

### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### **Professionalising the Early Childhood Development Educator (birth to 4) Workforce through a policy-driven initiative.**

*Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Kindly complete the questionnaire by answering the questions as fully as possible. The completed questionnaire can be returned to [Adendorff.z@dhet.gov.za](mailto:Adendorff.z@dhet.gov.za)*

**Participant:**

**D 2**

#### ***A. Implementation of the Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators.***

The <sup>1</sup>MRQECDE policy, aimed at producing a graduate birth to 4 years educator workforce, has far reaching consequences for the ECD sector. In light of this, please provide your considered responses to the questions below:

1. What role does your organisation/institution/department play in relation to early childhood development?

Answer omitted for protection of privacy

---

<sup>1</sup> Minimum Requirements for Programmes leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators

2. In your opinion, does the MRQECDE policy have any implication for your work? Why or why not?

Answer omitted for protection of privacy

3. Do you think that your organisation/institution/department may have a role to play in contributing to the successful implementation of the MRQECDE policy either at present, or in the future? If so, what, in your opinion, would this entail?

Answer omitted for protection of privacy

4. Do you see the implementation of the MRQECDE policy as a necessary initiative for the ECD sector? Why, or why not?

Yes. The MRQECDE sets out minimum requirements for teacher education programmes in ECD. As such the Policy is a standard setting mechanism that will contribute to quality imperatives in the ECD Sector.

5. What do you see as the constraining factors that may hinder or prevent the successful implementation of this policy?

The scope of the ECD sector is vast, it is to a large extent fragmented and has historically been left up to its own devices. The qualification basis of practitioners, teachers and assistants varies considerably. Pressures for the equal remuneration of practitioners, teachers and assistants may have bearing on the successful implementation of the policy.

6. What do you see as the enabling factors which could contribute to the successful implementation of this policy?

Buy-in from higher education institutions, generated through the PIECCE project and the support from DHET provide some momentum for the implementation of the Policy. The policy development process was also supported by the DBE. It will be essential to secure similar buy-in at grassroot level.

7. Are there any aspects of the policy which you would recommend being changed?

Similar to the Policy on MRTEQ, this policy may be influenced by the approach of the DBE in its Human Resources strategy for ECD. It is therefore recommended that the policy be revised according to the rollout of ECD. Policy must be vigilant not to duplicate minimum requirements for Grade R and perhaps later Grade RR.

**B. Views on the professionalisation of the Early Childhood Development Educator (birth to 4) workforce.**

1. What in your view does the term “the professionalisation of the ECD educator (birth to 4) workforce” mean?

It implies that standards are in place, that informs the qualifications, continuous professional development and conduct of the ECD educators. The standards find expression in policy such as the MRQECDE policy.

2. Do you think that qualifications in higher education should be a requirement for becoming an ECD educator for babies, toddlers and young children from birth to 4 year old? Why, or why not?

Not immediately. Time must be allowed to bring about continuity in the ECD Sector. The different functions at a ECD Centre must be clearly described, linked to standards and then linked to relevant qualifications. For certain positions a minimum requirement may include a higher education qualification.

3. Do you think that the higher education qualifications provided for in the MRQECDE policy should be a requirement for being a principal/centre manager of an ECD centre? Why, or why not?

Not before a description of a principal or centre manager has been developed. Keeping in mind that the size and complexity of ECD centres may differ. In the long term a higher education qualification may become a requirement.

4. Do you think that the higher education qualifications provided for in the MRQECDE policy should be a requirement for being an <sup>2</sup>ECD supervisor? Why, or why not?

Offering a higher education qualification is normally a requirement to be appointed in an office base position or subject advisory role. The expectations of ECD supervisors will be more demanding requiring such higher education qualifications.

5. How do you think the MRQECDE policy will affect ECD practitioners currently involved in the care and education of babies, toddlers and young children from birth to 4 yrs old?

**Please explain.**

It will provide a professional development pathway to many ECD practitioners. However, sufficient financial (e.g. bursaries), time (e.g. leave) and other incentives must be available. The Sector must be cautious not to use the MRQECDE policy to remove practitioners from employment.

6. Do you agree that the ECD educator workforce should be professionalised, and if so what are your recommendations for enabling and/or promoting the MRQECDE policy implementation, and for professionalising the ECCE workforce?

I agree that the ECD educator workforce must be professionalised. However, this must be a long term goal. Sufficient opportunity and incentives must be made available to practitioners for professional development. Teacher demand and supply considerations will also be important.

7. What do you see as the constraining factors in professionalising the ECD educator workforce in South Africa?

The diversity of qualifications currently in existence, the scope of the workforce, age of many of the existing practitioners and infrastructure (contextual) conditions at many ECD centres.

---

<sup>2</sup> "ECD supervisor" refers to provincial supervisors employed by the DSD and DBE or supervisors/mentors employed by NGOs

8. Please add any comments or other insights related to the topic of professionalising the ECD educator workforce or the professionalisation agenda of the policy on MRQECDE, should you wish to do so.

The role of the South African Counsel of Educators (SACE) will be important in this process.