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BOTSWANA

A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR HOLISTIC EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT(2018)

Day 1

National Multisectoral and Sector-Specific Policies for ECD

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Nurturing the Future
**Technical Meeting to Enhance Nurturing Care for Early Childhood
Development in the Health Sector**

25-28 February
Nairobi, Kenya

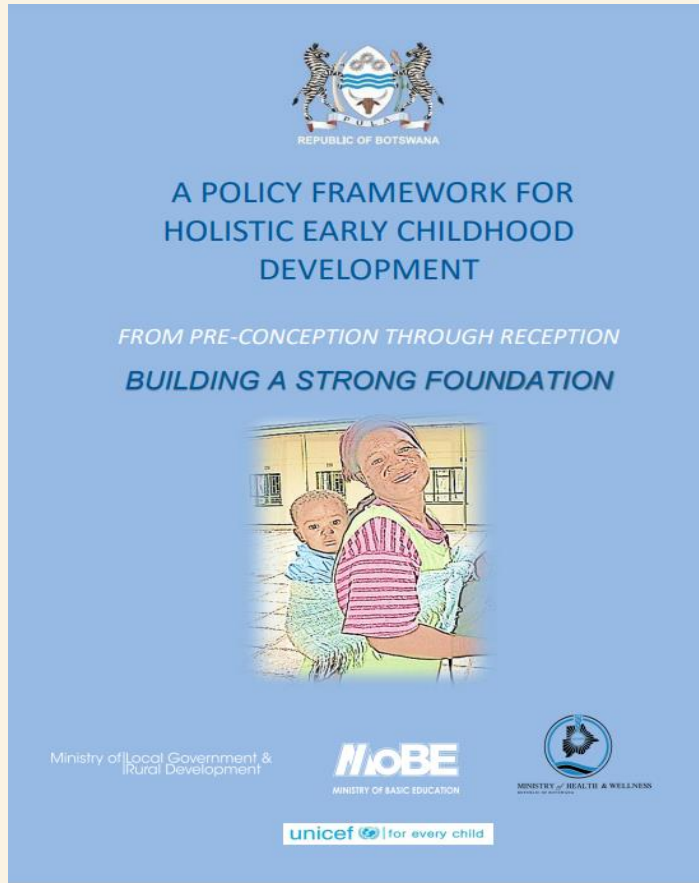


Botswana at a glance



- Population: 2,346,179; Under five-pop: 259,557 (Census 2022)
- 84% of the population reside within 5-8 km of a health facility
- Services are free or provided for a nominal cost in government facilities.
- Service utilization is high:
 - ❖ over 94% of pregnant women accessing ANC
 - ❖ 95% having skilled birth attendants
 - ❖ 65% PNC
 - ❖ Child Welfare attendance 78%

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ECD Embedded in National Plans

Vision 2036:

- Focus on Pillar 2: Human & Social Development

National Development Plan (NDP):

- 5-year planning horizons

Key Ministries Involved:

- Health
- Local Government & Traditional Affairs
- Child Welfare & Basic Education

Primary objective:

- Establish a comprehensive and integrated approach to early childhood development (ECD) in Botswana

<https://platform.who.int/docs/default-source/mca-documents/policy-documents/policy/BWA-CH-50-01-POLICY-2018-eng-ECD-Policy-Framework.pdf>

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Builds on existing strengths

- **Good access to health care:**
Provision of School Health Core Package; Provision of services through Primary Health Care Approach; Promotion of high impact interventions for child development and survival)
- **Robust Child and Social Protection System:** Wider outreach on birth registration; Community based ECD Services
- **Quality Access to Early Learning:** School feeding programme; National Reception Class Programme; Strong participation of the private sector

Health Sector Interventions for ECD

Primary Health Care Approach:

- Family planning expansion
- Nutrition and Ante-Natal Health Care services
- Delivering essential health services for children

High-Impact Child Interventions:

- Programs to boost child development and survival

School Health Programmes:

- Core health packages and school feeding initiatives
- Establishment of Child Protection Unit in 8 Police stations across the nation
- Establishment of Child Friendly Court.

Coordination Mechanism for Early Childhood Development (ECD) – MOH, MLGTA, MCWBE

The three ministries have committed to a collaborative implementation of ECD initiatives, guided by the following frameworks:

- An existing costed inter-sectoral ECD Implementation Plan, ensuring financial sustainability and coordinated action.
- A Common Reporting Framework for holistic ECD, facilitating standardized data collection and performance monitoring.

Key Indicators

The effectiveness of ECD interventions is measured using various indicators, including:

- Antenatal care (ANC) coverage
- Proportion of institutional births
- Immunization coverage
- IMR: 18.6 / 1000 live births (Census 2022)
- Under five mortality rate: 22.4 / 1000 live births (Census 2022)
- MMR: 175.5 (Census 2022)
- Proportion of children accessing pre-primary education



COORDINATION MECHANISM Cont

Immunization and Nutritional Status

- Penta(DPT) 3 vaccination coverage: (74%)
- Prevalence of underweight children: (0.4%)
- Child Welfare Coverage (77.8%)
- Antenatal care (ANC) coverage (98.9%)
- Proportion of institutional births (99%)

Monitoring and Evaluation

- ECD interventions are systematically monitored through the District Health Information System 2 (DHIS2) to ensure evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation



Key Policy Initiatives

- Implementation of biannual Child Health Days (every May & November) to provide essential health services, immunizations, and growth monitoring.
- Establishment of breastfeeding awareness programs, including an annual Breastfeeding Week, to encourage optimal infant nutrition.
- Supplementation of pregnant and lactating mothers (multi-parity & drought periods)
- Routine assessment and monitoring of child growth and development indicators.
- Introduction of baby corners in healthcare facilities to provide safe and supportive environments for infant care
- Provision of school health services and school feeding programme
- Establishment of under five children supplementary feeding programme (e.g Tsabana) as a social protection package



REFLECTIONS

Achievements

- Developed Reporting Framework for holistic ECD
- Expansion of Positive parenting/caregiving programmes
- Establishment of Youth friendly clinics
- Introduction of one-year free Reception class programme

Lessons learned

- Cross-sectoral collaboration is crucial
- Broad stakeholder engagement strengthens advocacy
- Leverage existing strengths

Opportunities

- The new government's prioritization of Early Childhood Development (ECD) presents a strategic opportunity to advance policies, programs, and investments in the sector
- The establishment of the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education provides a specialized structure to drive and coordinate ECD initiatives effectively.
- The inclusion of ECD principles and objectives in all national policies and strategies ensures a comprehensive and sustained approach to early childhood development across sectors

Challenges

- Lack of high-level inter-ministerial coordination structure (ECD National/Sub-National Coordination Structures)
- Limited budget for ECD

Priorities in 2025 & Beyond

- Establish high-level coordination mechanisms to drive policy alignment and implementation
- Scale up campaigns such as Early Moments Matter, ECD Pitso, Stop Violence Against Children, and Pula Nkgodisa to strengthen public and policy support for ECD.
- Embed caregiver well-being and nurturing care services into routine health and nutrition programs for holistic child development.
- Collaborate with the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education to enhance school-based health and nutrition interventions..
- Strengthen tracking of ECD indicators across multiple sectors to ensure data-driven decision-making and accountability.
- Increase equitable access to quality Early Childhood Development and Early Childhood Education services



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