



#ourchildren'sfuture

A global and inter-regional webinar series to promote understanding of the interlinkages between early childhood development and climate science within, across, and beyond regions

Global Webinar Series on Early Childhood Development and Climate Science

1 September 2022, 5:00-6:30 PM Singapore time

Regional, global networks: Build coalition, movement for ECD and climate resilience

For the first time, ECD networks at the regional and global levels came together to hold a webinar series on early childhood development and climate change.

ECDAN, AfECN, ANECD, ARNEC, and ISSA amplified the need to work together and reached out to champions and partners at different levels to make ECD part of global and national climate action during the first global webinar series on 1 September 2022.

“Approximately one billion children, nearly half of the world’s children, live in countries classified as being high risk of climate change,” stressed ECDAN Executive Director Elizabeth Lule. The experiences of Asia and Africa regions were the focus of the webinar, but in



the course of the series those of other regions will also be covered, she added.

Joan Lombardi, Senior Fellow of the Georgetown Collaborative on Children’s Issues and webinar moderator, cited the need to build bridges to support the intersection of ECD and climate change.

Meanwhile, Ghassan Issa and Liana Ghent, Executive Directors of ANECD and ISSA, respectively, expressed solidarity for the initiative and supported the call for a movement to advance the agenda for ECD and climate resilience at the global, regional, and country levels.

Climate expert cites transformational power of ECD, pathway to climate resilience,

Young children, like seedlings, grow and develop with the proper nurturing care and are likely to become healthy, productive, and resilient adults.

This stressed Adrian Cerezo during the webinar signifying the transformational power of ECD and offering to change the ECD

narrative from vulnerable to valuable.

Evidence has shown compounded returns on investments from ECD and making ECD aligned with environmental and sustainability

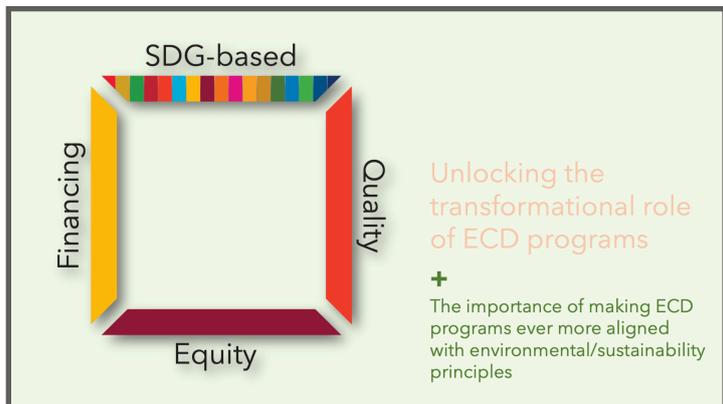


In case you missed it

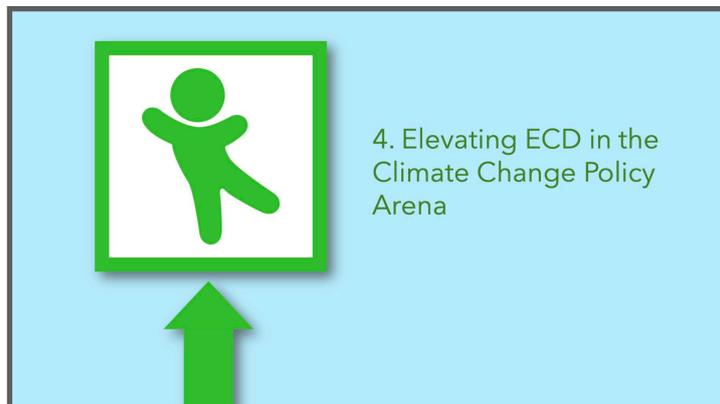
For the full documentation report, visit the ARNEC website or click this link: <https://arnecc.net/highlight-details?id=93>

For the full webinar recording in English, Portuguese, and French, visit the AfECN website or click this link: <https://afecfn.org/ecc-climate-change>

principles could further unlock its potential to achieve the SDGs, the social ecologist explained. Apart from the need for adequate financing to support quality and equity-driven ECD, Cerezo also called for ECD programs that are SDGs-based.



He also sought the need to work with champions and advocates to elevate ECD in the climate change policy arena, particularly sharing practical ways to broaden the coalition to influence COP27.



Asia, Africa share experiences in advancing agenda for early childhood, climate resilience

ARNEC Executive Director Evelyn Santiago presented the initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region to support the advocacy for clean, safe, and sustainable environments for young children.

The Asia-Pacific regional advocacy

Goal: Ensure that the well-being and development of young children are at the center of environmental and climate change discourses and actions (i.e., policy, financing, and programs).

Target: Policy makers, practitioners, communities, schools, parents and caregivers

Areas of Focus:

- ECD and environmental degradation:** Focus on the impact of critical environmental issues on young children (i.e. air pollution, exposure to toxins, and lack of clean and protective play and recreational spaces for children)
- ECD and climate change:** Focus on how climate change directly and indirectly affects young children and the need to see ECD as an opportunity to achieve sustainable development



Citing studies showing the vulnerability of young children and their caregivers and communities in the region as a result of climate change, Evelyn underscored the role of ARNEC in connecting stakeholders and partners to put ECD at the center of climate and environmental action.

From desk reviews to inform regional learning and advocacy to hosting regional conference and regular webinars, ARNEC has embarked on a regional strategy to advance the inter-linkages of ECD and climate change.

On the other hand, Play Africa's Managing Director Rongedzayi Fambasayi explained how governance affects climate action and ECD in the context of Africa.

Climate and environmental governance in Africa: Early childhood in the margins.

Rongedzayi Fambasayi
Managing Director, Play Africa
External Expert, ACERWC: Working Group Children & Climate Change



Systemic governance issues were raised, particularly the lack of harmonisation between ECD and climate change laws and policies and the unclear roles at different levels, which in turn affect the financing, delivery, and accountability for ECD and climate resilience in the region.

Ronge articulated the vital role of civil society especially in the context of weak governance, discord, and the privatisation of ECD services in Africa. He also explained Play Africa's programs to build climate change awareness, such as STEM Seeds, I am a SCIENTIST, and Water Table.

For more information on the play-based STEM Seeds curriculum, visit Play Africa: <https://playafrica.org.za/stemseeds/>.



quotable quotes

Insights from the Youth Panel

“



Awareness is key. When it comes to issues like climate change, discussions are not very inclusive. We really need to educate ourselves. Climate change is complicated. There is a need to break down information through stories that will help more people come on board, especially the youth and teenagers. We need connections to build resilience.

Winnie Cheche, Eco-blogger and climate activist, Kenya

“



The youth sector is very vocal. We are at the forefront of discussions about climate change. The age range for the youth is—from 20s to 30s—and many of us are young parents now. We look after our young children—their nutrition, health, protection, including mental health. All these have been affected by disasters and climate change. We need to start conversations on ECD and climate change.

Deena Maryam, MD and External Affairs Lead at YOUNGO Health Working Group (official youth constituency of UNFCCC)

Moving forward

Webinar insights and action points

1

Build coalitions for early childhood development and climate resilience at all levels

2

Advocate for adequate, sustainable ECD investments as integral component of national resilience plans/commitments

3

Use stories to simplify technical, scientific information on climate change to engage the youth in climate discussions and foster opportunities for children's voices to be heard in climate adaptation and mitigation

4

Continue sharing practices and resources to facilitate cross-country, inter-regional, and global learning on ECD and climate resilience



AfECN closes webinar, urges all to learn, engage...

Participants speak

Taken from the webinar evaluation

Climate change effects are impacting ECD in more profound ways than we can ever imagine.

Each one of us can do something.

That we all should do our part in involving the ECCD in the movement for climate change.

The issue of ECD/climate change is not a technical challenge but an adaptive challenge. Let us not complicate things but break them down into bite size communicable and solvable activities.

ECD is an entry point to sustainable development.

Communicate the importance of ECD to ensure National Climate Plans provide the financing for high quality, equitable, sustainable ECD programs.

We need to collaborate our efforts towards incorporating ECD and environment, particularly climate change. We have to make this as a movement considering the government as our ally. Children need to know what we are facing and what we can do for the better.

I would love to be involved or help out wherever possible. Apart from the small steps I take in my personal and professional life, I'm constantly looking for ways to take more steps.

Do the little you can, where you are, with what you have.

Climate change is real and we all need to take action now within our spheres of influence. And ECD is an effective entry point for sustainable action.

The webinar was amazing, informative, educational and thought provoking!

AfECN Executive Director Lynette Okengo led the closing program at the end of the webinar urging all participants to heed the call to action for ECD and climate resilience.

"Mine is to encourage each one to respond to the call to action and to continue learning and engaging," she remarked. She also asked all to begin with own 'spheres of influence' to

support clean, safe, and sustainable environments for young children.



Lynette thanked all partners, speakers, and participants for supporting the webinar.

...whilst participants rate webinar, provide feedback

A total of 54 out of 372 participants completed the online webinar evaluation. About 40 percent of the participants were from the Africa region, followed by 34 percent from Asia; 11 percent, South America; 10 percent, Europe; and 4.5 percent, Others. Results of the webinar evaluation are provided below (selected qualitative responses are provided on the left).

