

Early Childhood Development & Intergovernmental Coordination

Portfolio Committee on Social Development, 11 May 2021

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Presentation roadmap

- ECD & Intergovernmental coordination
 - Role and legal framework
 - Challenges
 - Recommendations



Early childhood development

The 'Essential Package' of Ecd Services – A Holistic Approach



Maternal and child
primary health
interventions



Nutritional
support



Support for primary
caregivers



Social services

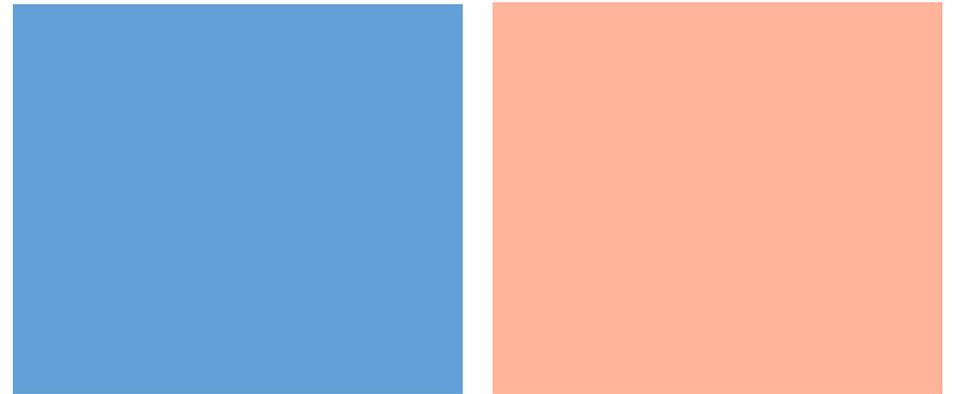


Stimulation for
early learning

Source: <https://ilifalabantwana.co.za/project/the-essential-package/>

Problem - fragmented & piecemeal approaches to ECD

‘[Early childhood] services have **often been fragmented**. They have frequently been the responsibility of several government departments at central and local levels, and their **planning has often been piecemeal and uncoordinated.**’ (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment 7, 2005 at para 22)



Solution: Rights-based, coordinated, multisectoral strategies

‘States parties are urged to develop **rights-based, coordinated, multisectoral strategies** in order to ensure that **children’s best interests are always the starting point** for service planning and provision.

These should be based around a **systematic and integrated approach to law and policy development...**’ (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment 7 at para 22)



South Africa: Intergovernmental coordination & ECD

- ECD services 'do not fall neatly into any one government department, sphere of government or sector' (National Integrated ECD Policy, 2015 at p 84).
- Requires:
 - **Vertical coordination** (national, provincial & local spheres)
 - **Horizontal coordination** (between government departments within each sphere)

(See, for example, Andre Kraak (2011) Horizontal Coordination, Government Performance and National Planning: The Possibilities and Limits of the South African State, *Politikon*, 38:3, 344)

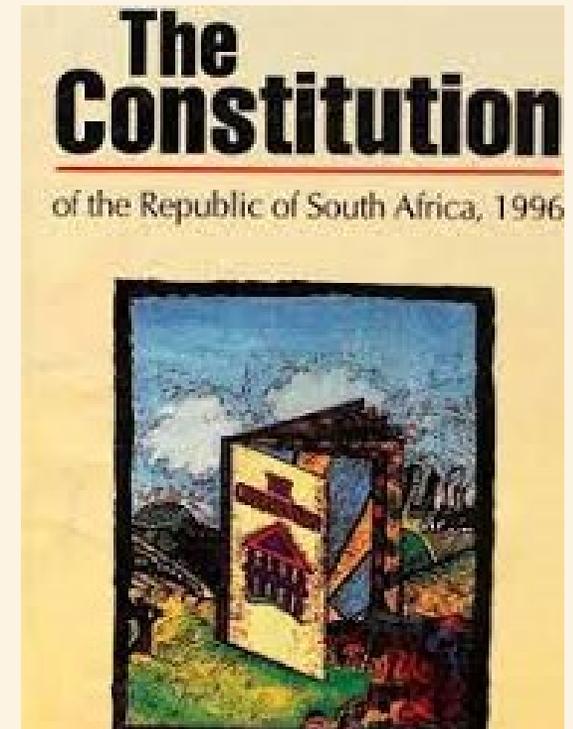
Constitution - intergovernmental coordination

- Chapter 3 – Cooperative governance

All spheres of government and all organs of state within each sphere must co-operate with one another in mutual trust and good faith by, amongst others:

- **assisting and supporting** one another;
- **informing** one another of, and **consulting** one another on, matters of common interest;
- **co-ordinating** their **actions and legislation** with one another.

(Section 41(1)(h))



ECD Policy - intergovernmental coordination

- National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy, 2015 ('ECD Policy')
- ECD services requires 'an integrated, cross-sectoral approach and plan across government departments' and involves private sector organisations, parents and children (ECD Policy, p84)



ECD Policy – Aims of ECD management & coordination

Accountability

Leadership

Oversight

Coordination

Partnership

Technical
expertise

Autonomy

ECD Policy – intergovernmental coordination

Interministerial Committee for ECD supported by Inter-Departmental Committee

- Planning, coordinating, overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the Policy & related priorities.

Intergovernmental forums at national, provincial & local levels

- Established in terms of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005.
- To promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations in the governance and implementation of ECD services.

Intersectoral Forum for ECD

- National platform for government and non-government sector to engage on ECD services.

Challenges

Disjuncture between national and provincial departments.

Unclear and/or competing roles and responsibilities between government departments.

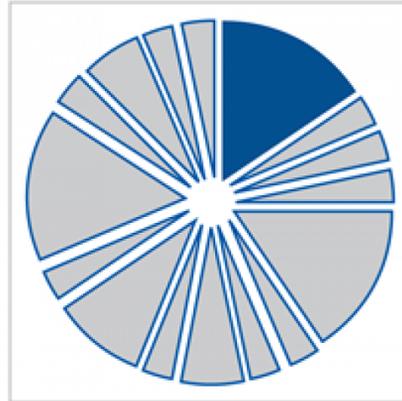
Failure to coordinate legislative and policy reform.

Fragmentation, overlap and duplication in the ECD regulatory landscape.

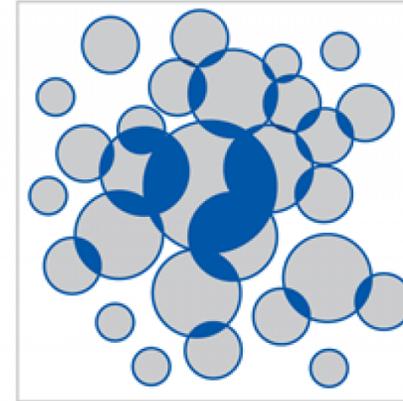


Fragmentation, overlap and duplication in the ECD regulatory landscape

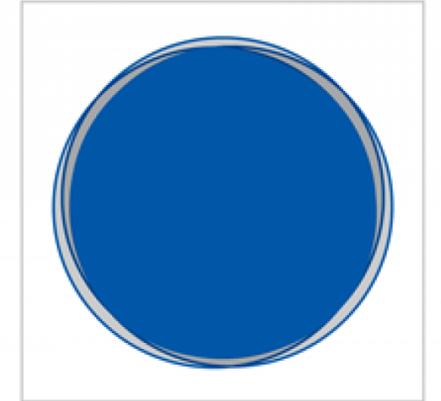
Fragmentation refers to those circumstances in which more than one federal agency (or more than one organization within an agency) is involved in the same broad area of national need and opportunities exist to improve service delivery.



Overlap occurs when multiple agencies or programs have similar goals, engage in similar activities or strategies to achieve them, or target similar beneficiaries.



Duplication occurs when two or more agencies or programs are engaged in the same activities or provide the same services to the same beneficiaries.

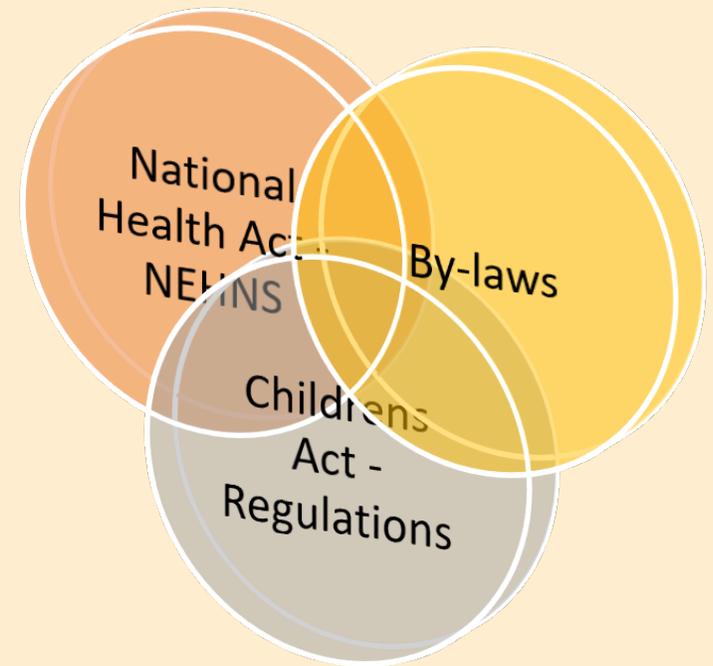


Source: GAO. | GAO-20-440SP

Source: US Government Accountability Office - <https://www.gao.gov/duplication-cost-savings>

Fragmentation, overlap and duplication in the ECD regulatory landscape

- E.g.: Multiple, inconsistent health and safety standards for ECD centres.
- Administratively and financially burdensome for both providers and government regulators.
- Frustrates the realisation of children's rights to ECD services.



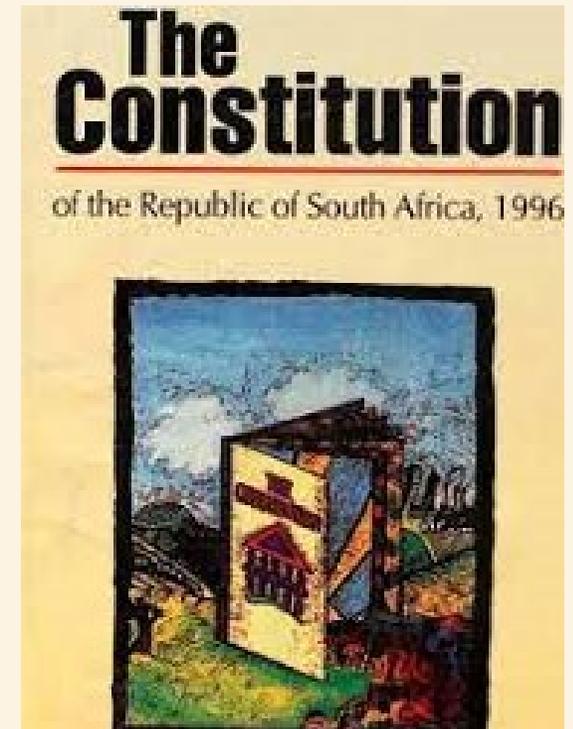
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Recommendations

- **REGULATORY 'CLEAN-UP'**
 - **Can be undertaken immediately**
 - Consolidate norms and standards (e.g NEHNS & Children's Act regulations can be streamlined).
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities of government departments and spheres of government: implementation, oversight and intervention.



Recommendations

- **MIGRATION AND LEGISLATIVE REFORM PROCESSES AN OPPORTUNITY**

- Assessment of the effectiveness / challenges of current intergovernmental coordination mechanisms.
- Legislation clarifying roles and responsibilities.
- Transparency and engagement with sector stakeholders based on time-bound plans.



Recommendations

- **PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT**

- Regular joint Portfolio Committee meetings to ensure:
 - effective inter-governmental coordination; and
 - holistic approach to realisation of children's rights to quality early childhood development services.





Thank you

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