

# Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood documentation of early childhood development noteworthy practices

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The Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) documents ‘noteworthy practices’ to help build a solid evidence base to support ECD policy development and programming in the region. This flagship initiative is undertaken annually, following certain themes. The use of ‘noteworthy’ rather than ‘best’ practices is intentional, to avoid the notion that particular programmes, initiatives or projects are better than others. Being noteworthy means:

- (a) showing promise and effectiveness in responding to a particular unmet need of young children and their families through a new or innovative process, product, service and/or method of delivery that responds effectively to a particular context, and
- (b) having the potential to be an inspiring model for others.

In 2015, ARNEC collaborated with the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) and UNICEF’s Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) to document selected ECD programmes from the region that address young children and families in diverse communities. The programmes were selected through a call for proposals managed by ARNEC, then paired up with local independent researchers from the same national context. All programme site representatives and researchers received technical support and training from UBD to ensure rigour in every stage of the research. The researchers documented the principles, processes and outcomes associated with each programme through observation techniques, stakeholder interviews, collecting artefacts, and analysing programme documents and appropriate outcome measures for children, families and communities in order to assess scalability and potential sustainability. The eight cases were:

- 1 **Bhutan:** ECCD Programme in the Lhop Community of Sengdhen (Tarayana Foundation) – a community-based ECCD (early childhood care and development) programme in a remote indigenous community
- 2 **Cambodia:** Approaches to Autonomising Community Preschools in Cambodia (Krousar Yoeung Association) – a preschool in a slum area with minimal basic infrastructure
- 3 **India:** Caregiver Education Programme (Centre for Learning Resources) – a caregiver and parenting education for under-3s in Chhattisgarh
- 4 **Indonesia:** SOS Children’s Villages, Semarang Case Study – creating a family-like environment for children without parental care, and making school inclusive
- 5 **Nepal:** Institutionalising Community-based ECD Centres in Nepal (Seto Gurans Network) – an example of how ECD programmes can help young children respect each other and eat and play together, which can change social taboos in communities where people are divided on the basis of caste and culture
- 6 **Pakistan:** Informed Parents Programme (Rupani Foundation) – a resource centre and home visiting programme to support parents of under-3s
- 7 **Pakistan:** Community Linkages and Early Childhood Development (Aga Khan Education Services Pakistan) – increasing meaningful community engagement in implementing ECCD programmes in hard-to-reach areas of Gilgit Balitistan
- 8 **Philippines:** Kababayan-an Alangsa Katilingbanong Kalambuan Case of Tulunghansa Batang Pit-os (TBP) – a community-based ECCD centre in the Philippine

countryside, with a mother-tongue-based curriculum rich in topics and activities that reinforce local cultural heritage.

All these cases reflect commitment to sustainability, inclusion and equity within their particular contexts. What makes them noteworthy varies from one case to another, but common themes include community engagement, holistic and inclusive interventions, active involvement of parents, capacity of ECD teachers, leadership, contextualised learning materials and use of mother-tongue education.

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