Professionalizing ECED Educators to Improve Children’s Development Outcomes in the Early Years: The Case of Indonesia

This paper starts by reviewing the existing policy intent and key programs that have relevance to the various aspects of the professional development of ECED educators in Indonesia, to better understand the existing enabling environment and future trends. Observation of the significant consequences of these policies and programs on ECED educators are then discussed and used to propose recommendations. This paper focuses on ECED services under the management of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC).

1. Early Childhood Professional Development: International Perspectives on Effective Practices

Across many different countries and different contexts, international research clearly establishes the importance of the early childhood teaching workforce in creating environments that promote children’s development and learning. As summarized in a UNICEF White Paper on the early childhood teaching workforce,\(^1\) the research, including a major Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) research review,\(^2\) shows that more competent staff are better able to nurture children’s development with rich interactions and stimulating opportunities to learn, while respecting children’s own ideas and extending their learning opportunities. The OECD’s research\(^3\) and other syntheses\(^4\) show that teachers’ formal education, especially in the early childhood field, is important. However, the research also suggests that educational qualifications alone are not sufficient to produce quality teaching.

Whether the training is provided at a university or in the community, it must have appropriate, relevant content, and must be implemented with effective training methods that integrate theory with practice and that encourage educators to reflect on their own teaching. According to a recent study commissioned by the European Commission,\(^5\) an emphasis on practice should be evident in both pre-service (higher education programs) and in-service (community training) settings. In addition, the same

---

\(^1\) UNICEF (2019a). *White paper: Pathways to strengthen the pre-primary workforce in low- and middle-income countries*. New York: UNICEF.


\(^3\) Ibid.


study\textsuperscript{6} emphasizes the importance of looking at the broader system that should support the provision of high-quality teacher professional development. Such a system should ensure coordination and collaboration across institutions and individuals, as well as policies that ensure effective governance of the professional development system at national, sub-national and local levels.

**There are risks attached to the expansion of ECED services in the absence of quality professional development for ECED educators.** Despite the evidence that training is critical to quality teaching, research shows that many countries, eager to rapidly expand the number of early childhood services, are not spending adequate time or resources needed to develop a sustainable, competent workforce that can staff these services. This neglect of workforce development has a negative effect on professionalization and on the quality of the early childhood education sector. One of the results is often difficulty in recruiting qualified personnel who are motivated to teach young children.\textsuperscript{7}

**What is needed? Priorities for quality early childhood professional development.** More specifically, the international literature on early childhood professional development identifies five areas that together promote quality in ECED. These are as follows:

1.1 **Staff qualifications, competencies and workforce policies**
According to UNICEF, Resources for Development, the OECD and others,\textsuperscript{8} clear expectations regarding ECED staff qualifications (levels of education and training) and competencies (what staff should know and be able to do), linked to specific jobs in ECED (e.g., assistant teacher, teacher, principal/director), are important as guides for the development and implementation of training programs. Such expectations can also help staff and supervisors to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

1.2 **Coordinated implementation at the national, sub-national and local levels**
There is consensus that effective implementation of professional development policies and programs is essential.\textsuperscript{9} Frequently, policies developed by the central government are not well understood or put into practice at the sub-national and local levels, either because of a lack of capacity on the part of the relevant officials, a lack of communication, or a lack of resources.

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid.


1.3 Access to ECED professional development

Access to early childhood professional development has increased. However, a frequent observation in the international literature is that, even when good quality training programs have been developed, there are enduring, often serious, inequities in who has access to these programs. Gaps may exist because of geographic factors, often disadvantaging teachers in more remote locations. Professional development is often more easily accessible to those working in government-supported ECED programs rather than those working under other auspices. Teachers who are members of cultural or linguistic minorities, or other underrepresented groups, may also lack access to relevant training programs. Economic factors may further limit access in those countries where teachers are required to self-fund their own training.

As noted in the following section, there is evidence that longer, more intensive, ongoing training is more likely to have a positive influence on teachers’ practices. Inequitable access may mean that teachers with lower incomes or other challenges are more likely to receive very brief, one-time training, if any, contributing to lower quality in the classroom. Also contributing to inequitable access is a frequently seen “one-size-fits-all” approach, in which early childhood professional development opportunities are offered in only one format or on one schedule, which are unlikely to meet the needs of a diverse workforce.

1.4 Quality of training

As noted above, if ECED teacher training is going to positively influence teaching practices and, as a result, child development outcomes, the content and methods of this training should reflect international best practice in professional development. Reviews of research have identified key features of effective training. The evidence emphasizes that both pre-service and in-service training programs should:

1. Emphasize important competencies and specific practices known to predict positive child development outcomes;
2. Provide opportunities to practice skills, including field-based learning, through internships and on-the-job guided practice such as coaching;
3. Continue these opportunities over time (more than short-term training courses or brief workshops);

---

12 UNICEF, 2019b; UNICEF, 2019c.
4. Respond to teachers’ expressed needs, cultures, and contexts; and
5. Be provided by well-prepared trainers who use interactive, engaging methods.

In addition, there is consensus that resources need to be adequate to support effective early childhood professional development (ECPD). These include resources to ensure equitable access to training, including teachers with low incomes, and resources such as trainers’ guides and teachers’ handbooks, as well as user-friendly online resources such as video demonstrations and virtual coaching or communities of learners for teachers or trainers. Resources are also needed for adequate, ongoing professional development for trainers, including lecturers in higher education.

1.5 Monitoring and quality assurance
A consistent emphasis in international reviews and reports is that ECPD must be well monitored to ensure that both initial training (pre-service) and continuing professional development (CPD) programs (in-service) reflect and promote identified and desired teacher competencies. Monitoring also ensures that programs use methods that have been shown to be effective. Accreditation or national recognition systems, both for higher education programs and for CPD providers, are a potentially important part of quality assurance. Issues of teacher recruitment and deployment, and equitable access to teacher CPD are also important to monitor.

Monitoring should yield relevant information with regard to early childhood teachers and their training across national, sub-national and local levels. Information should then be used to improve policies, implementation systems and classroom practices—ultimately with the ability to track positive development outcomes for children. To make this happen, adequate resources are needed to establish a quality assurance system, including building the capacity of those responsible for monitoring and quality assurance at each level of the ECED system (including local and program levels). Often forgotten but key to quality is helping individual teachers to self-monitor, reflecting on their practice and making decisions about strategies for improvement, often with the help of a coach or mentor.

2. The Indonesian Context
The following paragraphs identify and review key regulations that are relevant to the various aspects of teachers, especially pre-primary, and their professional development. Understanding the intent of the various regulations will help in understanding the existing enabling environment, and the gap, together with ambiguities or even possible contradictions. These regulations will also be used as a point of reference in formulating the proposed recommendations at the end of this paper.

2.1 How ECED services and educators are defined
The existing regulations make a clear distinction between formal and non-formal ECED services, and the different types of ECED educator. The word ‘teacher’ is exclusively reserved for individuals working in formal ECED services who have a university or Diploma 4 degree and have completed the certification process. For educators working in non-formal ECED services who have lower academic qualifications,

---

15 UNICEF, 2019b
17 Ibid.
18 UNICEF, 2019a; UNICEF, 2019c.
the terms used are ‘assistant teacher’ (*guru pendamping*) and ‘junior assistant teacher’ (*guru pendamping muda*). When the government recently (2018) incorporated the provision of one-year pre-primary education in the Regulation on Minimum Service Standards, all district governments were required to staff formal ECED services with teachers, i.e., educators with a university or Diploma 4 degree.

The specific regulations are discussed below.

a. Law on the National Education System (*Undang Undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional No. 20/2003*) recognizes three types of ECED services: formal (i.e., kindergarten), non-formal (i.e., play group, day care, others) and informal (family).

b. Teacher Law (*Undang Undang Guru dan Dosen No. 14/2005*) defines a ‘teacher’ as a professional educator, whose main responsibility is to educate, teach, guide, train and evaluate students. For ECED, the term ‘teacher’ (*guru*) applies to individuals working in the formal type of ECED services (*Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini jalur pendidikan formal*), along with those in primary and secondary education. A teacher is required to have a university or Diploma 4 degree, and to have attained professional certification. The Teacher Law does not mention or regulate educators in the non-formal types of ECED services.

c. National ECED Standard (*Standar Nasional Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*): Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 137/2014 lays out eight standards that are meant to guide the quality of all ECED services in the country—both formal and non-formal. The main goal of these standards is to ensure that children receiving ECED services get the support they need to develop their full potential. This includes the Standard for Educators and Education Personnel (*Standar Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan*), which introduces three types of ECED educator: teacher (*guru*), assistant teacher (*guru pendamping*) and junior assistant teacher/caregiver (*guru pendamping muda*). Specific academic qualifications and competencies are assigned for each type. A teacher (*guru*) is required to have a university or Diploma 4 degree and a certificate of professional competence; an assistant teacher (*guru pendamping*) is required to have a Diploma 2 degree plus a certificate of relevant training; and a junior assistant teacher/caregiver (*guru pendamping muda*) is required to have a secondary education level plus a certificate of training.

d. Government Regulation on Minimum Service Standards (*Standar Pelayanan Minimum: PP No. 2/2018*) regulates that districts are responsible for the provision of one year of pre-primary education by ensuring that all children aged 5-6 years old (especially from poor families) have access to quality ECED services. Subsequent technical guidance (Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 32/2018) defines the aspect of quality by requiring districts to staff those ECED services with teachers who have university or Diploma 4 degrees.

2.2 What is expected from an ECED educator

The regulations are very clear and detailed on what is expected from an ECED educator, both in terms of academic qualifications and competencies. Educator competence is closely linked with the various domains of child development and core teacher competencies based on the curriculum and the standard for an ECED educator.
There is a move within the MoEC to align the types of educator with the National Qualification Framework (*Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia*, KKNI) and map the required competencies from different types of ECED educator into nine competency levels (see Section 2.2d below).

The specific regulations are discussed below:

a. **Standard for Academic Qualifications and Competence for a Teacher:** Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 16/2007 regulates the academic qualifications for teachers in formal education. ECED teachers in kindergarten (formal services) are required to have a university or Diploma 4 degree. The decree also regulates that all teachers should have the following core competencies (*Kompetensi Inti*): pedagogic, character, social and professional. In the case of ECED teachers, these competencies are discussed in some detail. Some of the key competencies include understanding the concept of meaningful play-based learning, and being able to plan and implement play-based learning by following the curriculum, developing lesson plans (annual, semester, daily), and evaluating child development.

b. **National ECED Standard:** Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 137/2014 regulates eight standards that should be met by ECED services to provide the appropriate level of quality. Together with the standard for educators as explained above, there are eight standards. These standards start by defining ‘age-appropriate child development milestones’ (*Standard Tingkat Pencapaian Perkembangan Anak/ STPPA*) that cover the different child development domains: morale/religion, physical motoric, cognitive, language, socio-emotional and art. These development milestones are to be achieved by following the standard on ‘Content’, focusing on child-centered, play-based learning, the standard on ‘Process’, namely planning, implementing and evaluating the activity by developing lesson plans (annual, monthly, daily), and the standard on ‘Evaluation’, evaluating individual child development based on the milestones. The other four supporting standards are: Educator, Infrastructure, Financing and Management.

Based on the Standard for Educators and Education Personnel, teachers and assistant teachers are required to have a set of pedagogic, social, character and professional competencies. The competency standard set for junior assistant teachers is lower, focusing on basic care-giving competence. There is an Annex to the Standard that explains in considerable detail the different competencies for each type of educator. For example, a teacher is expected to be able to understand the different development domains, how play-based learning approach can be organized to support each of the domains, translate the child-centered play-based learning approach into lesson plans, implement the lesson plans (including deciding the choice of appropriate education toys and facility to be used), and evaluate the development of each child in the service. An assistant teacher is expected to be able to develop lesson plans, implement activities based on the plan and evaluate child development. A junior assistant teacher is expected to understand and also be competent in child feeding and hygiene.

c. **ECED Curriculum, or Kurikulum 2013:** Minister of Education and Culture Decree No.146/2014 provides the curriculum for ECED and follows the same structure as the Curriculum for Basic and Secondary Education. It introduces ‘Core’ and ‘Basic’ competencies (*Kompetensi Dasar dan Kompetensi Inti*) that children are expected to acquire. Teachers are expected to be able to deliver the curriculum and structure their activities to support children in meeting the Core and Basic
competencies. Each ECED service needs to operationalize the national curriculum by developing its own service-based curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan).

d. National Qualification Framework: Presidential Decree No. 8/2012 provides the framework that is used to structure the level of competency that can be used to compare, align, and integrate different types of education, work-related training and work experience to provide recognition to a specific work competence and job structure in all sectors. The framework introduces nine levels of qualification and groups them into the following: levels 1-3: operator; levels 4-6: technical/analytical; and levels 7-9: expert.

2.3 The size and academic qualification of existing ECED educators

According to the MoEC’s Key Education Information Database (Data Pokok Pendidikan, DAPODIK), the enrollment rate of children aged 3-6 years is 72 percent. These children are currently accommodated in 200,147 formal (kindergarten) and non-formal ECED services. Of the formal services, only 3.7 percent are public. All of the non-formal ECED services are private. More specifically, in rural areas, the ECED services are managed by the community. Currently, there are 316,453 kindergarten (formal) teachers registered in DAPODIK. However, although the database shows that 40 percent of these registered educators do not have university or Diploma 4 degree, there are neither clear sanctions levied for not meeting the academic standard, nor targets imposed on meeting those academic requirements.

Another 333,061 educators are registered in the DAPODIK as non-formal educators, working in non-formal ECED services, such as play groups. It is important to note that registering on DAPODIK requires a certain level of IT knowledge and good access to the internet—conditions that are not always present in rural villages. It is therefore safe to assume that the number of existing non-formal educators exceeds this level. The database identifies that 72 percent of these registered educators do not have a university or Diploma 4 degree. Again, no clear sanctions or targets are imposed.

If all the registered educators, both formal and non-formal, were required to have university or Diploma 4 degrees, this would require at least 300,000 educators to be upgraded.

2.4 What professional development programs and concepts are currently available

a. Pre-service training (for formal teachers): An ECED pre-service study program is currently being offered in 115 public and private universities and teacher training colleges, including the Open University. Some of these study programs have only been established in the past three years and no systematic quality assurance has been conducted. In terms of enrollment capacity, on average, one study program enrolls 30 students annually. A couple of districts offer scholarships for ECED educators to undertake the degree program.

ECED educators in the non-formal services do not always have pre-service training. In rural villages, village government select (mostly) female members of the local community to become ECED educators. They mostly are voluntary village cadres engaging in the Posyandu (Local community Health posts), Program Kesejahteraan Keluarga/ PKK (Family Welfare Program), primary school teachers.
**b. In-service training:** One of the key in-service training programs is Diklat Berjenjang (tiered training program), a program managed by the Directorate for ECED Teachers and Education Personnel (*Direktorat Pembinaan Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan PAUD dan DIKMAS, Direktorat GTK PAUD*), which was developed to build the capacity of the ECED workforce in meeting the National ECED Curriculum, as well as the competence level described in the Standard for ECED Teachers. It has three levels (basic, intermediate and advanced) and each level has a series of modules with an assigned number of lesson hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diklat Berjenjang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managed by the Directorate for ECED Teachers and Education Personnel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Modules:**
- 1. The Basics: Early Childhood Education and Development
- 2. Child Development
- 3. Children with Special Needs
- 4. The Way Children Learn
- 5. Health, Nutrition and Safety
- 6. Lesson Planning
- 7. Assessment
- 8. Communicating with Parents
- 9. Ethics and Character
- 10. Peer Teaching

- **Basic level:** 48 lesson hours face to face + 200 lesson hours individual assignment
- **Intermediate level:** 64 lesson hours face to face + 100 lesson hours individual assignment
- **Advanced level:** 80 lesson hours face to face + 100 lesson hours individual assignment

Based on the report of the Directorate for ECED Teachers and Education Personnel, Diklat Berjenjang has reached out to the following number of participants (see table). The figure is not fully broken down into level of Diklat Berjenjang completed, but there is strong indication that the majority are for the basic level of Diklat Berjenjang.

**Number of ECED educators participating in Diklat Berjenjang**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-15</td>
<td>125,902</td>
<td>MoEC, district, participant fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>15,333 (completing the basic level of Diklat Berjenjang)</td>
<td>ECED Frontline Pilot (Trust Fund) in 25 districts, 252 sub-districts and 2,681 villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>6,080</td>
<td>MoEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>28,440</td>
<td>MoEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 (planned)</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>MoEC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In keeping with the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (*Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia, KKNI*), in 2018 the Directorate GTK PAUD started mapping the Diklat Berjenjang to the KKNI levels. The Diklat Berjenjang basic level is mapped to Level 3 (operator level) and targeted for junior assistant teachers (*guru pendamping muda*), and the intermediate level to Level 4 (analyst) and targeted...
to assistant teachers (guru pendamping). The competency level mapping of the advanced level is still in process. Using this mapping, educators completing the basic level of Diklat Berjenjang are prepared to become care-givers as oppose to educators.

c. Monitoring and quality assurance: A certificate of completion is issued by the MoEC to each of the Diklat Berjenjang participants who meets the ‘passing score’. These scores are provided by the trainers based on written tests and limited observation as outlined in the Training Manual. Other than the trainer monitoring and observation, there is no other quality assurance mechanism at the district level.

d. Acceleration program: The MoEC is currently negotiating with a number of ECED study programs in higher education institutions to request the study programs to consider the completion of basic, intermediate and advanced levels of Diklat Berjenjang as ‘recognized prior learning’, and to convert these three levels into credit points. This means that after completing Diklat Berjenjang, an educator can join an accelerated program to obtain a university degree.

e. ECED services cluster working groups (Gugus) and centralized cluster working groups (Pusat Kegiatan Gugus, PKG): Teacher cluster working groups consist of six to eight neighboring ECED services at the village/inter-village level. Three to five Gugus are organized into one centralized cluster working group, or Pusat Kegiatan Gugus (PKG), usually at the kecamatan (sub-district) level. The PKG is supported by the government to become a resource and knowledge-sharing forum for improving the quality of ECED services. This program is managed by the Directorate General for ECED and Community Education.

f. Zone-based Teacher Training: The MoEC, through the Directorate General for Teachers and Education Personnel, has just (re)introduced its CPD system, characterized by the local delivery of training (based on geographical zone), followed by reflection and refinement of teaching practices discussed among peers. Specifically for ECED teachers, the (preliminary) concept is for certified kindergarten teachers from public kindergartens (TKN Pembina) to be trained and take up the responsibility of mentoring their peers. This concept is managed by the Directorate General for Teachers and Education Personnel. This CPD approach can be delivered at the local level, especially through the Centers for ECED Cluster Working Groups (PKG).

2.5 Welfare
There are a number of financial benefits available for ECED educators, as follows:

Civil Service Teacher (Kindergarten Teacher): At the top of the pay-scale are civil service teachers in public formal kindergartens, with an average monthly salary of Rp 3 million (US$214).

Certification Allowance (for civil service and non-civil service teachers): Qualified teachers in formal services, both civil servants and non-civil servants, are eligible to receive a certification/professional allowance equivalent to their current salary.

The certification process is open to all teachers in formal ECED services who meet the qualification requirement (university/Diploma 4 degree in ECED or related subject), and are either civil servants contracted by local government or permanent staff of a private foundation. The process, funded by the government, includes attending a 90-hour program known as the Professional Training Course for Teachers (Pendidikan dan Latihan Profesi Guru, PLPG), or a one-semester course on Teacher
Professional Education (Pendidikan Profesi Guru, PPG). Currently, there are 45 higher education institutions accredited to deliver PLPG and PPG. Once certified, these teachers are eligible to receive the professional allowance equivalent to their basic salary (i.e., doubling their salary). In 2019, the Directorate for ECED Teachers allocated 88 percent of their teacher/educator allowance for civil service ECED teachers.

Educators in Non-Formal ECED Services: Educators in a profit-oriented ECED service receive around Rp 3.0 to 3.5 million/month, while those working in community managed services in the villages receive between Rp 100,000 and Rp 300,000 (US$7 to US$21) from the Village Fund (Dana Desa).

The MoEC, through the Directorate for ECED Teachers, prioritizes teachers from formal ECED services (kindergarten) with civil service status. An amount of Rp 1,553 billion (US$110 million) has been allocated in 2019 to pay the certification allowance to 47,500 civil service and non-civil service registered teachers who have completed the certification process. Given that this consumes 88 percent of the allocated budget for various teacher allowances, little is left over for educators from non-formal ECED services.

2.6 Responsibilities in the professional development of ECED teachers/educators

The responsibilities for professional development of ECED teachers/educators are shared among many government level and institutions. Diagram 1 provides illustration of the organization of these institutions, while the following paragraphs provide elaboration of their role and function.

Based on the Regulation on Minimum Service Standards, district governments, through their local Education Office (Dinas Pendidikan), are responsible for professional development of ECED teachers/educators.

The MoEC is responsible for issuing standards, guidelines and quality assurance. The current central- and district-level institutional arrangements are as follows:

Central/Ministry.

- Directorate General for ECED and Community Education (Direktorat Pembinaan PAUD dan DIKMAS), under which is the Directorate for ECED, is responsible for developing standards, policy and guidelines.
- Directorate General for Teachers and Education Personnel (Direktorat Pembinaan Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan), under which is the Directorate for ECED Teachers and Education Personnel and Community Education, is responsible for developing policies, regulations, and standards for professional development of ECED teachers and facilitators in community education. This Directorate manages the Diklat Berjenjang program.
- Research and Development Agency, under which there is the Center for Curriculum, is responsible for curriculum development.
- PUSTEKKOM (Education Technology and Communication), produces and disseminates online learning materials (text and video), including those on ECED.
Local Government

- At the district level, ECED is embedded in the District Education Office (*Dinas Pendidikan*). As in the case at the central level, the responsibility for the management of ECED services (institutions) and ECED teachers/workforce can be spread across different units.
- District Education Offices also employ ECED supervisors. Their roles vary in different districts: some are dedicated ECED supervisors and others have a combined role as supervisors for ECED and Community Education.

2.7 Training support system

There also exists a network of institutions and forums, supported with funding, at the province, district and even down at the sub-district and village levels with responsibility on quality improvement for ECED services and their teacher/educators.

Regional/sub-national institutions:

- The National Training Center for Teachers and Education Personnel for Kindergarten and Special Education (*Pusat Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan Taman Kanak-kanak dan Pendidikan Luar Biasa, P4TK TKLB*) under the Directorate General for Teachers and Education Personnel has one training center. It is designed to support the CPD of teachers and education personnel in kindergartens (later in ECED) and special education. P4TK TKLB reports to the Directorate General for Teachers and Education Personnel in the MoEC.
- Centers for Development of ECED and Community Education (*Balai Pengembangan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini dan Pendidikan Masyarakat, BP-PAUD DIKMAS*, and *Pusat Pengembangan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini dan Pendidikan Masyarakat, PP PAUD DIKMAS*). The two are identical, except that the head of PP-PAUD DIKMAS has a higher rank in the civil service. The main task (*tugas pokok*) of the two organizations is to improve ECED quality, as well as develop ECED learning models. As for ECED quality, the reference used is the eight standards stipulated in Education Minister Regulation No. 137/2014. These centers report to the Directorate General ECED and Community Education.
- (District) Learning Centers/Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar are district-based learning centers that report to the district government.

Within the MoEC, the Directorate General for ECED provides two types of block grant: (i) the ECED Operational Support Block Grant (BOP PAUD), which is paid to ECED services on a per-enrolled-child basis (Rp 600,000 or US$42/year) to support non-personnel costs; and (ii) the Block Grant to Centers for Cluster Working Groups (*Bantuan Pusat Kegiatan Gugus*), paid to sub-district-level centers (Rp 10 million or US$710/year) for quality improvement activities. The Directorate General for Teachers and Education Personnel provides the Block Grant to Centers for Cluster Working Groups for teacher training.

**Operational Support Block Grant for ECED services (BOP PAUD).** Once registered in the National Education Database (*Data Pokok Pendidikan, DAPODIK*), an ECED service is eligible to receive a block grant to support its operational costs, which include teacher professional development. The amount is based on a per-child unit cost, at Rp 600,000. Fifty percent of BOP funds can be used for implementing play-based learning (educational toys or equipment), 35 percent for supporting activities (including
teacher-parent meetings and transport for teachers to participate in cluster working groups), and 15 percent for maintenance. BOP PAUD cannot be used for teacher allowances/salaries.

Diagram 1: Institutions with responsibilities in the professional development of ECED teachers/educators
2.8 Quality assurance

There are independent quality assurance agencies: one for ECED services (institutions) (*Badan Akreditasi Nasional PAUD*) and one for educators, the newly established Competency Certification Agency (*Lembaga Sertifikasi Kompetensi*, LSK). Competency certification is targeted at non-formal educators, where a fee (currently Rp 500,000 or US$40) is charged per educator. Currently, the number of physical locations of the Competency Certification Units (*Tempat Uji Kompetensi*, TUK) at the provincial/district levels, where teachers can participate in the competency certification process, is still limited. Upon successfully completing the competency certification process, the MoEC will issue a certificate of competence. While educators are encouraged to go through the certification process, unlike the professional certification process for teachers in formal ECED services that leads to the doubling of salary, completion of the competency certification does not give rise to any direct improvement in their salaries or welfare. Currently, central and local governments contribute funding to the accreditation and certification process.

2.9 Professional associations

There are two professional associations of ECED educators with national networks and local offices at the provincial and district levels. Their operations rely on membership fees but they also receive occasional financial support from the Government, mainly through funding national-scale activities. These associations manage short training programs for their members, including Diklat Berjenjang.

The first is the Association of Kindergarten Teachers (*Ikatan Guru Taman Kanak Kanak Indonesia*, IGTKI) whose members are the ECED educators working in formal ECED services (kindergartens) who have access to civil service positions and/or certification allowances. In fact, the MoEC allocates the majority of educator allowances to members of IGTKI.

The second is the Indonesian Association of ECED Educators (*Himpunan Pendidik PAUD Indonesia*, HIMPAUDI). HIMPAUDI was established to accommodate educators from the non-formal services. None of the members is a civil servant (unless they also work in kindergartens). Because of the non-formal nature of their association, HIMPAUDI is more proactive in organizing itself to access professional development programs for its members. HIMPAUDI has a national-level chair, as well as local offices at the district and sub-district levels.

2.10 Village support for ECED and professional development for ECED educators

Villages play an increasingly important role in ECED. In early 2000, the MoEC launched its “One Village – One ECED” program (*Satu Desa Satu PAUD*), a movement launched to build awareness in all villages of the importance of providing ECED services for young children. Based on 2017 data, 58,000 out of 74,000 villages (78 percent) already have an ECED service, although quality has not yet been assessed. Many of these services fall into the category of non-formal ECED and therefore their educators belong to the non-formal educator type. During 2015-19, 50,854 ECED services were established using the Village Fund (*Dana Desa*).

Village Support for ECED Services and Professional Development for ECED Educators. The Village Law, issued in 2014, stipulated the transfer of public funds through the national budget to every village in Indonesia. These funds, or *Dana Desa*, can be used by villages based on their mandate, and the decisions
on how to use the funds made through the village consultative process. Further implementing regulations by the Ministry of Villages lay out how villages can allocate their budget for basic services, including ECED. The combination of increased awareness from the village community on the benefits of ECED for their children (partly as the result of the One-Village One-ECED program) and the availability of the Village Fund has contributed to improved access to ECED services at the village level. The Village Fund is being used to support the purchase of educational toys/equipment, minor renovations and honorariums for ECED teachers.

**ECED Frontline Pilot.** In 2016 and 2017, the ECED Frontline Pilot—managed by the World Bank with funding from a DFAT Trust Fund—supported the government in establishing locally delivered professional development programs, mainly Diklat Berjenjang, for community ECED teachers. The MoEC prepared the training modules and also trained the district trainers. Teacher participation was funded through a training grant managed by villages and inter-village communities. Local NGOs, contracted by community, helped with implementation logistics. The training package introduced during the ECED Frontline Pilot included peer visits and regular meetings of the cluster-based educator working groups (PKG).

Evaluation of the Frontline Pilot showed that community ECED teachers participating at the basic level showed improvement in their competencies: namely, 18 out of 20 practices as measured by a global instrument (Measurement of Early Learning Environment). At the time of the pilot, the content of the basic level Diklat Berjenjang was equivalent to the competency required for an assistant teacher. As noted above, the modules and lesson hours of the basic level Diklat Berjenjang—after mapping to competency Level 3 of the KKNI—is now targeted at junior assistant teachers (*guru pendamping muda*). Emphasis is given to the health, nutrition and basic care-giving modules, to prepare the participants to become care-givers. The current composition of the module is no longer sufficient to prepare the participants to become educators.

The Frontline Pilot evaluation also showed that the model can be replicated and scaled up by advocating the use of the Village Fund. The unit cost per teacher is Rp 1,500,000 (US$107), which represents a relatively small amount of Village Funds, ranging from Rp 700 million to Rp 1,300 million (US$50,000 to US$92,000) per village depending on the size of their population and other criteria.
3. Discussion

- The Indonesian government should be commended for having formulated and issued a rich set of regulations and establishing the enabling environment for the development of quality ECED, as well as professional ECED educators.

- This review shows that the government is placing a strong emphasis on academic qualifications for ECED educators. A ‘teacher’ with a university and Diploma 4 degree is set as the long-term goal. However, it is important for the government to also discuss some of the immediate implications of pursuing this long-term goal. As suggested by the international literature, there is no guarantee that a university background (especially those not specific to ECED) is linked to teacher practical competence. Furthermore, there needs to be a systematic review of the availability, quality, accessibility and affordability of existing ECED study programs. Many of the programs are newly established, and no systematic and comprehensive quality measurement has been undertaken. They are spread across many provinces, but the majority are nonetheless in the Java/Bali region. Their enrollment capacity is very limited, at about 30 new students annually, which means that it will take decades for the 300,000 existing educators with non-university degrees to be upgraded. Furthermore, there are currently no clear sanctions for existing educators who fail to meet the requirement. For ECED non-formal educators who receive only around US$7 to US$21 monthly, financial support is of great importance if they are to pursue a university degree.

- Many non-formal educators are already working with no pre-service training background. They receive no preparatory training to deliver the quality ECED services as required in the National ECED Standards, particularly the Standards of Content and Process, which require educators to be able to plan and implement play-based learning based on the National ECED Curriculum.

- The MoEC is moving toward CPD for ECED educators that can be delivered locally and provided in a continuous manner, including discussion among peers, reflection and improving teaching practices. This is consistent with international best practice.

- There are already elements that can support the implementation of in-service professional development training programs. These include the following:
  - Diklat Berjenjang, with modules and lesson hours structured into three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. Each level is mapped into three types of educators: teachers (guru), assistant teachers (guru pendamping), and junior assistant teachers (guru pendamping muda). These levels are currently being mapped into the competency levels of the National Qualification Framework (KKNI).
  - Training of ECED educators (P4TK TK LB) and a good network of provincial-based Regional Quality Assurance Centers (BP and PP PAUD DIKMAS). With proper capacity building, these organizations can play an important role in making in-service training, especially Diklat Berjenjang, more relevant and accessible to ECED educators, especially in rural areas.
  - Block Grant to PKG, currently Rp 10 million/year per cluster working group.
Experience from the ECED Frontline Pilot in the local delivery of Diklat Berjenjang (with peer learning visits and regular participation in cluster working groups).

Participation by villages in allocating their resources for incentives for village ECED educators, as well as opportunities to advocate the use of the Village Fund to contribute to some of the costs related to participation of village ECED educators to locally delivered Diklat Berjenjang.

- Quality assurance system (Accreditation for ECED Services, Competency Certification for Teachers/Educators) is in place, although still with limited coverage.

- There is no clear linkage between competency certification for non-formal ECED educators and recognition/welfare.

4. Recommendations

- Prioritize child development. Support every ECED teacher/educator (both in formal and non-formal ECED services) to have basic competencies (supported with knowledge) to deliver the curriculum—through child-centered, play-based activities—that stimulates all development aspects of children.

- Move away from prioritizing the requirement for a university degree for teachers/educators and focus on recognizing competency.

- Increase access to shorter programs that can be delivered locally and can be recognized as ‘prior learning’, such as Diklat Berjenjang.

- Implement the government policy of zone-based training programs by defining clear responsibilities among different levels of government, for example:
  - The MoEC should: (i) develop high quality modules and other training materials that focus on building teacher competencies; (ii) building capacity of the provincial-based training institutions (BP PAUDNI and PP PAUDNI) as national training teams; and (iii) involve PUSTEKKOM to develop online training for trainers and teachers.
  - District governments should maintain a team of professional district trainers or mentor teachers/coaches to provide continuous support to individual educators, including through educator cluster working groups.
  - Village governments to proactively and regularly support CPD of their local teachers/educator by allocating the Village Fund for participating in locally delivered training programs.
  - Involve local NGOs to support training implementation.

- Support the teacher qualification system. Teachers and educators successfully completing a specific level of training or competency level (for example, the basic level of Diklat Berjenjang aligned to qualification level 3) should be financially rewarded, either by the central, district or village government.
• Support educator to achieve the highest qualification as possible. For example, once an educator has completed the Basic level of Diklat Berjenjang, s/he should be supported to complete the Intermediate and Advance Level. This will allow them to continue to University Degree through the Acceleration Program.

• Consider abolishing the distinction between formal and non-formal ECED services, given that the national standards and curriculum apply equally to both.