An Evaluation of the Early Childhood Care and Development Programme in Bhutan
A brief overview of the national ECD landscape in Bhutan

• Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programme
• Lead government agencies: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education
• Ministry of Health: 0 to 3 years
  o Maternal health (pre-natal and post-natal care)
  o Newborn health and Child health
  o C4CD and C4CD plus
• Ministry of Education: 3 to 5 years (since 2009)
  o Centre-based preschool programme: ECCD centres
  o Parenting education
  o Alternative models: mobile ECCD facilitators
  o Early stimulation and development
The National ECCD Evaluation (2019-2020)

Why was the evaluation conducted?

• First national-level ECCD evaluation through a multisectoral lens (health, education, and protection)

• Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the ECCD programme

• Sample: 3 districts from three regions (East, West, Central)- 51 ECCD centres, District Education Officers (9), District Health Officers (9), parents of birth to 2 year olds, ECCD facilitators, primary school teachers, Centre Management Committee.
The National ECCD Evaluation (2019-2020)...contd...

What are the key findings?

• ECCD-related policies are aligned to the NCF
• A common understanding of ECCD is lacking among stakeholders-linked to lack of multi-sectoral planning and implementation
• Access to ECCD centres remain a challenge
• ECCD participation in centres is positively related to child outcomes based on parent reports
• Standards of ECCD centres are a concern
• Health workers, creche and ECCD facilitators seek opportunities for targeted professional development
The Way Forward

• Implement a whole-system approach to ECCD through cross-sectoral collaboration – to address this UNICEF and MoE are developing Bhutan’s first Multi-Sectoral ECCD Strategic Action Plan

• Improve professional development opportunities for ECCD professionals

• Promote and improve parenting- parenting education and caring for caregiver programme

• Improve maternal and child health support/services

• Continue to advocate for ECCD focusing on increasing participation, improved learning conditions