

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

QUESTIONS TO ECD EDUCATORS AND PRINCIPALS

Background

TIS27: Practitioner, 42 Tshwane, Informal settlement, Hammanskraal

In the questionnaire which you completed, you indicated that you want to do Diploma in ECCE. I would like to ask you some further questions about your responses in the questionnaire to gain a better understanding of your work situation, challenges and aspirations as an ECD practitioner.

Q 1: *Why did you decide to become and ECD practitioner?*

TIS27: I had no job and I was going up and down looking. My principal had ECD level 4 and started a crèche in Sekampaneng. I asked for work and she said I can look after the babies.

R: So, Sekampaneng is an informal settlement?

TIS27: Yes, it is very big, next to Hammanskraal

R: *I see you say you work at a pre-school and what age group are you responsible for now?*

TIS27: I still look after the babies. We go up to Gr R, but we are closed now because of Covid.

R: *So, the creche has grown over the years because I see you have worked in ECD for 15 years.*

TIS27: Yes, we are big now, but we have struggled because of the money for building.

R: *You did not indicate any qualifications on your questionnaire, just short courses. How many days is a short course?*

TIS27: Some are just a day and you just get attendance, but others are 3, like making toys from waste is a short course for 3 days that I got last year from Cotlands.

Q 2: *You indicated a number of reasons for wanting to do the Higher Certificate in ECCE. I would like to ask you to tell me a little more about why you selected these response categories.*

R: *You selected the response category: "To become a better practitioner." Could you please clarify why you selected this response?*

TIS27: I want to learn more about being a practitioner. It has been 15 years of doing this work and I have learnt a lot from doing it. I want to get the qualification now.

R: *Why is having a qualification important to you?*

TIS27: Other practitioners at my pre-school have like level 4 or a diploma and I am 42 now and I can still do it.

R: *Being in charge of the babies is a responsible position, because you have to keep them healthy and safe, but also stimulate their development...*

TIS27: *(Interrupts, laughing).* We just look after the babies and give them food, and change them ...see that they sleep...I want to know more about playing with babies so they are learning. You know, that development. My principal says babies can learn even if they are so young.

R: *You also indicated that you want to do the Higher Certificate in ECCE to build a career in ECCE. What would you like to achieve in your ECCE career?*

TIS27: If I can do this qualification, maybe I can get bigger pay and also teach the older children. I want to grow more in this ECD.

R: Yes, I see you indicated that you want to earn a better salary.

R: *What do you think it means to specialise in ECD, because this is another answer you gave.*

TIS27: Uhm...I think to specialise means you have much knowledge of ECD for all the ages.

R: *So, do you think that the Higher Certificate will make you a specialist?*

TIS27: No, I don't think so because it is not at a high level, but if I can manage, I will go further.

R: *Do you mean you will do another ECCE qualification?*

TIS27: Yes, maybe the Diploma.

Q 3: ***You selected a number of indicators for what makes an ECD educator a professional. I would like to ask you to tell me a little more about why you selected these response categories.***

R: *Why do you consider continually improving your knowledge and understanding of you work by undergoing training as an important indicator of a professional ECD educator?*

TIS27: Like, I am not a professional now, because I don't have a qualification, but I have experience, so now I must do this training to learn more and to become a professional practitioner.

R: *Why do you consider showing love, care, kindness and compassion for children an important indicator of a professional ECD educator?*

TIS27: You must love the children and not be harsh. Also understanding where they come from, like some children live with the Goggo and there is just the grant...they come to school hungry. We know these things, but we have to keep it and not talk about it to others, like the drinking and the children suffer because there is no money.

R: Do you mean, as a professional ECD educator, you have to keep information about children and their families confidential? Do you not inform the social worker if you think a child is at risk?

TIS27: Yes, it is confidential. I tell my principal and she will take it to the social worker.

Q 4: *Does the pre-school get a subsidy from the DSD?*

TIS27: Yes, but there are many families who live on grants and the money is not enough.

Q 5: *What is the main source of income for the centre/who pays your salary?*

TIS27: The school pays the salaries from the money from the department and from some small fees.

R: *Does the school also get funding from donors?*

TIS27: Yes, but not a lot. The businesses here are not many and they are struggling, especially now with this Covid.

R: *Who owns the centre?*

TIS27: It is the principal who built the school.

Q 6: *What changes do you think the MRQECDE policy is bringing to the ECD sector?*

TIS27: I think maybe it is going to make us all to have higher qualifications to make the ECDs better. Some ECDs are not good and it makes us all get a bad reputation.

Q7: *How do you think the Government can further support the ECD education sector?*

TIS27: There are too many children who need to attend ECD and here in Sekampaneng there are not enough centres. We can't turn children away, but the work is too much and the money is too little. The Government can help to pay the salaries for more teachers if they get a higher qualification.

R: *So, you are saying the subsidy is not enough to cover all the needs that a centre has?*

TIS27: No, (*laughs*), what about the electricity and the gas for cooking the food?

Q8: *Do you have any questions regarding the qualifications that you would like to ask?*

TIS27: No, my only hope is that UNISA will accept me.