



PRESS RELEASE



Meghalaya Launches Integrated ECD Package

Transforming Public Centers into Learning Hubs for Children

Shillong, January 20, 2024: In what may be termed as a landmark initiative aimed at revolutionizing Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the Meghalaya Early Childhood Development (ECD) Mission has launched an integrated ECD package. The launch event, held in the Cabinet Room of the Main Secretariat Building in Shillong, was chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and Chairperson of the Human Development Council, Shri Conrad K. Sangma.

The ECD Mission is designed to transform public service centers, such as Anganwadis, primary schools, and community health centers, into vibrant learning and enabling hubs. These hubs will nurture the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of children, laying a strong foundation for their future.



Speaking at the launch, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma highlighted the government's people-first approach, he noted that programs are designed with individuals at the core which are mothers, children, farmers, and youth, ensuring policies break silos and focus on cohesive, outcome-driven frameworks. On the ECD Mission, he stressed the need for execution alongside the planning stage, urging stakeholders to utilize existing infrastructure like primary schools and community centers. "With minor upgrades, these can play a pivotal role in achieving the mission's goals," he said.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the impact of early cognitive development through simple interactive activities by parents to their children, like clapping, facial expressions, and interactions, which significantly enhance a child's analytical skills. He advocated for integrating values such as respect for elders, environmental consciousness, and discipline into the curriculum to nurture responsible citizens."

Shri Sampath Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary and Development Commissioner, emphasized the collaborative nature of the ECD mission, stating, “The ECD Mission is the first of its kind in the country. It represents a significant milestone in ensuring that every child is monitored and supported through a coordinated effort between various departments. This initiative will train functionaries across all levels, from lady supervisors to BDOs, creating a robust structure that brings care and learning closer to the community.”



He also stated that this initiative aligns closely with the objectives of the Meghalaya Health Systems Strengthening Project (MHSSP), which seeks to enhance health outcomes across the state. He further proposed the idea of training caregivers under the CCD (Community Care Development) Mission, which could serve as an innovative internship program.

As part of the launch, Sesame Workshop India showcased their collaborative efforts in ECD content development alongside key stakeholders. Highlights included the ECD Framework, a book and audio lullabies in local Khasi and Garo languages, an ECD calendar featuring educational messages for each month, early stimulation books, and various other innovative resources.



Sonali Khan, Managing Trustee, Sesame Workshop India Trust, stated “we are honored to partner with the Government of Meghalaya on the transformative ‘Meghalaya Early Childhood Development Mission (MECDM).’ Through the Meghalaya Health Systems Strengthening Project (MHSSP), we aim to improve children’s health, education, and development, fostering an inclusive and nurturing environment. Aligned with the National Curriculum Framework and National Education Policy (2020), the Early Childhood Development Framework empowers caregivers and frontline workers while embracing Meghalaya’s rich traditions and culture. We thank the Government of Meghalaya and all partners for their commitment to shaping a brighter future for the state’s children.”



It may be mentioned that Meghalaya government has partnered with **SESAME Workshop India**, a globally recognized leader in child development and education. SESAME Workshop India has been entrusted with developing an integrated ECD content package tailored to the unique needs of Meghalaya's children. Key Features of the Integrated ECD Package include holistic coverage, targeting children across critical stages of development—prenatal to adolescence 0–3 years, 3–6 years, and adolescents. The program adopts an integrated approach, addressing essential aspects such as health, nutrition, hygiene, and education.



The event was graced by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Conrad k Sangma, alongside Shri. Sampath Kumar, Principal Secretary & Development Commissioner, Planning Department; Shri. Pravin Bakshi, Commissioner & Secretary, Social Welfare Department; and Shri. Ramakrishna Chitturi, Additional Secretary, Social Welfare Department & CEO, MSRLS, Smti. C.D Lyngwa, Director, Social Welfare Department, and Shri. Ronald Kynta, COO, MECMD, among others. Representatives from SESAME Workshop India, including Ms. Sonali Khan, Managing Director; Ms. Jayanti Prakhas, Director of Content and Curriculum; Ms. Shobha Kapoor, Director of Media and Communication; and Ms. Rajsher Sen, Senior Director of Business Development among others were also present.