

TOOL 5.2: TIP SHEET

TIPS AND GUIDANCE ESTABLISHING ECE COORDINATING BODIES



Tip 1: ECE Technical Working Groups in subsector coordination

Should there not be any existing coordinating body for the ECE sub-sector that can be leveraged to effectively oversee the implementation of ESP operational plans, it will be important to establish a new coordinating body (CB). One starting point in developing a stand-alone entity is through establishing an ECE Technical Working Group (TWG) utilizing existing resources and guidance included in Tool 1.4 “Strategic Ideas for Establishing the ECE Technical Working Group”.

Establishing an ECE TWG that will play an integral role in subsector coordination responsibilities can be an excellent way to ensure the direct engagement of key ECE stakeholders and decision makers in ESP implementation and monitoring processes as well as develop a core team of stakeholders tasked with moving the national ECE agenda forward.

A note on ECE Technical Working Groups in subsector coordination

An ECE TWG is generally meant to consist of a “core team” of technical advisors that will support the ECE arm of the Ministry of Education (or other ministries that have responsibility over ECE) with its mandate and tasks on ECE. Should there be a large number of actors implementing ECE activities in your country context, it could be advisable to create a subsector coordinating body that is inclusive of all actors implementing ECE activities that can be convened by the chair of the ECE TWG as a means of ensuring the ECE TWG does not exceed 8-10 members in total.

Additionally, it will be important to ensure that subsector coordination is operational at both the national and subnational levels. In the case that the ECE TWG is only present and operational at the national level, it will require that the subnational level is effectively represented in the ECE TWG, or alternatively, that all regions have subsector coordinating bodies that will liaise with the ECE TWG at the central or national level. Within this context, the Chair of the ECE TWG can coordinate with relevant government officials (from the MoE or other line ministries for ECE) to establish subnational coordinating bodies.



Tip 2: Developing a Terms of Reference for an ECE Coordinating body

If an ECE Technical Working Group exists, or if there is a decision to establish an ECE TWG, the sample ToR included as an Annex to Tool 1.4 can be adapted to include subsector coordination responsibilities at the national level. However, should the decision be made to not create an ECE TWG but rather establish an ECE CB tasked with the oversight of ECE activities in the ESP operational plan,

the tips that follow may be helpful to guide the development or strengthening of the terms of reference (ToR) of the ECE CB.

A sample ToR is provided below in the Annex to this tool. This sample may be used as a template and adapted to your context as needed. The template can be further adapted for TORs for subnational coordination bodies (see tip 3 for a suggested division of roles and responsibilities between national and subnational coordination bodies).



Tip 3: Ensure ECE sub-sector coordination bodies are inclusive of the sub-national level of government

Establishing and maintaining strong lines of communication between national and sub-national levels of government is an essential element in ensuring effective implementation and monitoring of ESP operational plans. Establishing an ECE CB inclusive of both national and subnational levels can promote regular and systematic communication that can facilitate the timely identification of regional bottlenecks to implementation as well as capacity gaps at the subnational level.

This can be accomplished a variety of ways depending on country context:

1. **Integrating subnational representation within the national coordinating body:** Regional focal points can be invited to participate either virtually or in-person to ECE subsector coordination meetings convened at the national level. Alternatively, there can be a focal point within the coordination body at the national level tasked with engaging and collecting information from the subnational level which can then be shared during national coordination meetings. This could be the most feasible approach when the number of partners implementing ECE activities sub-nationally is relatively limited and doesn't require extensive coordination of partners at the subnational level.
2. **Establishing sub-national ECE CBs:** In instances where the number of partners implementing ECE activities requires coordination at the subnational level, it would be beneficial to establish sub-national ECE CBs led by appropriate subnational education authorities (in collaboration with other line ministries responsible for ECE), to ensure appropriate coordination and oversight of ECE implementing partners.

Chairs for subnational ECE CB can be appointed by the Chair of the ECE CB at the national level and the ToRs, included in the annex of this tool below, can be adapted for subnational CBs. It will be important to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between ECE CBs at the national and subnational level in support of the implementation and monitoring of ECE activities included in the ESP operational plan.



Tip 4: Clarifying roles and responsibilities between national and subnational coordination bodies

National and subnational coordination bodies play complementary roles to one another, each structured to maximize its comparative strengths in supporting the implementation and monitoring of ECE activities included in the ESP operational plan.

Primary responsibilities of the ECE coordination body at the subnational level can include:

- Ensuring all relevant stakeholders at the subnational level are appropriately informed of the national subsector strategy (as articulated through ESP) and operational plans.
- Monitoring of implementation of national subsector strategy, including associated activities and subnational quantitative targets.
- Identifying bottlenecks in implementation and identifying corrective measures and, when necessary, communicating existing bottlenecks to national ECE CB for support.
- On-going assessment of subnational implementation capacity in the implementation of sub-sector workplans (as articulated through ESP operational plans).
- Informing subnational stakeholders of policies/standards endorsed at the national level and ensuring appropriate operationalization and oversight at the subnational level.
- A mapping of partner presence at the subnational level.
- Consolidation of qualitative information (bottlenecks, lessons learned, etc.) and quantitative data (reporting against subsector targets) that will feed into and inform sector review processes.

Primary responsibilities of the ECE coordination body at the national level can include:

- Ensuring all ECE regional authorities at the subnational level have ownership over the national subsector strategy (as articulated through ESP and operational plans).
- Ensuring all ECE regional authorities at the subnational level are appropriately informed of and adhere to subsector policies/standards endorsed at the national level.
- Monitoring effective implementation of the subsector annual workplan through a consolidation of information provided from subnational coordination bodies (requests for support to national level to address bottlenecks, subnational capacity gaps, quantitative reporting against subnational targets, etc.).
- Informing appropriate Ministries/Divisions/Departments responsible for, or supporting, the ECE subsector at the national level for the need of support

to subnational levels of government to address identified bottlenecks or capacity gaps.

- National mapping of actors implementing ECE activities (consolidation of regional mapping exercise conducted by subnational coordinating bodies).
- Informing subsector strategic planning and advocacy (establish linkages with ECE TWG if operational and not directly responsible for subsector coordination at the national level).
- Liaising as necessary with the ESP Strategic Monitoring Committee overseeing implementation of ESP operational plan.



Tip 5: Ensure appropriate investment in subsector coordination

Effective and sustained subsector coordination requires both human and financial resources. At the subnational level, funding could be required to support travel of ECE actors/stakeholders involved in the implementation of ECE activities from the community or district level to the regional level to participate in coordination meetings. Funding could also be needed to support communication (phone/internet) at the subnational level between the chairs of subnational CBs and relevant actors at the subnational level (district/local ECE actors) as well as on-going communication with the ECE CB at the national level. When possible, leverage financial resources allocated for sectoral coordination and/or monitoring included as part of the ESP to help support subnational coordination.



Tip 6: Leverage the Cluster System in humanitarian contexts to strengthen the implementation and coordination of ECE activities

In country contexts affected by humanitarian crisis, the Resident or Humanitarian Coordinator can activate the Cluster system. Clusters are established as part of an international emergency response, based on an analysis of humanitarian needs and coordination capacity on the ground and in consultation with national partners.

Where an Education Cluster has been established, this coordination platform can be leveraged to coordinate and oversee the implementation of humanitarian programming (see cross-cutting considerations for crisis contexts in Tool 5.4) for the ECE subsector and address context specific issues related to the implementation of ECE programming in humanitarian settings. In some cases, this can be achieved through establishing an ECE sub-working group under the Education Cluster. Alternatively, if a ECE TWG exists in your country context, members from the ECE TWG could represent the ECE subsector within the Education Cluster.

TOOL 5.2: ANNEX

SAMPLE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) COORDINATING BODY (CB)

Note: The specifics and sections of this sample ToR are likely to need adaptation to your country context. This is a suggested format only – please feel free to use any format that suits your country context.

1. Background

Within the context of the national Education Sector Plan (ESP), the Ministry of Education (MoE) has established a strategic monitoring committee that will be tasked with general oversight of the implementation of the ESP operational plan. Within this national framework, the Early Childhood Education sub-sector, under the leadership of the MoE will establish a Coordinating Body (CB) that will be responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the national ECE strategy as articulated through the ESP operational plan. These Terms of Reference sets out define the mandate, and roles and responsibilities of members as well define the operational modalities of its organizational work.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- What other Ministries in addition the Ministry of Education are mandated with oversight of the ECE subsector which need to be included in this coordinating body?
- How is the strategic monitoring committee structured within your specific country context?

2. Objectives

The objectives of the ECE Coordinating Body is to ensure the effective implementation of the Education Sector Plan for the ECE sub-sector as articulated through the ESP operational plan through:

- 2.1.** Ensuring appropriate alignment of all ECE actors implementing ECE activities in accordance with national subsector policies and standards.
- 2.2.** Reducing the duplication of efforts and facilitating equitable provision of ECE services.
- 2.3.** The identification solutions to identified challenges/bottlenecks in the implementation the national subsector strategy.
- 2.4.** Systematic collection of qualitative and quantitative data that will inform the ESP monitoring and evaluation processes.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- What are the objectives of the ECE CB (within the context of the implementation and monitoring of the ESP operational plan)?
- What are the specific tasks and activities that will help the ECE CB meet these objectives?
- Are there SMART indicators that can guide the progress of the ECE CB? Will the ECE CB review the objectives and the progress against such indicators on a regular basis so that adjustments can be made?

3. Membership of the ECE CB

Membership of the coordinating body will be by invitation from the ECE Unit of the MoE. The coordinating body will comprise of representatives of stakeholders that are implementing ECE programs in the country. It is envisaged that representatives from the following departments/institutions (but not limited to) will be nominated to participate in the coordinating body:

- 3.1.** ECE Unit of MoE (national and subnational levels)
- 3.2.** Non-governmental organizations
- 3.3.** Civil society partners
- 3.4.** Etc.

Membership of the coordinating body for the ECE subsector will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure it continues include representation of all stakeholders implementing ECE programs in the country.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- Outside of the MoE, are there other line Ministries responsible for the implementation and oversight of ECE programs?
- Who are the stakeholders implementing ECE programs in your country?
- How will membership be revised and updated to ensure inclusion of all relevant stakeholders?
- How is the subnational level of government and other ECE actors at the subnational level included in the subsector coordination body?

4. Structure of the ECE Coordinating Body

4.1 National Coordination. The national ECE CB will be led by the Chair, with the logistical and practical support from the Secretariat. The Chairperson and the Secretariat person for the ECE CB will be appointed by the ECE Unit of the MoE at the national level. The Chair of the national ECE CB will be responsible for liaising with the Chairs of subnational ECE CBs (or sub-national ECE focal points in the absence of operational sub-national CBs) to ensure appropriate communication between national and regional coordinating bodies.

4.2 Sub-National Coordination. Sub-national ECE CBs will be led by the Chair, with the logistical and practical support from the Secretariat. The Chairperson and the Secretariat person and for sub-national ECE CBs will be appointed by the ECE Unit of the MoE at the sub-national level. While ECE coordination bodies at both the national and sub-national levels should be under the leadership of the MoE, other members of the ECE CB can be requested to support the Chair or the Secretariat based on identified needs.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- How many partners do are there implementing ECE activities at the subnational level? Does the existing number of partners merit establishing regional ECE CBs?
- If not, how will the sub-national level be integrated into the national ECE CB?
- Who supports with the operations of the ECE CBs at both national and sub-national levels?
- How can appropriate coordination and communication be ensured between national and sub-national levels?

5. Responsibilities of the ECE Coordinating Body

All members shall:

- Regularly attend meetings, or nominate an appropriate alternate representative of their organization to attend;
- Report back as necessary to their nominating organization and members to encourage a wide dissemination and sharing of knowledge about progress and issues related to the planning, implementation and monitoring of ECE activities;
- Make available relevant information held by the organizations they represent to support the planning, implementation, and monitoring of ECE activities.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- What is expected of the ECE CB members? What are their roles?
- What are their specific tasks?

6. Convening of the ECE CB meetings

6.1. Meetings shall be held quarterly or more frequently to align with operational modalities for ESP implementation and monitoring as defined by the national strategic monitoring committee.

6.2. Quarterly sub-national meetings will be held in the month prior the national ECE CB meeting to ensure sub-national CB meeting minutes inform the agenda/discussions of the national ECE CB.

- 6.3.** The time and location of meetings will be indicated by the Chair of the ECE CB (both at national and subnational levels).
- 6.4.** Extraordinary meetings of the ECE CB to consider urgent matters shall be convened at the initiative of the Chair of the ECE CB.
- 6.5.** Reminders of the date of meetings with the agenda shall be sent not later than 5 working days before the actual meeting date of the ECE CB.
- 6.6.** Quorum for the meetings will be achieved if the meeting is attended by at least 50% of registered CB members in addition the Chair and Secretariat.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- How will you ensure an appropriate synergy between national and sub-national CBs?
- How often will national and sub-national groups meet? Who will convene meetings?
- What is the process for convening meetings and for establishing quorum?

7. Participation in the ECE CB meetings

- 7.1.** Member organizations of the ECE CB shall take part in the ECE CB meetings, as well as any other staff from MoE or other relevant Ministries involved with the planning, implementation and monitoring of ECE programs
- 7.2.** Members of the ECE Technical Working Group.

8. Decision-making procedures

- 8.1.** Each member organization of the ECE CB shall be entitled to one vote only when taking decisions on the matters under consideration at the ECE CB meeting.
- 8.2.** All participants and invitees present at the ECE CB meeting shall have the right to make suggestions, comments and amendments on the substance of the issues under discussion as well as to make inquiries.
- 8.3.** Those invited to the ECE CB meeting may submit in writing their comments or suggestions on the issues under consideration.
- 8.4.** Decisions of the ECE CB shall be taken by consensus by a simple majority (more than 50%) of the ECE CB members.
- 8.5.** Decisions on procedural matters shall be taken by a simple majority of the member organizations participating in the ECE CB meeting.
- 8.6.** The results of the decision-making shall be recorded in the Minutes of the meetings.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- How will the decisions be made?
- How will the activities and decisions of the ECE CB be recorded?

9. Preparation of materials

The draft agenda shall be set based on the ECE CB's objectives or recommendations made by the national Strategic Monitoring Committee, as well as taking into account the proposals of the ECE CB members and realities requiring immediate attention.

The agenda shall set out the topics of discussion and as relevant the desired outcomes of the meeting. Materials for consideration at the ECE CB meetings shall be prepared by the Secretariat of the ECE CB in accordance with the agenda. The draft agenda with the necessary documents shall be sent to all members of the ECE CB not later than 10 working days before the ECE CB meeting.

Comments and suggestions on the agenda received shall be communicated to the Secretariat of the ECE CB at least 5 working days prior to the commencement of the work of the ECE CB. Comments or suggestions not submitted within the specified period shall be considered as unavailable.

The draft agenda, considering the amendments and additions made by the members of the ECE CB, shall be approved by the ECE CB in session. By the decision of the ECE CB during the meeting, the issues that members of the ECE CB may consider important and urgent, shall be included to the agenda.

10. Minutes of the meetings

The results of the meetings shall be recorded by the Secretariat in the Minutes summarizing the proceedings, including decision-making and records. The Minutes and decisions shall be signed by the Chair of the ECE CB and the Secretariat of the ECE CB.

The minutes of all meetings will include:

- a list of the members in attendance
- action points/responsibilities under each agenda item
- progress on agreed actions from previous meetings
- any statements which members request be recorded.

Any member of the ECE CB may, if necessary, request that a dissenting opinion on a decision taken by the ECE CB be reflected in the Minutes and that a full or partial statement be included in the records. The minutes of meetings and records of all correspondence and reports of the ECE CB will be kept by the Secretariat and will be made available to the members of the CB in an agreed manner. Decisions and minutes of the meetings shall be sent to the ECE CB members within 5 working days after the meeting. Members are required to provide feedback on the minutes that were shared prior to the date identified by the secretariat.

Guiding questions to help you reflect on the information to include in this section of the ToR:

- How will the results/summary of the meetings be documented? Who has the responsibility of documenting and communicating the activities/decisions of the ECE CB?
- What should the minutes of the meetings include?
- How are the minutes of the meetings shared with and approved by the members?