EDCOM2
The Second Congressional Commission on Education

Priority Area #2
Supply-side Factors

From Access to Impact: Assessing the Effectiveness of Early Childhood Learning Resource Materials in the Philippines

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This Research Fellowship is made established through the Gokongwei Brothers School of Education and Learning Design (GBSEALD) and the Ateneo School of Government (ASOG), to conduct research projects on 28 priority areas in education reform, as identified by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II).

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Statements and Declarations

Declaration of Interest

The author(s) of this work declare no competing interests.

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The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) is collaborating with scholars across various institutions to provide valuable insights for the development of evidence-based policies that address the unique challenges and opportunities in the Philippine education landscape.

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Karol Mark R. Yee, PhD
EDCOM II EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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List of Acronyms or Abbreviations

AIP	Annual Investment Plan
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
BTS4C	Budget Tagging System for Children
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CBPAV	Center-Based Programs in Alternative Venues
CDC	Child Development Center
CFLGA	Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit
CDT	Child Development Teachers
CDW	Child Development Workers
CWC	Council for the Welfare of Children
DCC	Daycare Center
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EDCOM II	The Second Congressional Commission on Education
ELDS	Early Learning and Development Standards
ELM	Early Literacy and Math
GAD	Early Years Act of 2013 (Republic Act 10410)
ICESCR	Gender and Development Fund
IECE	International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
IP	Inclusive Early Childhood Education
IRR	Indigenous People
KBA	Implementing Rules and Regulations
LGU	KapitBahay-Aralan
LC	Local Government Unit
LCPC	Learning Center
LSWDO	Local Council for the Protection of Children
MOOE	Local Social Welfare and Development Office
NCF	Maintenance and Other Operating Expense
NCR	National Capital Region
NCDC	National Child Development Centers
NELF	National Early Learning Framework
NGO	Non-government Organization
NTA	National Tax Allocation
PAGCOR	Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation
PPA	Programs, projects, and activities
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
SEED	Sustainable Early Education and Development
SEF	Special Education Fund
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WLP	Weekly Learning Plan

Executive Summary

This study investigates the availability, regional disparities, and effectiveness of learning resource materials used in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programs in the Philippines. Anchored on a nationwide mapping of materials across center-based, home-based, and community-based programs in alternative venues (CBPAV), the research answers four main questions:

Research Question 1: What types of learning materials are currently available in ECCD programs (center-based, home-based, and CBPAV)?

Findings

a. Most materials are concentrated in center-based programs, especially in urban areas.
b. Home-based and alternative venue programs (e.g., evacuation centers) have limited or improvised resources.
c. Learning materials commonly include storybooks, workbooks, puzzles, manipulatives, and posters.
d. Limited presence of sensory-rich, digital, and inclusive materials for 0–2-year-olds and children with disabilities.

Policy Recommendations:

a. Define a national standard package of ECCD materials by age and developmental domain.
b. Institutionalize bundled training with material provision to ensure effective use.
c. Preposition portable ECCD kits in CBPAV and emergency settings (aligned with RA 10821).

Research Question 2: How does the availability of learning resource materials vary across different regions?

Findings:

a. Urban regions (e.g., NCR) have more diverse and complete ECCD materials.
b. Regions like BARMM and Region XIII face severe material shortages, especially for 0–2 age group.
c. Wide budget disparities: some LGUs have only ₱1,900 per CDC annually, while others can build ₱500,000 “Bay Areas” (play spaces).

Policy Recommendations:

a. Develop costed benchmarks for ECCD materials by modality and region.
b. Institutionalize local procurement and LGU budget line items for ECCD kits.
c. Promote matching grants and public-private partnerships to address regional inequities.
d. Ensure LGU allocations for ECCD learning materials be aligned with the updated school MOOE formula, ensuring that budgets reflect enrollment size, poverty incidence, and geographic context. The national government, through the ECCD Council, DBM, and DILG, may also establish an ECCD Equity Fund to provide matching grants for low-income and geographically isolated LGUs, thereby improving resource adequacy and alignment with national equity reforms under EDCOM II and RA 12199.

Research Question 3: What are the gaps or deficiencies in the availability of learning materials?

Findings:

a. Inadequate resources for infants and toddlers (0–2 years).
b. Limited culturally relevant, mother-tongue, and disability-adaptive materials.
c. Material updating and replacement are not regularly funded or systematized.
d. Fragmented implementation due to varying LGU priorities and capacities.

Policy Recommendations:

a. Expand low-cost, inclusive ECCD kits for the 0–2 age group.
b. Promote indigenous and community-led content development.
c. Require annual updating and quality assurance of ECCD kits via a national mechanism.
d. Create an ECCD Toolkit for LGUs with procurement templates and costing guides.

Research Question 4: How effective are the learning materials in promoting development for children aged 0–3 and 3.1–4 years?

Findings:

a. Structured materials benefit 3–4-year-olds (e.g., literacy and numeracy tools).
b. 0–2-year-olds benefit more from sensory, interactive, and caregiver-guided tools.
c. Materials are underutilized due to limited training of CDWs and caregivers.
d. No consistent national system exists to monitor material effectiveness.

Policy Recommendations:

a. Develop a Unified ECCD Resource Effectiveness Matrix to guide planning and evaluation.
b. fImplement a tiered M&E system:
   - Informal (e.g., photo logs)
   - Structured (checklists)
   - Standardized (e.g., International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA)-lite)
c. Integrate CDW capacity-building and parental engagement into all ECCD programs.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations:

a. Align all actions with RA 12199 (ECCD Systems Act), RA 11148 (First 1,000 Days), and RA 10821 (Children in Emergencies).
b. Prioritize infants and toddlers through integration with health and nutrition services.
c. Monitor LGU performance using Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA) and Budget Tagging System for Children (BTS4C).
d. Create regional ECCD offices and a national database of ECCD suppliers and materials to scale access and innovation.

This evidence informs the implementation of the ECCD Systems Act and underscores the urgent need to bridge the access-to-impact gap in early learning across all modalities and regions.

Keywords: *ECCD, Learning Resource Materials, Philippines, regional analysis, mapping*

Introduction

Importance of ECCD Materials for Early Learning

The early years of life represent a period of unparalleled development, laying the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and health. From birth to age five, more than one million neural connections are formed every second – an extraordinary pace shaped by a child's environments, relationships and experiences (Shonkoff et al., 2019). Within this context, learning materials are not merely pedagogical tools but vital enablers of early stimulation, responsive caregiving, and developmentally appropriate learning.

High-quality Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) materials, such as storybooks, manipulatives, musical instruments, and culturally relevant toys, play a critical role in promoting foundational skills in language, motor development, problem-solving, and socio-emotional learning. When used intentionally, they promote active exploration and strengthen caregiver-child interaction, and scaffold emergent competencies (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2017; Whitebread et al., 2012). Play-based resources, in particular, enhance confidence, creativity, and curiosity, contributing to children's school readiness and holistic development (UNICEF, 2019).

The Nurturing Care Framework (WHO, UNICEF & World Bank, 2018) underscores "opportunities for early learning" as one of five interrelated components necessary for children to survive and thrive, alongside good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, and responsive caregiving. Learning materials support this holistic approach by enriching cognitive and linguistic environments, fostering social interaction and positive parenting practices.

For children from marginalized groups such as those with disabilities, Indigenous communities, and families in disaster-prone or conflict-affected areas, appropriately designed materials are crucial for enabling inclusion and mitigating developmental risks.

Policy Landscape and Systemic Mandates

The right to early learning is affirmed in both global and national policy frameworks. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.2 commits governments to ensuring that all children have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education by 2030. In the Philippines, this right is embedded in the ECCD Systems Act of 2024 (RA 12199), which strengthens system-wide coordination, governance and accountability across sectors.

These laws assign the ECCD Council responsibility for setting national standards, monitoring implementation, and building local government capacity to deliver holistic ECCD programs. The Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 reinforces this mandate, emphasizing investment in inclusive early learning, caregiver support, and capacity-building for child development workers (NEDA, 2023). The National Early Learning Framework (NELF) further articulates principles and learning domains for children aged 0–5, calling for enriched and inclusive environments that foster curiosity, problem-solving, and socio-emotional security (DepEd, 2013).

The Philippine ECCD system operates through three main modalities: center-based programs (e.g., Child Development Centers),

home-based programs (facilitator-led group sessions with caregivers and children), and community-based programs in alternative venues (CBPAVs) such as evacuation centers or mobile setups during emergencies. To guide material use and program quality, the ECCD Council developed Learning Resource Packages (LRPs) covering classroom setup, instructional materials, home-based facilitation, and parenting support. While these LRPs provide a national framework, their rollout remains uneven, with material gaps most evident in home-based and emergency settings, and for children under three and those with disabilities.

Despite these mandates, ECCD implementation remains highly decentralized, with the provision of materials delegated to LGUs. This has resulted in significant variation in the quality and quantity of ECCD resources across regions. While mechanisms such as the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA) and Budget Tagging System for Children (BTS4C) exist to monitor investment, they do not comprehensively capture equity gaps in ECCD materials, especially for the youngest and most marginalized children. Without clearer operational guidance and more equitable financing, policy commitments to inclusive and high-quality early learning remain difficult to achieve at scale.

Persistent Gaps in Access and Use

Despite the existence of a robust policy framework, the availability and effective use of ECCD learning materials in the Philippines remains inconsistent and inequitable. Monitoring data from the ECCD Council and legislative oversight bodies such as EDCOM II (2023) reveal a fragmented landscape. While urban and affluent LGUs may procure customized, high-quality kits, many LGUs—especially in remote or conflict-affected areas like BARMM and Eastern Visayas—report annual material budgets as low as ₱1,900 per child development center. This results in reliance on improvised, outdated, or incomplete materials.

Children aged 0–2 are particularly underserved, as most materials are designed for older preschoolers. There is also a lack of inclusive, sensory-rich materials suited for children with disabilities, developmental delays, or those from ethnolinguistic minorities. In many cases, materials are selected based on availability or donor preference rather than alignment with developmental standards or the National Early Learning Curriculum. Compounding this issue is the absence of a national system to contextualize, replenish, or redistribute materials in response to evolving local needs.

Research underscores that presence does not equal use. Abadiano and Cabaero (2019) documented marked disparities in the distribution and utilization of ECCD resources between rural and urban areas, noting that children from lower-income families often have little or no access to developmentally appropriate materials. Similarly, Omaga and Alieto (2019) found that in some child development centers, materials were acquired to meet parental expectations—often reflecting Western preschool aesthetics—but were rarely integrated into the daily curriculum or routines. This underutilization is frequently attributed to a lack of orientation for caregivers, limited training for child development workers (CDWs), and weak supervisory support.

Even innovative community-based programs such as Save the Children's Kapitbahay-Aralan and the Department

of Social Welfare and Development's Supervised Neighborhood Play illustrate the systemic limitations. While these models provide alternative pathways for reaching underserved children, they often rely on ad hoc, non-standardized materials without consistent guidance on developmental appropriateness or quality assurance. These promising practices reveal not only creative solutions to service gaps, but also the urgent need for a coherent, equity-focused national approach to ECCD materials.

Research Objectives and Scope

Recognizing these persistent challenges, this study aims to generate evidence on the availability, distribution, and effectiveness of ECCD learning materials across diverse modalities and regions in the Philippines. Guided by the principles of the Nurturing Care Framework and aligned with the mandates of RA 12199, the research explores both system-level gaps and material-level usage in everyday learning environments.

The study is organized around four core questions:

1. What types of learning resource materials are currently available in ECCD programs, specifically in center-based, home-based, and alternative venues (CBPAV)?
2. How does the availability of these learning materials vary across different regions of the Philippines?
3. What are the identified gaps or deficiencies in the availability of learning resource materials across regions?
4. How effective are these learning materials in promoting key developmental outcomes for children aged 0–3 and 3.1–4 years?

By mapping the ECCD material ecosystem and assessing their developmental impact, the study seeks to inform national and local decision-making, enhance the quality and equity of ECCD implementation, and support the realization of inclusive early learning under the ECCD Systems Act and SDG 4.2.

Methods

Study Design and Approach

The research combined quantitative and qualitative methods to triangulate findings and strengthen the validity of conclusions. Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys, while qualitative insights were gathered via Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). This approach allowed the research team to measure general trends and explore contextual nuances in resource availability, accessibility, utilization, and developmental impact. Ensure LGU allocations for ECCD learning materials be aligned with the updated school MOOE formula, ensuring that budgets reflect enrollment size, poverty incidence, and geographic context. The national government, through the ECCD Council, DBM, and DILG, may also establish an ECCD Equity Fund to provide matching grants for low-income and geographically isolated LGUs, thereby improving resource adequacy and alignment with national equity reforms under EDCOM II and RA 12199.

Sampling and Respondents

A multi-stage purposive sampling strategy was used to select diverse ECCD settings (center-based, home-based, and community-based programs including CBPAVs). Representation was ensured across major island groups Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao with specific focus on urban, rural, and geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs).

A total of 820 ECCD stakeholders participated, including:

a. ECCD teachers and workers
b. Parents and caregivers
c. Local ECCD coordinators
d. Barangay and LGU officials
e. Children development specialists
f. Representatives from DepEd, DSWD, and partner NGOs

Although sampling sought diversity across settings and regions, the reliance on purposive sampling limits statistical generalizability. The findings should thus be interpreted as indicative of key patterns rather than representative of all Philippine LGUs.

Quantitative Component

Survey Instrument

A structured survey tool was developed to capture:

a. Type and availability of learning resource materials (by modality and age group)
b. Inclusion and accessibility for children with disabilities
c. Training and support received for effective material use

The tool was pilot-tested and refined to ensure clarity and reliability.

Administration and Data Collection

Surveys were administered through both paper-based and digital platforms, depending on location and connectivity. Local data collectors trained in child-friendly and inclusive practices assisted in reaching caregivers and frontline workers, particularly in remote and underserved communities. Variations in internet connectivity and local logistical capacities may have affected the uniformity of survey reach across certain geographic areas.

Qualitative Component

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A total of **12 FGDs** were conducted with:

a. Parents and caregivers (6 FGDs)
b. ECCD teachers and workers (4 FGDs)
c. Barangay ECCD focal persons (2 FGDs)

These discussions explored:

a. Lived experiences with using ECCD materials
b. Perceived effectiveness across developmental domains (cognitive, motor, socio-emotional, language)
c. Cultural and contextual challenges in usage
d. Strategies to support children with disabilities

FGDs were conducted in local languages with audio recordings, transcription, and thematic coding. While FGDs provided rich contextual insights, responses may have been influenced by social desirability bias and the dynamics of group discussion.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

8 KIIs were carried out with:

a. National and regional ECCD officials
b. Experts in inclusive education and child development
c. Representatives from NGOs supporting ECCD resource development

KIIs focused on:

a. Policy and institutional frameworks for ECCD resource distribution
b. Insights on best practices, innovations, and systemic gaps
c. Recommendations for scale-up, localization, and integration with RA 11148, RA 10533, RA 11650, and RA 12199

Data Analysis

Qualitative Analysis
FGD and KII transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis using both inductive and deductive coding aligned with the research questions. NVivo software supported data organization and analysis, with emergent themes triangulated against survey findings.

Ethical Considerations

a. Informed consent was obtained from all adult participants; assent protocols were followed for children's involvement in observational segments.
b. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured through de-identification of data.
c. The research was reviewed and approved by an institutional ethics board in February 2025.

Limitations

The study recognizes several methodological limitations. The use of purposive sampling, while appropriate for exploratory mapping, constrains the statistical generalizability of findings. Focus Group Discussions may have been subject to participant bias, and uneven geographic coverage, particularly in conflict-affected or remote LGUs, may have influenced data representation. These limitations do not diminish the value of insights but define the interpretive boundaries of the study's conclusions for policymaking.

Literature Review

ECCD in the Philippines within the Nurturing Care Framework and National Development Goals

The Philippines is a signatory to three human rights treaties that provide legal and political bases for the implementation of ECCD programs and services that would benefit children, and families (Tongson, et.al., 2023). Early childhood education is widely recognized as fundamental in building "more efficient and effective education systems." Participation in ECCD is crucial as it significantly impacts children's development, setting the foundation for lifelong learning (UNICEF, 2019).

The Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 outlines a strategic framework to enhance education and lifelong learning, emphasizing human and social development. Outcome 1 aims to achieve quality, inclusive, adaptive, resilient, and future-ready basic education for all, a key initiative focused on enhancing the ECCD curriculum, particularly during the first 1,000 days of life. Additional strategies to attain this outcome include comprehensive implementation of ECCD services, capacity building for child

development teachers, and introducing nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions in early childhood (The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II), 2023).
In alignment with these national priorities, the Philippines is also guided by the global Nurturing Care Framework (NCF), a strategic framework jointly developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and the World Bank. The NCF outlines five essential conditions for children to achieve their full developmental potential: good health, adequate nutrition, responsive caregiving, opportunities for early learning, and safety and security. The ECCD system in the Philippines operationalizes many of these pillars through multi-sectoral approaches in health, nutrition, education, and child protection. This study highlights the fourth pillar; opportunities for early learning which is foundational to brain development and school readiness and is directly linked to the availability and quality of learning resource materials. The NCF emphasizes that responsive and stimulating environments, supported by appropriate materials and engaged caregivers, are critical for ensuring optimal early childhood development.

According to a study conducted by UNICEF Philippines, the positive impact of ECCD is sustained for over five school years. Research shows that early childhood education and development significantly influence later student performance; for example, Grade 4 learners who engaged in early literacy and numeracy activities with their parents before primary school scored higher in mathematics and science compared to those who did not (UNICEF, 2021). Furthermore, other studies indicate that participation in early education can help children avoid special education, grade repetition, early parenthood, and incarceration due to delinquent behaviors—outcomes that impose high costs on the government to address (The Center for High Impact Philanthropy, 2015). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target that "all girls and boys should have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so they are ready for primary education" by 2030.

ECCD services can typically be divided into three stages: (1) Neonatal (for children aged 0 to 2, covering the first 1,000 days), (2) Pre-Kindergarten (for children aged 3 to 4), which may be home, community, or center-based, and (3) Kindergarten (for children aged 5) (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, n.d.). The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruption in society, but it also opened opportunities for policymakers to rethink ECCD strategies (Greszler & Burke, 2020).

Historically, early education programs have existed in the Philippines since the early 1940s. However, from the 1940s to the 1980s, these programs were fragmented and targeted various educational needs, primarily establishing day care centers in every barangay for Filipino children aged 0-6 years. Over time, research indicated that successful childcare and development require a comprehensive approach, transitioning from a compartmentalized view to a holistic approach that considers the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive domains of child development (UNICEF, 2004).

Challenges within the ECCD system include fragmentation in governance, institutional arrangements, and inefficiencies in capital infrastructure, financing, and human

resources. The passage of RA 8980 on July 24, 2000, acknowledged the need for a national and comprehensive policy on ECCD, emphasizing parental involvement and counseling for mothers regarding prenatal and postnatal care. This law underscored the importance of providing early childhood care and education programs, especially for disadvantaged children. Local government units (LGUs) were mandated to establish day care centers in every barangay under RA 6972, the Barangay Level Total Protection of Child Act. These centers were tasked with providing early childhood care and education for children aged 3 to 4.

The RA 12199, also known as the ECCD Systems Act, emphasizes that investing in ECCD addresses various aspects of children's growth, including cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development (Supreme Court E-Library, 2013). It established a legal basis for a comprehensive, integrative, inclusive, and sustainable National Early Childhood Care and Development System Framework. This framework emphasizes multi-sectoral and inter-agency collaboration among service providers, families, communities, the public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, and academic institutions. It also includes commitments to finance the implementation of national and local ECCD policies[1]. At the operational level, a significant shift in the implementation and governance of the National ECCD Systems Framework has emerged, recognizing ages 0 to 8 as a critical phase in educational development. This framework designates the ECCD Council as responsible for children aged 0 to 4, promoting inclusion and support for children with special needs and disabilities (Tongson et al., 2024). During this crucial stage, children aged four and under attend daycare centers, preschools, or other educational modalities, where they begin to "learn how to learn" and partake in activities that foster interactions and relationships with other stakeholders, specifically, parents, peers, and teachers (Ulep, 2019).

Despite these advancements, the implementation of ECCD interventions in the Philippines remains fragmented (EDCOM II, 2023). LGUs, at the provincial, city, or barangay level, are responsible for planning, implementing, and funding ECCD efforts, including health, nutrition, early learning, and social welfare. They coordinate with national government agencies, such as the Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPC), and NGOs to ensure the integrated delivery of ECCD services to families with young children. At the national level, the ECCD Council has its own budget within the Department of Education, which, according to Rule IX of the EYA's implementing rules and regulations (IRR), should consist of a combination of public and private funds. Over the years, the budget has primarily focused on establishing National Child Development Centers (NCDC) in target local government units, supported significantly by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), with funding reaching as high as Php 4.25 billion (US$83.33 million) (PAGCOR, 2018).

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1 *Under Republic Act 5547, LGUs are mandated to set aside one percent of the real property tax collection for the Special Education Fund to provide financial support for social services.*
Under Republic Act 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women, all government offices and LGUs must allocate at least 5% of their annual budget for Gender and Development programs to address gender issues and achieve women's empowerment.
Under the Mandanas Ruling national government agencies who are members of the ECCD Council will start devolving some of their functions to local executives. In addition, LGUs will receive 40% share of the national internal revenue taxes (NIRT) and collections of the Bureau of Customs

The national government grants for early education ideally incentivize local governments to allocate more resources to ECCD services. However, evidence suggests that many early education interventions remain "passive," merely filling financing gaps rather than mobilizing additional resources for high-quality early childhood care services. This situation indicates that the implementation of ECCD at the local level is often driven by patronage politics rather than robust and effective institutional frameworks.

Current Situation of the ECCD in the Philippines

The ECCD Council has developed the "Standards and Guidelines for Center-based Early Childhood Programs for 0 to 4 Years Old Filipino Children" (Early Childhood Care and Development Council, 2015), applicable to all public child development centers (CDC) or learning centers (LC), as well as privately owned and managed CDCs/LCs. Nearly 99% of the 70,000 public ECCD facilities are publicly owned.

There are 42,046 barangays based on the 2020 data of the Philippine Statistics Authority. Despite RA 6972 of 1990 mandating the establishment of a daycare center in every barangay, data from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the ECCD Council indicate that only 36% have at least one child development center (CDC) (EDCOM II, 2023). For instance, Malabon City is the only city with a barangay daycare center in all 21 of its barangays, housing 32 daycare centers. Conversely, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon (CALABARZON), lack daycare centers entirely, as evidenced by a 2009 ECCD Council survey. The lowest coverage of CDCs is recorded in Region VIII, with only 479 CDCs among 4,365 barangays (11%), and in the Cordillera Administrative Region, with only 152 CDCs among 1,178 barangays (13%). There are stark disparities in service availability; first-class municipalities have as many as six centers for every 10,000 children aged 3 to 4, while sixth-class municipalities have only one or two (SOTAR-DCS 2009 study).

While the Magna Carta for Women and Executive Order No. 340 have facilitated the establishment of daycare centers or creches in government and private offices, many communities still face a shortage of quality, accessible, and affordable childcare services that operate for at least eight hours daily. During the COVID-19 pandemic, instead of devising ways to continue ECCD services appropriately, local social welfare offices and private learning centers waited for two months for the ECCD Council to issue advisories for reopening ECCD programs for children aged 0 to 4. As a result, ECCD services were suspended for more than six months, resuming only in October 2020. Upon receiving the advisory, many interviewees reported feeling left to independently interpret and implement the guidelines in redesigning their existing curricula for remote or blended learning, with minimal technical support from the ECCD Council. This situation has blurred accountability lines between governing bodies at national and local levels (Tongson et al., 2023). Consequently, inadequate childcare centers were supplemented by alternative programs for young children, such as Supervised Neighborhood Play and other delivery modes that offer stimulating activities and supplementary feeding (Department of Social Welfare and Development, 2002), Kindergarten-On-Wheels (KOW) in Navotas City, and KapitBahay-Aralan (KBA) of Save the

Children Philippines in selected partner cities in Metro Manila.

The low participation rate in pre-kindergarten programs in the Philippines may be partly attributed to the increasing number of employed mothers who struggle to find affordable childcare that accommodates their work schedules (Hansen, Joshi, Verropoulou, 2006). Additionally, some parents perceive their children as too young for formal education (Ulep et al., 2024) and face financial constraints that limit their engagement in ECCD programs (Tongson & Tayag-Binuya, 2021). Consequently, many children remain at home instead of attending pre-kindergarten programs. However, there is a lack of data to determine whether these children receive adequate learning stimuli while at home. The survey results raise questions about parents' understanding of the benefits of ECCD programs for their children's well-being and learning experiences (Ulep, 2019).

Currently, young children aged 0-4 are among the most vulnerable members of society, requiring nurturing care from their parents, communities, and the government. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) estimates that there will be approximately 11.1 million children aged 0-4 by July 2023, accounting for about 10% of the total population, projected to reach 112.9 million (Senate of the Philippines, 2023). This anticipated growth necessitates a thorough examination of the implementation of the ECCD Systems Act, as the number of targeted students is expected to rise.

Ulep et al. (2024) analyzed the early education outcomes of Filipino children, exploring their access to such services. Their analysis of demand- and supply-side factors such as governance, financing, infrastructure, and human resources revealed that many parents fail to engage their children in early stimulation activities. Only half (50%) consistently participate in reading and accessing educational materials, leading to significant socio-economic disparities that adversely affect children's cognitive abilities, educational outcomes, and lifelong success. This lack of engagement can prevent crucial interventions during critical stages of development, particularly within the "first 1,000 days" (Tongson & Tayag-Binuya, 2021). Furthermore, there is a socio-economic gradient in the ratios of DCCs/CCDs to barangays, with poorer municipalities exhibiting lower ratios compared to wealthier areas. Overall, the current capital investment for ECCD in the Philippines falls short of meeting the goal of universal access for children aged 3-4. An estimated shortage of about 33,000 daycare/child development centers is evident to fulfill the total demand of 96,000 centers needed for complete coverage.

Moreover, Tongson et al. (2023) indicated that despite the free and accessible use of child development facilities at the barangay level, families from low-income households still struggle to meet their children's basic needs, such as food, transportation, and educational supplies. Consequently, these families require additional government support to ensure that children receive comprehensive and quality childcare services.

The ECCD discourse in the Philippines reflects the intricate connections between households, communities, markets, and the state, where discussions about sustainable childcare investments occur, offering returns for individuals, families, and society.

The Impact of Early Childhood Interventions on Development Outcomes

Researchers have shared positive impacts of various interventions in ECCD. Love, Harrison, Sagi-Schwartz, van Ijzendoorn, and Ross (2003) compared three national studies on early childcare programs. One program they examined was the Early Head Start Program, which targets children from low-income families. Their findings revealed that children in the Head Start program benefited positively through improved language, socio-emotional, and cognitive development, as well as decreased levels of aggression, attributed to the program's high quality. These benefits directly correspond to three key components of the Nurturing Care Framework (NCF):

a. Opportunities for Early Learning – through language and cognitive stimulation in center-based settings
b. Responsive Caregiving – demonstrated by nurturing teacher-child relationships
c. Safety and Security – as evidenced by the reduction in aggressive behaviors and emotional stress.

The researchers also determined that children from low-income families benefitted more from group care, scoring better in cognitive and language assessments the more time they spent in the centers. This finding affirms the NCF's emphasis on structured learning environments as critical opportunities for young children to develop core brain functions, especially when they come from households with limited educational stimuli. Other studies indicated that children from impoverished communities significantly benefitted from participation in ECCD programs, particularly in terms of cognitive and language development (Belsky & Steinberg, 1978; Ellermeyer, 1998; Goelman & Pence, 1987; Wright, 1983). These domains fall under Opportunities for Early Learning, and when programs are implemented holistically, they also engage caregivers, thereby reinforcing the NCF pillar of Responsive Caregiving.

In a study by Loeb, Fuller, Kagan, and Carroll (2004) focusing on childcare for children in poor communities, the researchers found a high correlation between a child's progress in cognitive and language development and participation in group care or center-based programs, especially when childcare professionals were caring and responsive to the children's needs. This supports two NCF pillars:

a. Responsive Caregiving, which is critical for emotional regulation and secure attachment, and
b. Opportunities for Early Learning, where structured group care provides stimulation through play, interaction, and emergent literacy activities.

When viewed through the lens of the Nurturing Care Framework, these international studies emphasize that early interventions should be multi-dimensional. They do not only enhance children's academic preparation but also strengthen emotional resilience, behavior regulation, and social skills, each of which aligns with whole-child development as envisioned in Philippine policies.

Factors Affecting Access to Quality ECCD

Various studies have identified factors affecting ECCD. Crowe (1973) presented the ideal setting as a first-class environment where children are exposed to enriching and stimulating experiences that foster confidence and optimal development. However, not all children have access to

such environments. The quality of childcare and education programs varies across different settings and contexts (Howes & Smith, 1995). Howes and Smith's (1995) study, which included 840 children across various childcare centers, found that classroom quality and staff-to-child ratios significantly impacted children's cognitive outcomes.

Torquati, Raikes, Huddleston, Casas, Bovaird, and Harris (2011) discovered that programs serving mostly low-income families often provided lower quality than those serving higher-income families. They also noted that less educated parents tended to have lower sensitivity to and awareness of quality childcare. Gormley (1995) argued that some parents could not afford high-quality childcare programs and that there was a lack of affordable, high-quality options. He analyzed various ways society, particularly the government, could support the proliferation of high-quality childcare and education, emphasizing that the issue of childcare and education is a concern for everyone.

Another critical factor influencing child outcomes is the homecare environment. Watamura, Phillips, Morrissey, McCartney, and Bub (2011) examined the relationship between the qualities of home and childcare environments, revealing effects on children's socio-emotional adjustments at 26 and 54 months. The researchers categorized home and childcare environments into niches: double protection, lost resources, compensatory care, and double jeopardy. They found that children in the double jeopardy niche (high-risk factors in both home and childcare environments) exhibited poor outcomes in internalizing, externalizing, disruptive, and prosocial behaviors. Conversely, children in the lost resources niche (high protective factors at home and high-risk factors in childcare) displayed fewer externalizing problems, while those in the compensatory care niche (high-risk factors at home and in childcare) faced challenges as well.

Howard Gardner (1991) emphasized that classroom teachers must strive to provide instructional materials that cater to the individual needs of learners. There is a significant relationship between the availability of resources and the quality of early childhood education. Factors such as access to educational resources, teacher training and support, community engagement, adequate facilities, and health and safety significantly influence the quality of early childhood education (Gaco, 2024). Studies by Siraj-Blatchford et al. (2017) and Whitebook et al. (2017) indicate that children with access to age-appropriate resources demonstrate high levels of engagement and improved learning outcomes. This is supported by trained teachers who utilize various learning materials and resources, such as books, toys, manipulatives, and digital tools, facilitating hands-on exploration, creativity, and cognitive development.

Shonkoff et al. (2019) found that the quality of early childhood education is closely related to the availability of resources, including learning materials. Yoshikawa et al. (2013) examined the impact of access to educational resources on the long-term outcomes of early childhood education programs. Their study found that access to high-quality early childhood education programs, including learning materials and facilities, led to better academic and social-emotional outcomes for children in both the short and long term. Bennett and O'Keeffe (2014) posited that the availability

of adequate learning materials and resources is a key factor in ensuring the quality of early childhood education, arguing that inadequate facilities and resources can hinder the delivery of high-quality ECCD.

Resources also play a crucial role in fostering family engagement in early childhood education. A study by Sheridan and Copeland (2017) emphasized that the availability of resources and materials at home promotes family involvement in children's learning. Resources such as books, learning kits, and educational games can be provided to families, enabling them to support and extend children's learning experiences beyond the classroom. Kim and Kim (2018) found that access to learning resources, including books, toys, and games, positively impacts the cognitive and socio-emotional development of young children. The study further argued that access to learning resources enhances children's learning experiences and increases their engagement in the learning process. Thus, providing adequate resources is crucial for ensuring the delivery of quality education during this critical stage of a child's life. One essential resource in early childhood education is a conducive learning environment; a positive and stimulating learning environment enhances children's engagement, cognitive development, literacy, and comprehension abilities (Bradley & Caldwell, 1979; Anilas, 2023).

In the Philippine context, Abadiano and Cabaero (2019) examined the availability and utilization of educational resources in early childhood education and found that, while there were a range of educational materials, significant disparities existed in their distribution across different regions and socio-economic groups. Specifically, rural areas and low-income families had less access to educational resources, limiting their opportunities for high-quality early childhood education. Similarly, some case studies in the Philippines indicated that while materials may be present in classrooms (possibly modeled on Western preschools to attract families), they are often not integrated into daily classroom activities or the curriculum (Omaga & Alieto, 2019).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) certifies the delivery of plans and programs vital for every child's survival, protection, participation, and holistic development. Meanwhile, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) Article 9 states, "that State Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance." This treaty underscores that successful ECCD programs require a competent, well-prepared childcare workforce. This highlights the need for teachers or workers who are adequately prepared and equipped to provide high-quality early education, complementing the available learning materials and resources. This claim is supported by the study conducted by Yoshikawa et al. (2013), which analyzed the evidence base for preschool education and found that teacher training and support are essential components of effective ECCD programs. They concluded that high-quality teacher training and professional development can improve teachers' knowledge, skills, and instructional practices, leading to better child outcomes.

Types of Learning Materials and Resources in ECCD Programs

The Standards and Guidelines for Center-Based Early Childhood Programs (2015) ensure that manipulative learning materials and educational toys are accessible to all

children. In the context of ECCD programs in the Philippines, particularly for children aged 0 to 4 years, various types of learning materials and resources are emphasized. These include age-appropriate storybooks, posters, and audio-video materials that promote independent learning; musical instruments to introduce young children to sounds and encourage them to sing, hum, or whistle; and resources that help children recognize patterns in music and nature, as well as to become sensitive to environmental sounds and human voices. Additionally, arts and crafts activities stimulate children's curiosity and foster their artistic and creative abilities.

Materials such as open-ended and sensory resources (e.g., blocks, sand, water, play dough, manipulatives, and art materials) are provided to allow young children to select their own activities during free time. For half-day programs, at least one activity period is allocated for children to experiment and engage in independent or peer play under the supervision of a teacher or Child Development Specialist.

The ECCD Council also advocates for a home-based ECCD program, characterized by clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all participants, typically conducted online. The ECCD Council collaborates with local government ECCD decision-makers and leaders to disseminate the program and resources (e.g., start-up packages, learning resources), including guidelines for community mapping. Supervisors nominate, resource, and support local facilitators to deliver the program to parents within communities. These parents register for the program, attend weekly support groups, and engage in activities with their children.

As these materials remain scarce, innovative resources have been facilitated. For instance, Save the Children Philippines conducted three phases of Project ARAL (Access to Resources for Alternative Learning), which helped families transition to home-based learning. Specifically designed for 3- to 5-year-old children, the Early Literacy and Math (ELM) at Home Plus package includes COVID-19-sensitive, adapted activities integrated with Social Emotional Learning Foundations, Resilience Building, and Enhanced Health and Nutrition components (Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood, 2023).

Additionally, the Sustainable Early Education and Development (SEED) initiative, facilitated by Save the Children, aimed to improve access to green ECCD for boys and girls aged 3 to 8 years in Antipolo City. This program adopted an integrated and comprehensive approach toward an inclusive, play-based, climate-sensitive, and resilience-building ECCD ecosystem (Save the Children Philippines, n.d.).

Effectiveness of Learning Resource Materials

Pearson et al. (2017) emphasized that ECCD should strongly focus on contextually grounded learning materials, resources, and strategies for implementation in the field. Children learn through spontaneous activities, play, well-prepared learning resources, and guided experiences (Rana, 2022). The positive correlation between school facilities and resources and student performance has been consistently observed (UNICEF, 2021).

The effectiveness of ECCD learning materials and resources accessible to the public can significantly impact children's developmental areas, such as cognitive and social-emotional development. Within the NCF, well-designed and inclusive learning

materials serve as critical enablers of early learning and also promote responsive caregiving by empowering adults to engage meaningfully with young children. In the Philippine context, the study by Abrigo et al. (2019) highlighted that caregivers' awareness of the importance of neurological stimulation enabled them to read to their children at night, play with them, and cuddle with them when possible. These practices reflect both responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning, as they enhance bonding while introducing literacy-rich environments. In Zamboanga del Norte, some caregivers used toys and reading materials to support ECCD initiatives, while others facilitated Supervised Neighborhood Play for children under two years of age, demonstrating how localized materials and strategies can be harnessed to activate NCF pillars at the household and community level.

Firstly, learning materials and resources can affect children's social-emotional development, which is central to the NCF domains of responsive caregiving and safety and security. Berk (2006) stated that providing ample space and play materials fosters empathy, teamwork, and self-regulation, thereby reducing conflicts and helping preschool children develop their social skills and emotional intelligence. Offering a variety of realistic materials, such as dolls and toy scenes, allows children to act out everyday roles and make sense of their experiences, critical for emotional regulation and the internalization of social norms. While some educators rely on traditional methodologies, others leverage technology and media, transforming text from linear printed materials into multimedia experiences (Hemmons, 2018), which can expand both the reach and relevance of learning while supporting stimulating early learning environments.

Secondly, certain learning materials and resources impact cognitive development, another domain strongly associated with opportunities for early learning. For instance, a study by Redondo and Catapang (2024) found that innovative technologies, such as the contextualized interactive video called the Bahay Kubo Application, helped emerging readers improve their reading abilities and comprehension due to its relevance to their needs, promoting higher reading performance. These tools, when age-appropriate and culturally rooted, help address inequities in cognitive stimulation, especially for children in underserved communities.

Learning resources and materials, particularly those related to play, are central to early childhood education as they provide opportunities for children to develop their ideas and construct their own knowledge (Omaga & Alieto, 2019). Play is a developmentally essential experience that supports early learning and responsive interactions, particularly when caregivers and educators understand its value. Omaga and Alieto (2019) discuss how play can be a key tool for teaching literacy concepts by linking play with literacy activities. Their research indicates that teachers need support to develop their ability to articulate the connections between play and literacy learning, underscoring the NCF's view that caregiver support systems are vital to child outcomes.

A focus on resource architecture can transform and enhance the provision of inclusive, equitable, and quality Early Childhood Education. Support resources are key enablers and facilitators of successful Inclusive Early Childhood Education (IECE). This view implies that support represents a constellation of available, relevant, and needed resources that enhance, enable, and

empower educators, especially teachers, to lead IECE initiatives. In NCF terms, this speaks to the enabling environment that ensures responsive caregiving and early learning are not sporadic acts, but systemically embedded practices. Both explicit and implicit support may be available by default, extending the capacity, leadership, and receptiveness of teachers and the entire education system to foster change (Ackah-Jnr & Fluckiger, 2023).

Since all children have the right to equal educational and social experiences (Cologon, 2014; Smith et al., 2012; Winter, 2007), and since IECE eliminates barriers while increasing access, participation, and engagement (Booth, Ainscow, & Kingston, 2006), a lack of or inadequate support services for its implementation is considered a barrier. These ideas align with the findings of Mortier et al. (2010), which suggest that developing support for practice should be a dynamic and holistic process grounded in the needs of children, the environment, and, more significantly, in creativity and courage, which serve as sources of inspiration and possibility for teachers. Informed by the NCF, this means that the quality and inclusivity of learning materials must align with the diverse developmental needs of children, including those with disabilities and those in marginalized settings, to ensure every child is given the early stimulation, protection, and caregiver interaction they need to thrive.

Evidence from Studies and Evaluations in the Philippines

Aside from the ECCD Council, many non-government organizations have facilitated interventions related to the provision of educational learning resources and materials in the ECCD program. Save the Children Philippines implemented the First Read program, which aims to improve the developmental outcomes of children aged 0 to 4 years by supporting their emergent literacy and numeracy through reading and play. The program provides various interventions, including age-appropriate indigenous play materials and books in local languages and dialects. On average, the program distributed 2.8 storybooks, 1.5 concept books, and 1.5 picture books. Results suggest that caregivers have internalized the lessons of First Read regarding the importance of play, reading, and caregiver support for early learning and psychosocial development, as evidenced by an increase in reading and play practices at home (Save the Children Philippines, 2016).

The Philippine Business for Education facilitated the Kiddie Learning Train, which aimed to assist underperforming pupils from Cebu and Himamaylan by providing tablets and gamified learning apps, as well as enlisting volunteer tutors. This initiative resulted in significant improvements, with lagging students in Grades 1-2 from Cebu experiencing a 122% increase in reading scores and a 33% increase in math scores. Meanwhile, Kinder 1 and 2 pupils from Himamaylan increased their literacy skills by 233.3% and their numeracy skills by 507.1% (Malipot, 2023).

Importance of Learning Resource Materials

Learning resource materials are critical components of ECCD, directly influencing children's cognitive, language, and socio-emotional development. RA 12199 emphasizes the state's responsibility to ensure developmentally appropriate learning tools are available in all ECCD settings.

Global evidence supports this mandate. Studies (e.g., Gardner, 1991; Yoshikawa et al., 2013) show that access to age-appropriate materials such as books, toys, and manipulatives enhances school readiness, engagement, and long-term academic and behavioral outcomes. In center-based programs, trained caregivers who integrate these tools into structured activities foster responsive caregiving and early learning—two key pillars of the NCF. Similarly, family engagement increases when learning kits and materials are available for home use (Sheridan & Copeland, 2017).

The legislative intent of RA 12199 based on Senate and House deliberations, was to bridge developmental disparities and strengthen the learning foundations of Filipino children, especially in disadvantaged areas. This includes equipping CDCs with learning resources and tools that are responsive to local needs, including those of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and children with disabilities.

Despite the existence of national standards such as the *2015 ECCD Council Standards and Guidelines for Center-Based Programs* and DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2016 for Kindergarten, the implementation remains fragmented. EDCOM I already highlighted gaps in material availability and distribution, while EDCOM II (2023) reaffirmed that only 36% of barangays have at least one CDC, with learning materials often outdated, insufficient, or underutilized. Regions such as BARMM and Region VIII continue to experience the lowest access.

Philippine studies (e.g., Abadiano & Cabaero, 2019) reveal wide disparities in material provision across regions, particularly in rural and low-income municipalities. Omaga and Alieto (2019) further found that materials in classrooms are often unused or misaligned with the curriculum. These findings point to a deeper problem: the lack of systems to monitor, standardize, and localize ECCD materials across diverse educational settings.

The success of ECCD policies relies not only on infrastructure but also on the availability, quality, and contextualization of learning resource materials. Bridging these material gaps through targeted investments, local curriculum adaptation, and strengthened LGU and ECCD Council coordination is essential for achieving RA 12199's goals and SDG 4.2 on universal access to quality early childhood education.

Key Findings

Types of ECCD Learning Materials in Different Modalities

Learning materials across ECCD programs in the Philippines vary considerably by delivery modality, age group, and geographic context. While the ECCD Council's Learning Resource Packages (LRPs) provide a national standard for material provision, implementation is uneven and adaptation for specific developmental needs remains limited.

Center-Based ECCD Programs
Center-based programs, particularly in urban barangays, benefit from structured and standardized materials aligned with domain-specific learning. These include:

a. Language and Literacy Tools: Storybooks, alphabet charts, and pre-writing workbooks
b. Manipulatives and Numeracy Tools: Counting blocks, puzzles, sorting trays
c. Visual and Creative Aids: Art materials, posters, and role-play props

However, materials predominantly cater to children aged 3.1–4 years. Infants and toddlers (0–2 years) are underserved, with limited sensory-rich materials that support early interaction and brain development. Replenishment of LRP materials varies and is often dependent on LGU resources.

Inclusion gap: : Only a few centers have materials adapted for children with disabilities (e.g., tactile books, visual schedules, large-grip crayons). Most lack inclusive or assistive tools for children with sensory, mobility, or developmental needs.

Home-Based ECCD Programs (HBPs)
In HBPs, learning is facilitated by caregivers, often with simplified LRPs and improvised tools. Common resources include:

a. Caregiver-Child Interaction Tools: Routine-based play calendars, activity guides, picture cards
b. Low-Cost and Local Play Items: Bottle caps, cloth scraps, and handmade musical instruments
c. Printed Visual Aids: Wall charts, big books, and locally translated posters

Urban HBPs sometimes access digital content (e.g., YouTube stories, Messenger-based guidance), though device access and connectivity vary. Materials for infants (0–2) are sparse, with most kits designed for 3.1–4 year-olds.

Inclusion gap: Materials tailored for children with disabilities are nearly absent. Caregivers express limited access to tools or training to support children with sensory, cognitive, or physical impairments.

Community-Based Programs in Alternative Venues (CBPAVs)
CBPAVs in evacuation centers or temporary shelters rely on portable, improvised materials often supported by NGOs. Examples include:

a. Manipulatives: Coconut shell counters, bottle-cap sorting games
b. Socio-Emotional Tools: Puppet sticks, laminated emotion cards
c. Basic Literacy Materials: Printed picture books, alphabet mats, recycled flashcards

Inclusion and age-related gaps: Materials for 0–2-year-olds are rarely available. Adaptations for children with disabilities are virtually non-existent in CBPAVs.

It is noted that children aged 0–2 years consistently receive the fewest developmentally appropriate materials. Materials adapted for children with disabilities are rare in all settings, despite mandates under RA 11650. HBPs and CBPAVs display innovation in using local materials, but without standardization and developmental alignment, impact is uneven.

These findings underscore the need to enhance the quality, inclusiveness, and equity of ECCD materials across modalities and age groups, particularly for the youngest children and those with disabilities.

Geographic Disparities in Availability of ECCD Learning Materials

A review of regional patterns in the availability of ECCD learning materials in the Philippines reveals stark geographic disparities. These disparities are shaped by local government capacity, procurement mechanisms, community engagement, and the presence of donor or NGO partnerships. While certain LGUs demonstrate innovation and responsiveness, systemic inequities persist, particularly for infants (0–2 years), children in geographically isolated areas, and children with disabilities.

Regional Typologies of Access and Provision

Six regional typologies emerge from the cross-site analysis:

a. Urban Advantage with Internal Disparities (e.g., NCR, Region IV-A): Well-resourced cities like Valenzuela and Muntinlupa exhibit strong material access and digital integration. However, resource availability varies widely across barangays. While structured implementation is evident, materials for children with disabilities or 0–2-year-olds are seldom prioritized.

b. Community-Led but Underfunded (e.g., Region II, Region VI): In areas like Santiago City and Dao, ECCD programs rely heavily on CDWs' resourcefulness, using indigenous materials or caregiver-made tools. Despite high community ownership, support for inclusive or age-appropriate resources is limited due to budget ceilings (as low as ₱1,000 per center per year).

c. Tech-Integrated Models with Uneven Reach (e.g., Regions IV-A, XII): These areas blend digital tools (e.g., Knowledge Channel, TV+USB learning kits) with traditional materials. Though promising, high costs and limited training affect sustainability and developmental alignment.

d. Print-Rich, Literacy-Focused Regions (e.g., Region III): ECCD programs in Region III invest in culturally grounded print materials and parent-led literacy kits. Mabalacat's city ordinance supports inclusive ECCD services, yet remote LGUs face access and budget constraints.

e. Culturally-responsive but Structurally Gapped (e.g., BARMM, Region IX): ECCD materials in BARMM include Islamaganda storybooks and Maguindanaon language texts. However, 90% of children lack ECCD access, and inclusive tools for children with disabilities remain unavailable.

f. Hybrid-Responsive but Fragmented Models (e.g., Regions V, VII, XIII): These regions employ both indigenous and QR-enabled tools. Despite innovations (e.g., repurposed bamboo or caregiver

co-created flashcards), procurement delays, lack of localization, and absence of disability-adapted resources hinder scale and equity.

Vignettes of Local Innovation

a. In *Region V*csome barangays have adopted QR-coded books printed on laminated paper for storytelling sessions, complementing these with recycled indigenous crafts such as coconut husk puppets and shell counters.

b. *Region III's* Parent-Mentor model enables trained caregivers to deliver weekly activity kits, blending printed stories with Facebook-based digital content created by Aeta artists, reinforcing cultural identity.

c. In *Region IV-B*, LGUs disseminated offline-compatible Knowledge Channel videos via USBs and hard drives to centers in mountainous barangays. While this improved access, weak caregiver orientation limited usage.

d. In *Region II*, one LGU allocated local funds for neurodevelopmental screening and procured sensory toys for a small pilot group of children with disabilities. However, sustainability remained an issue due to lack of system-wide inclusion planning.

Procurement, Budgeting, and Systemic Patterns

Findings suggest that LGU investment and procurement practices are critical determinants of ECCD material sufficiency. Some LGUs budget between ₱300–₱500 per child annually (e.g., Dao, Antique), while others operate with far less. In Regions V and VI, delays of up to five months in procurement cycles disrupt continuity. Conversely, in Regions I and IV-A, decentralized procurement systems allowed for more rapid adaptation and integration of community preferences.

Donor-supported resource kits (e.g., Save the Children, Knowledge Channel Foundation) play a vital bridging role, particularly in isolated municipalities. However, overreliance on external sources underscores the need for national standardization and equity-focused funding transfers.

Gaps and Challenges in Provision and Use

Despite national policy support for ECCD, the actual provision and effective use of learning materials remain highly uneven, with recurring systemic deficiencies that disproportionately impact the most vulnerable children. These gaps also indicate partial implementation of key provisions of RA 12199, particularly those related to equitable financing, procurement, inclusion, and developmental quality assurance.

Key Systemic Gaps:

a. **Lack of Standard-Setting and Quality Assurance Mechanisms**
   - No national standards or benchmarks currently guide the age-appropriateness, domain alignment, or inclusiveness of ECCD learning materials.
   - In the absence of a centralized vetting or approval system, LGUs rely on ad hoc selections, legacy materials, or donor-provided kits often misaligned with updated curricular and developmental standards.
   - This reflects a policy gap in ensuring that materials used in all ECCD programs meet the developmental

and inclusive quality standards envisioned under Section 12 of RA 12199.

b. Absence of Updating and Replacement Protocols

- Materials in many Child Development Centers (CDCs) are outdated, faded, or incomplete.
- There is no institutionalized cycle for replenishment, nor systematic reviews to assess whether materials remain developmentally relevant.
- Procurement delays and lack of ECCD-specific supplier pools contribute to year-long lags in delivery (e.g., Region V).
- These bottlenecks underscore the need for more strategic, transparent, and timely procurement mechanisms as mandated under Section 7 of RA 12199, which calls for adequate and efficient resource allocation and utilization.

c. Limited Materials for Children with Disabilities

- Adapted materials (e.g., tactile books, communication boards, sensory kits) are largely absent in both center- and home-based programs.
- The high cost and low awareness of inclusive tools result in exclusion or ad hoc solutions, especially in rural or low-resource areas.
- Even where inclusive materials exist, CDWs often lack training to use them effectively.
- This indicates a shortfall in fulfilling inclusion and accessibility obligations outlined in Section 12 of RA 12199, which emphasizes support for children with disabilities and diverse learning needs.

d. Inadequate Sensory and Motor Tools for 0–2-Year-Olds

- Programs overwhelmingly cater to 3–4-year-olds, with limited provision for infants and toddlers.
- Materials for tactile exploration, fine/gross motor development, and early communication are nearly absent, especially in home-based and emergency settings.
- Caregivers in these settings are often left without guides or practical interaction tools.
- This gap highlights the need to operationalize Section 6 of RA 12199, which mandates differentiated standards and materials appropriate to specific age groups.

e. Misalignment with Developmental Domains and NELC Goals

- Overreliance on alphabet and numeracy posters overshadows the holistic domains in the National Early Learning Curriculum, including socio-emotional, motor, language, and creative development.
- This demonstrates a lack of adherence to Section 12's call for developmentally appropriate and holistic learning approaches.

f. Contextual and Cultural Irrelevance

- Materials in Indigenous languages or with local cultural relevance remain scarce and donor-dependent, with limited institutional scaling or adoption by the ECCD Council.
- This signals the need to implement Section 14, which mandates culturally responsive, localized ECCD programs that reflect diverse community contexts.

Perceived Effectiveness and Observed Use

Qualitative findings across diverse settings reveal that while ECCD learning materials can significantly support child development, their effectiveness is shaped by multiple contextual and implementation factors. However, the presence of these system-level and legal alignment gaps limits the consistency and equity of outcomes across regions. Drawing from field data and informed by national and global frameworks (e.g., NCF, IDELA), this section presents perceived and observed effectiveness across developmental domains and delivery modalities.

Language Development

CDWs and caregivers consistently noted that storybooks—especially in the mother tongue—stimulated vocabulary acquisition and verbal expression among children aged 3–4. High effectiveness was seen in areas like BARMM where multilingual storybooks (e.g., Islamaganda) were integrated into daily routines. While storybooks in local languages enhanced expressive language among 3–4s, the near-absence of materials for 0–2-year-olds constrains stimulation during the most critical brain development period. In sites with printed books but no training, materials were used mainly for display rather than interactive storytelling—dampening their developmental potential. These findings echo research emphasizing the role of shared reading and adult mediation in language development (Bus et al., 1995; Neuman & Wright, 2014).

Motor Development

Manipulatives such as puzzles, stacking toys, and crayons, when available, supported fine motor development. However, such tools were largely concentrated in urban center-based programs. In rural and home-based settings, children used improvised materials like bottle caps and sticks, which lacked structured progression or durability. Most improvised tools lacked sequencing or graduated challenge levels, reducing their capacity to build foundational fine/gross motor skills over time. Gross motor development materials were notably absent across all modalities, despite their relevance for 0–2-year-olds' physical milestones (WHO, 2020). These limitations underscore the importance of both age-specificity and guided use.

Social-Emotional Development

Storybooks, puppets, and role-play materials depicting familiar emotions or social situations were perceived as helpful for developing empathy, cooperation, and confidence. However, in many cases, such materials lacked accompanying guidance, reducing opportunities for scaffolding emotional learning. In most sites, CDWs lacked structured activities or scripts to extend the emotional learning embedded in storybooks or puppet play. This supports findings that socio-emotional outcomes rely heavily on responsive interactions rather than materials alone (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Approaches to Learning

Although not formally emphasized in the ECCD Council's Learning Resource Packages (LRPs), many CDWs and caregivers observed that materials such as puzzles and matching games promoted sustained attention, persistence, and problem-solving—skills foundational to learning. Caregivers and CDWs cited gains in persistence and concentration, pointing to the need to embed 'Approaches to Learning' in future ECCD frameworks. These observations align with the global push to recognize this domain, as reflected in tools like IDELA, and support the call for structured materials

that build executive function and learning dispositions from early childhood.

Modality-Specific Effectiveness and Use

Effectiveness varied not just by availability of materials, but by the enabling environment—including rotation systems, supervision, and contextual relevance.

- Center-Based ECCD programs showed moderate to high effectiveness, particularly for 3–4-year-olds. Access to learning corners and trained CDWs facilitated structured material use, though in some cases, materials were underutilized or treated as decorations. In Quezon City, regular rotation and child-created materials ("Sulok Buting-tingan") enhanced engagement

- CBPAVs (Community-Based Preschool in Alternative Venues) demonstrated low to moderate effectiveness. In Capiz, materials were stored in sacks and reused intermittently, with no sanitation corners or storage support. Despite these constraints, CDWs maintained group routines and adapted storytelling during crises.

- Home-Based ECCD programs had the lowest observed effectiveness. Caregivers often used household items like pots, clothespins, and cloth scraps, which encouraged bonding but lacked alignment with developmental goals. Absence of structured guidance, low caregiver confidence, and limited access to printed materials were key barriers.

Enablers and Barriers to Effective Use

Enablers:

a. Training or refresher coaching for CDWs (e.g., in Morong and Quezon City) increased confidence and integration of materials into daily routines.
b. Parental engagement through parenting sessions or PES meetings helped caregivers recognize the value of play and respond more intentionally.
c. Supportive local governance, where LGUs allocated dedicated funds and monitored ECCD material use, fostered sustained implementation and motivation among CDWs.
d. Availability of developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant materials, particularly those co-developed with communities or local artists, enhanced engagement and learning continuity.
e. Integrating training on material use within broader ECCD capacity-building programs, such as those offered by TESDA and CHED, enabled more consistent and professional application of learning materials.

Barriers:

System-Level Constraints:

a. Absence of age-appropriate materials for 0–2-year-olds and children with disabilities.
b. Minimal support for inclusive adaptation or sensory-rich tools, limiting access for children with developmental delays or impairments.
c. Lack of contextualization and accompanying guides led to underuse or misuse of materials.
d. Fragmented coordination between the ECCD Council, DSWD, and LGUs resulted in unclear accountability for the procurement, replenishment, and monitoring of learning resources.

e. Procurement bottlenecks and dependence on donor kits created inconsistencies in material quality and availability across regions, reflecting broader systemic challenges highlighted under RA 12199 (Sec. 7).

Workforce-Level Barriers:

a. CDWs lacked structured training on how to adapt or scaffold material use for different developmental stages or emotional learning goals.
b. Caregiver fatigue and limited printed or digital guides impeded use in home-based settings.
c. Low caregiver confidence in improvising age-aligned or disability-inclusive learning activities was compounded by the absence of structured mentorship, feedback loops, and supervision mechanisms.
d. Limited access to peer-learning opportunities or professional learning communities restricted CDWs' ability to exchange adaptive strategies and innovations.
e. The underutilization of ECCD learning materials underscores the need to professionalize the ECCD workforce, as emphasized by EDCOM II. To address this, the paper recommends that the distribution of ECCD learning materials be mandatorily bundled with standardized training for CDWs and parent-caregivers, which can be scaled through TESDA's NC III in ECCD and CHED's Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECEd) programs.

Overall, these findings highlight that effective use of ECCD learning materials depends not only on their availability but also on the presence of enabling systems, training, supervision, procurement coordination, and inclusive policy support, that ensure equitable and context-responsive implementation.

Program and Policy Implications

This study reaffirms the vital role of learning materials in promoting children's holistic development, particularly when such materials are developmentally appropriate, inclusive, and supported by trained caregivers and enabling environments. However, the effectiveness and equity of ECCD resource provision are undermined by governance fragmentation, lack of inclusive standards, and underinvestment in both physical and digital infrastructure. The following implications highlight priority levers for system transformation:

1. **Define Age- and Domain-Specific Material Standards**
   Materials must be developmentally appropriate and systematically categorized by age (0–2 and 3–4 years) and core learning domains (language, motor, socio-emotional, and approaches to learning). These standards should be formally adopted through the IRR of RA 12199 to guide kit development, procurement, and M&E.

2. **Link Materials and Training as a Bundled Investment**
   Provision of learning materials must be accompanied by structured training for CDWs and caregivers. This includes orientation on developmental goals, inclusive use, and adaptation for multi-age and home-based settings. TESDA, ECCD Council, and LGUs should co-develop bundled training packages.

3. **Prioritize Infants, Toddlers, and Marginalized Groups**
   Systematic efforts are needed to close access gaps among children aged 0–2, children with disabilities, and those in remote, IP, or emergency-prone areas. ECCD kits should be developed and prepositioned specifically for home-based and evacuation settings, using inclusive, low-cost, and culturally resonant materialss.

4. **Clarify Governance Roles to Reduce Fragmentation**
   Accountability gaps persist across national, regional, and local levels. The IRR of RA 12199 should delineate clear responsibilities:
   a. ECCD Council: Develop standard kits, age-domain templates, and inclusive procurement guidelines (aligned with RA 9184).
   b. Regional Offices: Coordinate pooled procurement, training hubs, and emergency kit deployment.
   c. LGUs: Allocate ECCD kit budgets in AIPs and DRR plans, ensuring replenishment and equity.

5. **Institutionalize Local Procurement and Cultural Relevance**
   a. Procurement policies must mandate;
   b. At least two developmentally appropriate, inclusive materials per domain;
   c. Resources in the mother tongue and IP languages;
   d. Partnerships with local illustrators, authors, and cultural groups to co-create field-tested materials reflecting Filipino traditions and values.

6. **Promote Digital Equity for Early Learning**
   Digital kits and platforms must be expanded to serve geographically isolated and disaster-affected communities. These must be tailored to low-resource contexts, designed with gender and disability inclusion in mind, and supported by local digital infrastructure strengthening.

7. **Institutionalize Safe Outdoor Play and Learning Environments**
   All ECCD centers should have access to secure and age-appropriate outdoor play spaces, guided by Nurturing Care and child protection principles. This must be embedded into ECCD facility standards and LGU accreditation mechanisms.

8. **Translate Inclusion into Measurable National Targets**
   The IRR should include:
   a. Equity-based indicators to track progress on material provision for children with disabilities and IP learners;
   b. Specific targets for the inclusion of IP language storybooks in IP-majority centers.

9. **Align with Related Legal Mandates**
   Recommendations are aligned with:
   a. RA 11148 (First 1,000 Days Act): Supports early stimulation through caregiver kits in health and nutrition settings.
   b. RA 10821 (Children in Emergencies Act): Ensures early learning continuity through CBPAV kits and ECCD inclusion in DRRM.
   c. RA 12199 (ECCD Systems Act): Anchors all systemic reforms in multisectoral, devolved, and rights-based implementation.

Findings confirm that learning materials are essential, not optional, for early brain development and developmental outcomes, especially for children aged 0–3, those in remote areas, and those with disabilities. Availability varies sharply by region, with disparities driven by procurement challenges, weak LGU capacity, and limited national support.

Aligned with the NCF and mandates under RA 11148, and RA 12199, the study shows that access to inclusive, age-appropriate, and culturally relevant materials is critical for responsive caregiving and early learning. Results call for urgent reforms in governance, procurement, and investment to meet the goals of the PDP 2023–2028, AmBisyon Natin 2040, and SDG 4.2.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Findings from this study underscore both the potential and limitations of ECCD materials in promoting holistic child development. While pockets of innovation and impact exist, systemic barriers undermine scale and equity. To bridge these gaps, we propose the following actionable next steps:

Recommendations

To address the identified gaps, the following actionable steps are recommended:

1. Immediately Include ECCD Material Standards in RA 12199 IRR
   Define required materials per age group and learning domain. Ensure alignment with the ECCD curriculum, Nurturing Care Framework, and local contexts.

2. Adopt Costed Material Packages and Annual LGU Allocation
   Create tiered costing benchmarks to help LGUs plan:
   - Basic ECCD kits;
   - Enhanced kits with training components;
   - CBPAV emergency kits for learning continuity during disasters.

3. Mandate inclusion of ECCD materials as recurring budget lines in AIPs and DRR plans
   Mandate Bundled Training for Every Material Roll-Out.

4. Procurement guidelines should require that all ECCD material provision includes orientation and coaching support for CDWs and caregivers, particularly in under-resourced settings.

5. Preposition Inclusive Kits in Remote and Emergency Settings Stock low-cost, field-ready ECCD kits for use in health centers, homes, and evacuation sites. Ensure materials reflect diverse languages, developmental stages, and accessibility needs.

6. Build Local Innovation Pipelines
Incentivize partnerships for the development of field-tested, culturally embedded materials. Establish quality assurance and curation systems to validate locally produced resources.

7. Track Usage and Impact through Tiered Monitoring Tools
Operationalize informal (photo logs, parent diaries), structured (CDW checklists), and standardized tools (e.g., IDELA-lite) to evaluate material use and developmental outcomes. Integrate findings into national RBME systems.

8. Expand Digital Resource Development and Infrastructure Support
Invest in localized digital learning platforms, particularly for IP, coastal, and mountainous communities. Engage LGUs, CSOs, and the private sector in building resilience and access.

9. Clarify Governance Structures for Materials Provision
Clearly define mandates across ECCD Council, regional offices, and LGUs. Provide standardized toolkits and procurement templates to streamline local implementation and reduce fragmentation.

10. Inclusive and Locally Relevant Procurement. Ensure that kits meet the needs of all learners, particularly marginalized groups:
    a. Mandate the provision of at least two inclusive and developmentally appropriate learning materials per developmental domain that are accessible to children with disabilities, ensuring that no child is left behind in early education settings.
    b. Include mother tongue and culturally responsive resources in IP and linguistically diverse areas.
    c. Encourage the development and use of locally created, culturally relevant, and field-tested learning resources through partnerships with illustrators, authors, cultural practitioners, and community-based groups.

11. To enhance the educational experience and promote holistic development, ECCD programs should incorporate culturally relevant materials that reflect the diverse ethnicities, languages, and traditions of Filipino communities, while fostering character building (Sakti, Endraswara & Rohman, 2024).

12. Institutionalize Safe and Developmentally Appropriate Outdoor Play Spaces in All ECCD Centers

13. Expand Equitable and Sustainable ECCD Access Through Digital Learning Platforms, Infrastructure Strengthening, and Localized Partnerships. To ensure inclusive, equitable, and resilient early childhood education in the Philippines, national and local governments must facilitate the systematic expansion of digital learning resource materials, particularly for underserved, remote, and disaster-affected communities.

14. Translate Inclusion Gaps into Measurable National Targets. Develop equity-based indicators to track national and local compliance.
    a. Establish National Inclusion Targets Linked to Equity-Based Indicators.
    b. Ensure Linguistic and Cultural Inclusion in Indigenous Communities.

Mandate that all ECCD centers located in Indigenous Peoples' (IP) areas be equipped with at least one children's book or story material written in the local indigenous language

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To operationalize these insights, the table below presents a consolidated set of policy actions drawn from the findings.

TABLE 1

Inclusion Gaps

RA 12199 Provision	Gap Area Addressed	Policy Implication	Recommended Action	Timeline	Lead Agency / IRR Inclusion
Systems Approach	Procurement and capacity gaps	National integration is needed to harmonize tools, materials, and guidance	Develop a centralized ECCD materials database with standardized guidance across health, nutrition, learning, and protection	Urgent	ECCD Council (can be mandated in IRR)
	CDW capacity and training	ECCD frontline workers across sectors need coherent multisector capacity building	Institutionalize a multi-sector ECCD orientation and refresher course (CDWs/ CDTs, BHWs, nutrition scholars)	Medium-term	ECCD Council & DILG (IRR + inter-agency circular)

RA 12199 Provision	Gap Area Addressed	Policy Implication	Recommended Action	Timeline	Lead Agency / IRR Inclusion
LGU Service Delivery Mandate	Unequal material provision	LGUs need local benchmarks for ECCD material investment	Define minimum ECCD materials package per modality and per-child costing thresholds for barangays, municipalities and cities	Urgent	IRR inclusion + ECCD Council-led standardization
			Advise LGUs to adopt a more strategic procurement approach—such as sourcing high-quality, pre-approved learning kits available on the market—instead of relying on inconsistent LGU-led or donor-driven procurement processes. While the ECCD Council's mandate is primarily recommendatory and does not include direct procurement authority, it can play a crucial advisory role in guiding and endorsing quality-assured materials and standardized procurement practices across LGUs.		
	Material obsolescence	Local investment for replacement of outdated or unsafe materials must be systematized	Require annual LGU budget line item for ECCD materials upgrade (e.g., IRA, SEF)	Foundational	IRR (LGU obligations) + DILG budget circular or template

RA 12199 Provision	Gap Area Addressed	Policy Implication	Recommended Action	Timeline	Lead Agency / IRR Inclusion
National–Local Coordination (Sec. 7)	Fragmented LGU implementation	Local planning and procurement need simple and unified tools	Create an ECCD Systems Toolkit for LGUs, including procurement templates and costing references	Medium-term	ECCD Council & DILG (toolkit referenced in IRR)
Inclusive and Equitable Access	Limited inclusion of 0–3s, children with disabilities, Indigenous groups	Ensure diversity and equity in material provision	Co-design and preposition low-cost, inclusive, and culturally responsive ECCD kits for health centers, evacuation sites, homes	Urgent	ECCD Council (with IRR guidance on inclusion standards)
Public–Private Partnerships (Sec. 10)	Donor dependence and improvisation	Encourage locally relevant innovation and scale	Institutionalize LGU–NGO matching funds or adopt-a-center schemes; enable private sector investment in ECCD hubs or libraries	Medium-term	Not IRR-bound; spearheaded by DILG + LGUs through ordinances or MOUs

While the primary framework for these recommendations is Republic Act No. 12199 (ECCD Systems Act), the actions outlined also operationalize key mandates from other national laws.

a. RA 11148 (Kalusugan at Nutrisyon ng Mag-Nanay Act): Mandates the delivery of integrated health and nutrition services during the first 1,000 days.

b. RA 10821 (Children in Emergencies Act): Requires child-focused preparedness, prepositioning of ECCD kits, and continuation of early learning and psychosocial services during emergencies.

These actions are intended to be practical, scalable, and aligned with the multisectoral and developmental principles of the ECCD Systems Act.

TABLE 2

Proposed Scalable Actions Aligned with the ECCD Systems Act: Practical and Multisectoral Approaches

Recommendation Area	Policy Action	Suggested IRR Provision / Legal Basis	Who Should Lead	Priority Timeline
1. Define age- and domain-specific ECCD standards	Include the IRR to include ECCD material standards by age (0–2, 3–4) and domain (language, motor, socio-emotional, approaches to learning)	RA 12199 Sec. 5a, 5b	ECCD Council	Urgent
2. Expand inclusive, low-cost materials for 0–2	Institutionalize home-based ECCD kit templates (e.g., recycled, indigenous, no-cost)	RA 10410; RA 11148	ECCD Council, DSWD, DepEd	Medium-Term
3. Integrate training with material delivery	Mandate all ECCD material procurement to include bundled orientation or CDW/ caregiver training	RA 12199; TESDA and ECCD Council accreditation	ECCD Council, DILG	Urgent
4. Preposition CBPAV kits for emergencies	Include ECCD kits in LGU disaster preparedness and DRR plans	RA 10821; RA 12199 Sec. 5a	ECCD Council, LGUs	Foundational
5. Establish local production pipelines	Strengthen LGU-NGO-private sector partnerships for ECCD publishing in mother tongue	RA 12199; Local Government Code	LGUs, NCCA, publishers	Medium-Term
6. Monitor effectiveness of materials*	Integrate ECCD material use into CDW reports using checklists/photo logs; pilot IDELA-lite tools	RA 12199; ECCD Council RBME Framework	ECCD Council, LGUs	Medium-Term
7. Scale community-led innovation	Replicate best practices: mother tongue book dev, ECCD corners, and parent training	RA 12199; Local Culture Code	ECCD Council, NGOs	Ongoing
8. Establish LGU performance benchmarks tied to outcomes	Link LGU ECCD compliance to child learning and development indicators and appropriate use of learning materials	RA 12199	DILG, ECCD Council	Medium-Term

Address Missing Data on Effectiveness Measurement

To address lack of monitoring tools, we recommend the development of a tiered monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework aligned with national ECCD outcomes and adaptable to local contexts:

TABLE 3

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Tiers for Assessing Child Development in ECCD Settings

M&E Tier	Description	Tools / Mechanisms	Suggested Users
Informal	Daily, low-burden methods to document child responses to materials	Parent feedback logs, CDW photo documentation, anecdotal notes	Parents, CDWs
Structured	Use of ECCD Council's existing checklists and domain-based tracking sheets	ECCD Developmental Checklists, toolkits with indicators per material	LGUs, CDWs, ECCD supervisors
Standardized	Sampling or piloting of validated tools to assess developmental progress	IDELA, ASQ, or a national ECCD learning outcomes tool	ECCD Council, research institutions, DepEd, DSWD

Legal and Programmatic Alignment

The following national laws provide the enabling environment to institutionalize the recommended actions in this paper.

TABLE 4

Alignment of ECCD Policy Recommendations with Key Philippine Laws

Law	What It Mandates	How Recommendations Support It
RA 12199 (ECCD Systems Act)	Defines ECCD as multisectoral from pregnancy to age 4.9	Costed material kits, CDW training, CBPAV kits, LGU metrics
RA 11148 (First 1,000 Days)	Health, nutrition, and stimulation in first 1,000 days	ECCD caregiver kits at BHS, aligned with nutrition services
RA 10821 (Children in Emergencies Act)	ECCD continuity in displacement/emergencies	CBPAV prepositioned kits, ECCD in DRR plans

The findings confirm that while ECCD learning materials are present in many sites (RQ1), their quality, usability, and developmental relevance vary widely (RQ3), and their effectiveness depends heavily on training, modality, and contextual fit (RQ4). To ensure equity and impact, the next step is not merely to expand access but to guarantee that materials lead to meaningful developmental gains.

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About EDCOM 2

The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) is a national Commission established through Republic Act No. 11899, tasked to undertake a comprehensive national assessment and evaluation of the performance of the Philippine education sector, and to propose transformative solutions, from 2023 to 2025. It is composed of lawmakers from both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and is guided by an Advisory Council, and assisted by the Technical Secretariat.

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