal amount of human, material and financial resources

- **does not need formal structural building and facilities** but just needs a floating house/cottage;
- **parents are trained and act as the teacher;**
- **using play-based interactions;**
- **using local available resources** around the houses as learning and teaching tools and materials to stimulate children's physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive development.



Home-based ECCD is **adaptable to the needs and context** of local community, reaching out to all young children

- Gross and fine motor skills,
- Language and cognition,
- Social and emotional skills,
- Emergent literacy and numeracy,
- School readiness

Development

Daily stimulation

Interactions

- Caregivers find their own time,
- Set up their own schedules,
- Choose their own preferred activities
- Make use of resources around their houses to produce materials and toys



Home-based ECCD services **Covers a large number of children from zero to under-six years of age**

An example of Save the Children in Cambodia:

Interventions within 2 to 3 years, reaching at least **30% of all children aged from zero to under-six in the village**

Curriculum is flexible to the needs of children in community

An example of Save the Children in Cambodia:

Informed by baseline study, the current topics for home-based parenting activities are **focused on cognition and linguistic development**

Informed by:

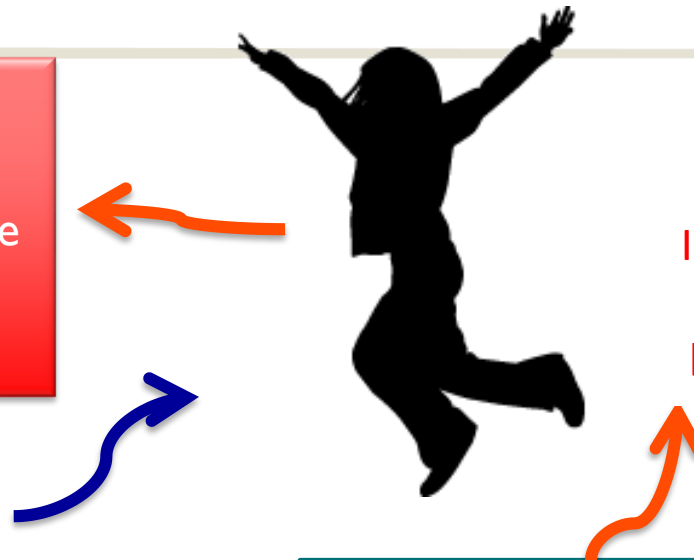
- Low cognition development - only 23% of children aged 0 to 12 months
- Strong gross and fine motor skill development, reaching 51% for children aged less than 12 months, up to 69% for children aged 13 to 24 months, and to 88% for children aged 25 to 42 months.



Home-based ECCD is the best option for **timely intervention** to young children, starting from zero to under-six

By the age of three, Developed root brain structure: the foundations for future functioning, like thinking, language, aptitudes and attitudes (Brotherson, 2009).

Micro-nutrients



Internal formation and connection between neurons



External activation and stimulation

Home-based ECCD =

- Caring,
- Watching, concentrating & thinking
- Playing,
- Listening and talking,
- Repeating
- Reading,
- Counting,
- Singing,
- Dancing,
- ...

Option 2: Implement center-based solutions for floating ECCD centers

For Children, at the center ...

- Learn from teachers
- Learn from their peers
- Playground for children – ‘floating playground’
- Space to talk, listen to, read, repeat, play with, sing and dance with their neighboring peers,



- Development of gross and fine motor skills, language, socio-emotional skills and cognition.
- Emergent Literacy and Numeracy

For parents, at the center ...

- gathering floating villagers for social and community development activities
- share knowledge, skills and experience, through meeting, workshop, discussion and demonstration (*like how to continue breastfeeding for children after the age of six...*)
- health education and child vaccination



- Stimulation and Interactions between caregivers and children
- Care and protection



In Summary

Gaps and Barriers to young children's access to ECCD services in flooded and floating communities along the Tonle Sap Lake:

1. **Lack of services** in the areas due to the lack of facilities, teachers, salaries for teachers/facilitators, and materials for learning and teaching
2. **Difficulty in access** (travelling and transportation) to ECCD service
3. Lack of **space for movement and interactions**: difficult for child development
4. Limited access to **nutritious food** for child development

In Summary

Challenges in Implementing ECCD programmes as learned by Save the Children

1. Difficulty in travelling
2. Unavailability of floating villagers for some specific periods
3. Lack of pre-school teachers and parenting facilitators
4. Clarity on roles and responsibilities of commune, school and health center
5. Mechanism for monitoring and following up parenting and parents' practices
6. Coordination and integration with key programmes:
 - WASH
 - Health and Nutrition
 - Protection

Recommendations

- Design of interventions on ECCD services for floating communities should take into account the **complexities and challenges** in the areas

- **Home-based** ECCD be employed as intervention approach as it has many elements that most **fit the conditions of the area**:
 - needs minimal amount of human, material and financial resources;
 - it is adaptable to the needs and context of the community,;
 - reaches out to all children;
 - the best option for in-time intervention to young children, starting from zero to under-six.

Recommendations

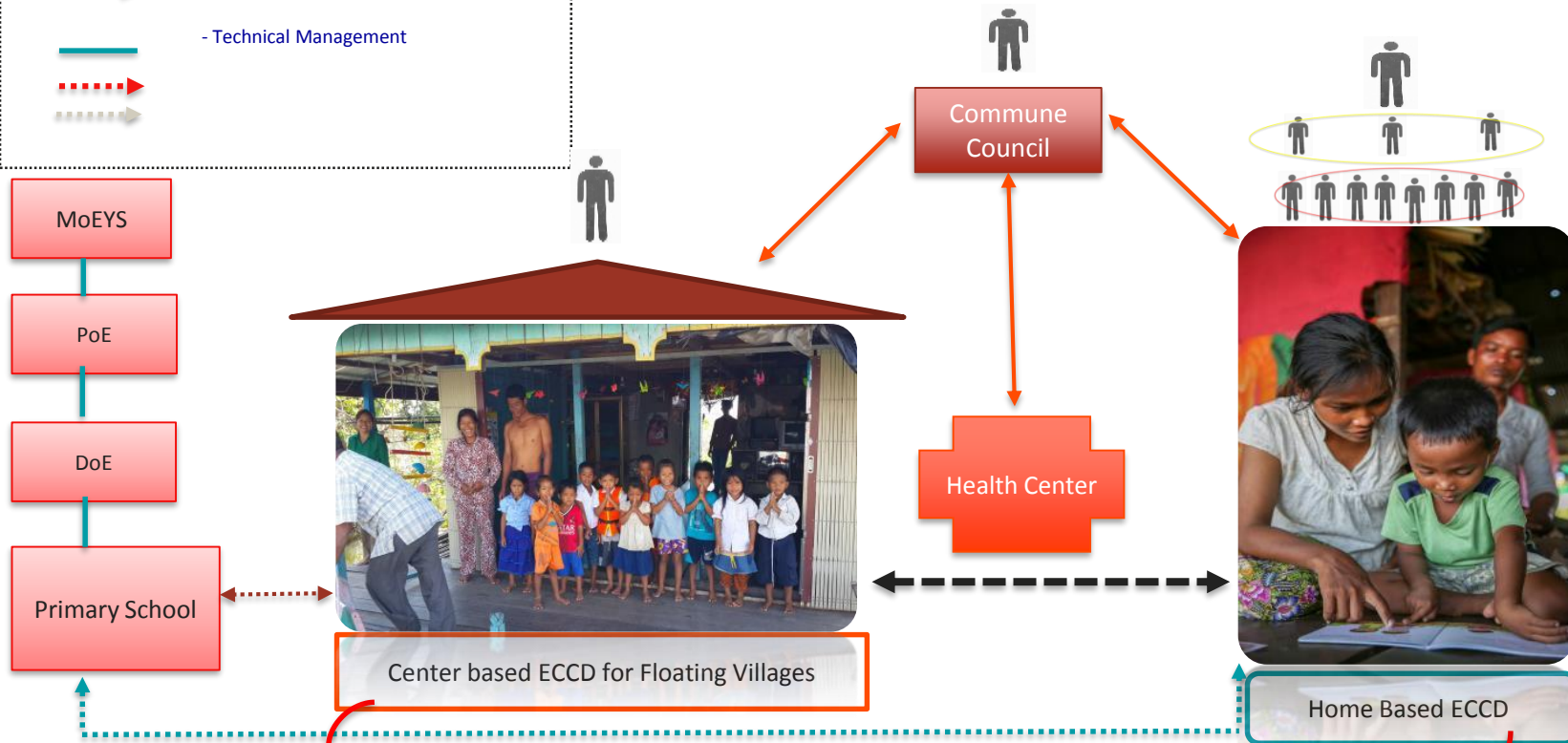
Another complementing and supplementing approach is the operation of **ECCD floating center** in the floating community

- the center should be used as the **resource center** with holistic ECCD services beyond pre-school;
- it should be used as the center where parents, caregivers and teachers **share their knowledge and experience** in child care and education of young children;

Home-based and center-based ECCD in Floating Villages should be linked together

Note:

-  - Direct Management (Implementation)
-  - Technical Management



Caregivers from home-based sites and ECCD center facilitators, need to:

- exchange their plan on caring and educating young children
- set up joint plan on caring and educating their children
- exchange results and best practices
- Jointly follow up progress of their young children's development

Recommendation for operationalization

- The government should **design the roles and functions** between commune council, health center and school based on the complexities and reality of isolated floating communities by making sure that:
 - ✓ Integration plan and implementation with WASH, health and nutrition and protection network into early childhood education;
 - ✓ Functioning mechanism for monitoring and following up parenting activities and practices amongst parents.
- The **curriculum** for home-based parenting should be **adapted to the local community** and be **based on the findings from research study or baseline on child development** in gross and fine motor skills, socio-emotional skills, cognition and language in the areas for interventions.
- The government should **increase national budget on ECCD services**

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Thanks

Questions?



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THANK YOU



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