



**A Collaborative Proposal**  
**ECD Centres as Nutrition**  
**and Health HUBS**



**inceba**  
TRUST



# Table of contents

## Background

Page 4

The health and nutrition crisis facing young children in cape winelands

## 1. Current status of early childhood development centres/ programmes in Breede Valley (Worcester and Zweeklethemba) and Drakenstein

Page 6

1.1 Breede Valley

1.2 Drakenstein Area

## 2. Summary of approaches

Page 8

2.1 Breede Valley: DO MORE FOUNDATION

2.2 Drakenstein Area: Inceba Trust

## 3. Using ECD Centres as HUBS to improve young childrens' nutrition, health and wellbeing

Page 20

3.1 Registration and Subsidy of ECD Centres

3.2 Nutrition Subsidy/Food Voucher System

3.3 Training of ECD Practitioners

3.4 Training of Cooks

3.5 Provision of Cooking Facilities/Resources

3.6 Establishment of Food Clubs

3.7 Strengthen Links to the Department of Health Network

3.8 Integrated Referral System

3.9 Establishment of Model Food Gardens

3.10 Links to Other Sources of Agriculture Produce

3.11 Integration of Food Growing into ECD Curriculum

3.12 ECD Centres to have a Food Policy

3.13 Primary Caregiver Engagement

3.14 Support to Cadres of Home Visitors

## 4. Next Steps

Page 28

4.1 Development of an Agreed Vision, Principles of Engagement and Implementation Plan

4.2 Need for a “Driver” to Catalyse, Advocate, Mobilise and Coordinate

4.3 Data Collection, Mapping, Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting

4.4 Communication

## 5. An Opportunity for a ‘Game Changer’ in the Western Cape

Page 30

# Early childhood development centres as nutrition and health HUBS for young children<sup>1</sup>

## Background: the health and nutrition crisis facing young children in **cape winelands**

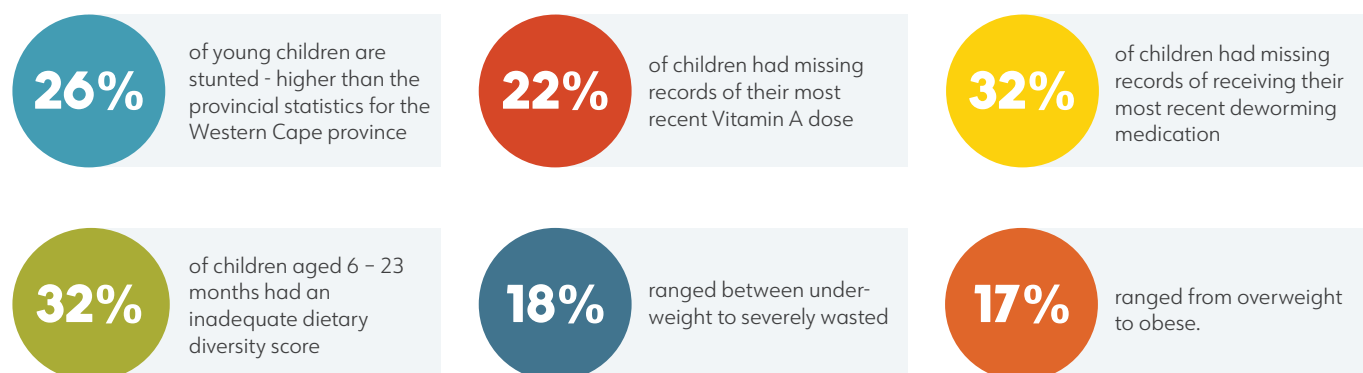


A vital issue that impacts children's health is malnutrition. Nationally, there has been no change in the prevalence of stunting for the last two decades. Stunting affects one in four young children (South African Child Gauge, 2019: 37). Van der Berg & Spaull (2020: 2) cited the latest General Household Survey (GHS) data which showed that at least 2.5 million children experienced hunger and lived below the food poverty line. Child mortality audits show that almost a third of children who die are severely malnourished (Bamford et al., 2018).

Research provides ample evidence of the impact of stunting and poor nutrition on young children's brain development and how it robs them of the chance of achieving their potential, succeeding at school and becoming productive citizens able to contribute to their communities and country. At the same time studies have shown that investments in early childhood nutrition yield significant gains in childhood and adulthood. The Global Nutrition Report of 2014 estimated a return of R16 for every R1 invested in nutrition interventions for all age groups (SA Child Gauge, 2020: 26). The benefits of interventions focusing on young children are likely to exceed this.

Apart from malnutrition and hunger, children's health is also impacted in terms of their mental health. Although evidence suggests that children are minimally susceptible to the virus, they are hit the hardest by the psychosocial impact of this pandemic. School closure, the lack of outdoor activity, unusual dietary and sleeping habits are likely to disrupt children's lifestyles. At the same time, the pandemic has caused an increase in financial stress that is likely to have an increased risk of child abuse, mental health breakdowns and the emotional exhaustion of caregivers together with rising rates of depression and anxiety (Van der Berg & Spaull, 2020: 2).

**The issues mentioned above impact the Cape Winelands District Municipality. The recent Grow Great Report<sup>2</sup> made the following important findings of children under 5 years in the Worcester area:**



<sup>1</sup> This draft document was developed jointly by the DO MORE FOUNDATION and Inceba Trust.

<sup>2</sup> The project was a joint partnership between the Grow Great Campaign and Stellenbosch University on the Nutritional Status of Children Under Five in Worcester, Breede Valley. It reported on a sample of 854 children under age 5 and the survey was conducted in 2018.

Data collected during the Drakenstein ECD Support Programme (DESP) at the beginning of 2021 corroborate these findings in the Drakenstein area.

While the percentage of stunted children in South Africa is currently 27%, in the Drakenstein area it was 9.4%. There was, however, an area with a percentage of 13,1%;

While the aim of wasting in South Africa is to keep the percentage below 5%, the latest national percentage was 2.5% in 2016. In the Drakenstein area, the average was 5% while one area was as high as 11.3%;

While the South African target for undernutrition is no increase, it was last measured nationally at 6%. The Drakenstein average early in 2021 was 3.4% while one area was as high as 6.3%.

It is safe to assume that COVID-19, lockdowns, increased unemployment and increasing levels of poverty have severely exacerbated this already dire situation facing young children and their families. There is a hunger, food security and nutrition crisis facing young children in the Cape Winelands that needs to be addressed urgently.



**This document proposes a potential solution to the crisis. The solution is based on two premises, that ECD Centres have the potential to function as HUBS in communities and that a collaborative, coordinated approach through public/private partnerships i.e., a WOGA [Whole of Government] and WOSA [Whole of Society] Approach would facilitate the solution.**

Community-based ECD Centres could be an important resource in any strategy to address food security and malnutrition for young children in the Western Cape. At the same time, one would also take cognisance of the constraints under which these Centres operate. For example, they have a constant battle for financial survival and generally lack of capacity to take on additional responsibilities. Therefore, additional services would need to be supported with resources, strong managerial input, capacity building, mentoring, as well as clear measurable outcomes and incentives.

Both the DO MORE FOUNDATION and Inceba Trust have experience of the potential of the ECD sector and have developed collaborative approaches in Worcester and Drakenstein areas. Although the approaches differ slightly due to the contextual differences, they are very comparable.

This document firstly explores the current status of ECD Centres/Programmes in the Breede Valley and Drakenstein area. The exploration is followed by a brief explanation of the DO MORE FOUNDATION and Inceba Trust collaborative approaches and a list of suggested projects which have been implemented with success and which are scalable are discussed. Finally, the next priority steps are proposed.

**1.**

# **Status of early childhood development centres/ programmes**

**In Breede Valley (Worcester and Zweekhemba) and Drakenstein**

# 1. Status

## of early childhood development/ programmes in Breede Valley and Drakenstein (2021)



### 1.1 Breede Valley

According to data gathered, we are aware of:

	Total Number of ECD Centres	Fully Registered and Subsidized	Fully Registered and Not Subsidized	Conditionally Registered & Subsidized	Conditionally Registered - Not Subsidized	Unregistered
Number of Centres	78	12	11	2	3	50
Number of Children	4145* 3536*	863	687/ 575	354	203	1745* 1390*

\* "Full uptake" capacity

\* Uptake – Jan 2022 (Higher uptake expected from Feb onwards)

The above numbers exclude the growing numbers of playgroups and only focus on ECD centres in Worcester and Zwelethemba and only those who are members of the Grapevine and Masiphatisane forums respectively. In addition to the centres, there are 11 Smart Start playgroups that are members of the Grapevine forum with a total intake of 141 children and 12 that are not part of the forum.

### 1.2 Drakenstein Area

Based on a pre-pandemic provincial database, there were 110 ECD Centres in Paarl, 47 in Mbekweni and 60 in Wellington. This totals 218 facilities. This number has not been verified post-pandemic.

As far as Inceba Trust is concerned, post-pandemic, they support 101 ECD Centres in the Drakenstein area. Of the 101 Centres, 63 are not registered while 38 are registered. It should be mentioned that in 2021 10 ECD Centres were conditionally registered (eight on Bronze level and two on Silver) in a pilot project in the provincial Vangasali campaign.

Most recently Inceba Trust conducted M&E surveys in 68 of the ECD Centres it supports. These Centres employ an average of 4.8 persons per facility (education and other staff) which totals to 485 persons being employed in the 101 Centres.

Furthermore, 3 200 children attend the 101 facilities.

**2.**

## **Summary of approaches**



## 2. Summary of Approaches

This section briefly discusses the approaches that the DO MORE FOUNDATION and Inceba Trust follow in their respective areas.

### 2.1 Breede Valley: DO MORE FOUNDATION



The DO MORE FOUNDATION was established in 2017 out of RCL FOODS' corporate social investment department. One of RCL FOODS' most important brands is Rainbow Chickens, which has a large processing plant and farms in Breede Valley and is a major employer in the area.

The DO MORE FOUNDATION is not a direct service provider.

**It sees itself as a 'backbone organisation' and catalyst for change through mobilising, enabling and coordinating collaborative partnerships, both public and private, towards a common vision of 'better tomorrows for South Africa's young children'.**

As such it has played a pivotal role in mobilising stakeholders in Breede Valley to co-create a vision of 'Worcester – a place where young children flourish!' and to work towards actualising this vision.

#### Initiatives Supported



##### 2.1.1 Nutrition and Food Support

**The DO MORE FOUNDATION, through its close ties to RCL FOODS, produces a nutritious porridge suitable for young children.**

- This is distributed free of charge to children in SmartStart playgroups and identified unfunded ECD centres
- During lockdown, DMF did extensive feeding of young children and families, working in partnership with ECD centres to distribute direct to families. It also partnered with Breede Valley Municipality to provide porridge and other foods such as chicken and eggs to soup kitchens. Approximately 85.5 tonnes of DMF porridge was provided to families and ECD centres from the start of the lockdown until the end of 2021.
- DMF partners with SA Harvest to distribute 'close to expiry' foods, including chicken, bread and fresh vegetables to ECD centres
- In partnership with other businesses, DMF provided seed packs for 50 household food gardens to be established.
- DMF is in discussion with Department of Agriculture to support the establishment of food gardens at ECD centres that have sufficient and appropriate land.



### 2.1.2 Western Cape Government 'Nourish to Flourish'

- The Western Cape Government identified poor nutrition of young children as a key priority to be addressed and has reduction in high stunting rates as a key indicator. Breede Valley has been identified as one of 3 areas in which to pilot the 'Nourish to Flourish' initiative. The DO MORE FOUNDATION is working closely to support the Office of the Premier and the Western Cape Government in this regard.
- DMF is also supporting a multiple university research project entitled 'The Nourished Child' and works closely with the University of Stellenbosch [US] Nutrition Department in this regard. One key area of support was to facilitate engagement between ECD principals and high-level government officials and academics to explore ECD centre and young child challenges and achievements in the context of nutrition through the US's "Learning Journey" in Zwelethemba.



### 2.1.3 First 1000 Days (FTD)

#### The DO MORE FOUNDATION supports:

- the Western Cape Department of Health to host and facilitate a First 1000 Days Stakeholder Forum as a platform for information sharing, discussion, planning and addressing gaps. The Forum is inclusive of a wide range of stakeholders from district and local government, the University of Stellenbosch and NGOs working in FTD
- the Grow Great Campaign and the Flourish franchisees who facilitate ante-natal and post-natal workshops for pregnant mums and mums with babies
- the CommonGood Foundation Sikunye initiative to mobilise churches to support families in the First 1000 Days and beyond
- linking DoH with young / teenage parents who have young children enrolled at ECD facilities in Zwelethemba to do training on breastfeeding

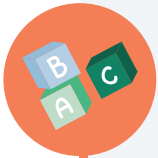


### 2.1.4 Breede Valley Young Child Forum [BVM YCF]

The BVM YCF was established in 2019 to bring together ALL stakeholders working with or for young children. It includes the various key government departments of Social Development, Health and Education; Cape Winelands and Breede Valley municipalities; ECD centre principals; playgroup leaders; home visitors; ECD NGOs; faith-based organisations. It also provides a platform for government to inform stakeholders on changes in policy, share information and listen to challenges experienced with access to government services.

### **The DO MORE FOUNDATION supports:**

- Monthly meetings that include expert input on a range of topics pertinent to young children– health, nutrition, brain development, barriers to learning, personal development, early literacy and numeracy, and more.
- Creating linkages for further engagements with experts beyond the YCF sessions where support is required and intervention is possible.



### **2.1.5 Early Learning and Resources**

#### **The DO MORE FOUNDATION supports:**

- #Do More Play In partnership with CHEP Pallets and the Breede Valley Association for People with Disabilities. DMF supported a core group of 20 young people with intellectual disabilities to be trained in woodwork and to make kits of educational toys for young children. A number of these kits were distributed to ECD centres in Worcester in partnership with FNB Business
- Distribution of 3700 Book Dash books for young children in the correct home vernacular
- Distribution of Repurpose 4 Purpose early learning materials that promote cognitive development to ECD centres for inclusion in early learning programmes
- Workshops on story telling through Nal'ibali, the national reading campaign
- 3960 LEGO Playkits distributed to young learners for use at home
- The Learning Initiative's intensive Blocks 4 Growth with approximately 145 children screened for barriers to learning and about 100 receiving intensive therapy, with capacity building and support to teachers and parents to further support their young children at home
- Provision of PPE and cleaning materials to enable ECD centres to re-open post lockdown



### **2.1.6 ECD Centres Infrastructure and Registration Support**

- In partnership with Breadline, three ECD centres were supported with container buildings to enable them to run quality ECD programmes for young children and work towards meeting registration requirements in line with the Children's Act.
- In 2019, in partnership with FNB Business, DMF facilitated the instalment of outdoor climbing frames at 10 ECD centres.

- Five unregistered centres were supported with building plans and three with fire extinguishers through the support of RCL Foods and Hennie's Fire Extinguisher (local private sector partner) respectively.
- An assessment was done at the end of 2021 to determine the infrastructure needs of another 8 ECD centres with the view of



### 2.1.7 Breede Valley Municipality [BVM] ECD Task Team

- DMF supports the BVM ECD Task Team processes and meetings. Stakeholders include municipal officials, Departments of Social Development, Health and Education, ECD NGOs and the two ECD Forums, Grapevine and Masiphatisane. This Task Team grapples with the challenges facing ECD centres, including compliance with municipal requirements and is in the process of developing a municipal ECD Policy in line with the National Integrated ECD Policy.
- DMF also supports the ECD practitioners to be policy literate and to make their voices heard to ensure ECD is prioritised, especially in the Breede Valley Integrated Development Plan and budget
- As part of the Real Reform for ECD Campaign (RR4ECD) campaign ECD practitioners were encouraged and supported to make submissions into the Children's Amendment Bill. ECD centres also lobbied councillors and candidates before the Local Elections to make ECD a local government priority.



### 2.1.8 Parent Support

- DMF has established a 'one-stop' on-line parent resource hub with access to a wide range of quality early learning and other resources
- In partnership with Mikhulu Trust and Cogta's Community Works Programme [CWP] participants are being trained to facilitate book sharing in the home to promote and support early literacy and responsive caregiving, as well as in the municipal libraries.
- We are currently piloting a new parent engagement programme – 'Eat, Love, Play, Talk' that builds caregiver nutrition literacy and makes the links between healthy eating and early brain development, as well as learning through play and responsive caregiving. ECD centre principals will be trained to facilitate this programme with parents of young children in their community.



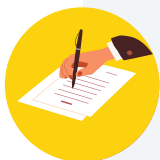
### 2.1.9 Communications

- DMF sponsors Valley FM to facilitate a weekly half-hour radio programme for parents/ caregivers of young children entitled 'Love, Play, Talk' that covers a wide range of topics pertinent to supporting parents to give their young children the best possible start in life. If expertise is required for specific topics on the community radio station, the DMF arranges expert interviews.
- A quarterly newsletter is produced and electronically circulated to update partners on DMF interventions in Worcester
- Through sponsorship from Incredible Connection, DMF provided a high-end router to the ECD forums that enables them to download relevant ECD information during Young Child Forum meetings or when they collect material from the central distribution ECD centre in Worcester.



### 2.1.10 Data Collection, Monitoring and Evaluation

- DMF has a comprehensive database and profile of ECD centres, playgroups and First 1000 Days initiatives in Worcester and supports stakeholders to use data to plan, monitor and report.



### 2.1.11 Stakeholder Engagement

- DMF engages extensively with a wide range of government departments, both district and local municipalities, the universities, local and national businesses, faith-based organisations, child-focussed NGOs and ECD stakeholders in support of co-creating '**Worcester – a place where young children flourish!**'



**Let's take a closer look!**



**Young Child Forum Gathering 2022**



**ECD training**



**ECD training**





**Play based activities**



**Young Child Forum**

## 2.2 Drakenstein Area: Inceba Trust



Inceba Trust's mission is to prepare children in body, mind and soul to ensure that they face their future with confidence and courage. The Trust engages this mission through supporting ECD Centres in multiple ways. When children are young, they spend most of their time in two environments, family and ECD Centres/programmes. Inceba utilises ECD Centres as conduits to impact children and their primary caregivers as beneficiaries.

In addition, Inceba Trust takes the concept of Nurturing Care as a strategic point of departure in its engagement with the Centres. As children need all five components of Nurturing Care to flourish, ECD Centres are supported comprehensively in all five components. Inceba Trust adds a sixth component, leadership and management, as leadership is such a crucial element in creating an environment for Nurturing Care to be implemented.

A key value of Inceba Trust is to collaborate. Besides being a value, it has developed into an approach where the Trust constantly reaches out and invites potential partners to collaborate on projects. Systemic change is the consequence of collaborative endeavours with a joint vision.

Below are examples of projects and programmes which Inceba Trust are planning to implement with collaborators in 2022 on each of the five components of Nurturing Care.



### 2.2.1 Early Learning

- Kinderland training – practitioners are trained to implement a quality Day Programme.
- Wordworks: Little Stars pilot for improved language and literacy for Grade RR learners by capacitating ECD practitioners.
- Book-Sharing - parent- and primary caregiver engagement programme promoting literacy and social relationships.
- School readiness assessments Grade RR children – assess all Grade RR children's school readiness.
- Bursaries for ECD practitioners - the professionalisation of the ECD workforce by capacitating 20 practitioners to level 4 qualifications.



### 2.2.2 Responsive Caregiving (which includes family engagement)

- Legacy Dad – train fathers of preschool children to be intentionally involved fathers which in turn will impact their preschool children.



- Improving ECD outcomes with behavioural change - Diagnose the behavioural barriers and drivers that contribute to the decisions and actions of caregivers and/or ECD practitioners engaged in one or two priority behaviours.
- Stand Firm – train practitioners and ECD principals to work with abused and traumatised children.
- Salt & Light Kids – Inceba Trust collaborates with this NGO to teach the Gospel interactively to children using hand actions, Scripture and movement.
- Oyster ministries - Inceba Trust collaborates with Oyster ministries to provide training in four areas, Spiritual Direction, Spiritual Formation, Disciple Making and Moving from success to significance.



### 2.2.3 Safety and Security

- Vangasali 2nd pilot - To influence and participate in the registration and subsidy processes to enable most ECD Centres to be registered and funded.
- Bronze to Gold pilot – support ECDs in the first pilot to attain Gold level full registration with DSD.



### 2.2.4 Nutrition

- Baseline assessments - Understanding and tracking progress of the nutritional status of all children for planning (interventions) and referrals.
- Nutrition intervention (feeding) - To develop sustainable ways to provide food to the children in participating ECDs.
- Kitchen training - To prepare participating ECDs to prepare healthy food while complying with DoH standards and menu.
- Intervention - to develop an integrated (nutrition, early learning and family engagement) intervention to implement in 2023.
- Referral system - to develop referral pathways for children at risk and connect them with the Department of Health Services.
- Food Club - To develop a sustainable system of collective food buying for Inceba ECDs.
- Training: Mentors, chefs and principals as beneficiaries.



### 2.2.5 Health

- HearX Foundation - Inceba Trust collaborates with the HearX Foundation that provides hearing and vision screening services at ECDs and partner with referred children's primary caregivers to reach needed healthcare interventions. In addition, they provide teacher and child focussed hearing and vision awareness training.
- VisionBox – Inceba Trust collaborates with the VisionBox Foundation to help children to receive glasses who cannot afford the costs offered in the practices.
- First Aid training - to train at least one practitioner in each participating ECD in paediatric first aid to deal with Paediatric emergencies.



### 2.2.6 Leadership and Management

- Principal training: To train ECD principals in implementing the concept of Nurturing Care with standards and best practices.
- Own staff training – to train Inceba Trust's mentors on all aspects needed in their roles.
- Principal training: To train ECD principals to implement sound processes and procedures w.r.t. governance and finance.
- Stakeholder meetings and conferences - To engage with various Inceba stakeholders and grow Inceba's support base.
- Stakeholder meetings with ECD Principals - To regularly engage with ECD principals on various issues.



### 2.2.7 Rewards System

- Beneficiaries receive "rewards" (e.g. educational toys, books etc.) as part of a behaviour change model.



### 2.2.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

- To develop online tools to collect data on the outcomes of all implemented projects and to conduct evaluations for improved implementation.

Post-pandemic Inceba Trust realised that the context of its beneficiaries have changed

dramatically and consequently developed the Drakenstein ECD Support Programme (DESP). This programme integrates several of the components of Nurturing Care into one programme. DESP was launched at the end of 2020 and implemented at the beginning of 2021. The overarching goal of DESP is to establish and maintain cooperation between Inceba Trust, the Western Cape government departments of Health and Social Development, community organisations, businesses and funders to provide comprehensive support to ECD Centres in the Drakenstein area.

”

**Inceba Trust’s mission is to prepare children in body, mind and soul to ensure that they face their future with confidence and courage.**



**3.**

## **Using ECD Centres as HUBS to improve young childrens' nutrition, health and wellbeing**

# 3. Using ECD Centres as HUBS to improve young childrens' nutrition, health and wellbeing

## Potential Strategies

This document presents a potential solution to the malnutrition crisis. The solution is based on two premises, that ECD Centres have the potential to function as HUBS in communities and that a collaborative, coordinated approach through public / private partnerships mobilises resources that enable nutrition related initiatives.

The DO MORE FOUNDATION proposes that through collaborative public / private partnerships, several strategies could be developed to address poor nutrition and health in young children. Such strategies, as depicted below, could be **replicable and scalable in other communities**.





## 3.1 Registration and Subsidy of ECD Centres

---

It is critical that the registration of ECD Centres and programmes, as required by The Children's Act, is accelerated; that pro-poor subsidies go hand in hand with conditional registration; and that financial and other support is given to ECD Centres to meet compliance standards required for full registration and access to government subsidies for those children most in need.

An example is the current Vangasali campaign run by the provincial Department of Social Development.



## 3.2 Nutrition Subsidy /Food Voucher System

---

Access to food and nutrition is a child rights issue and the government has a responsibility to provide in cases where primary caregivers cannot.

While a National Schools Nutrition Programme is targeting vulnerable children in schools, it is unconscionable that there is no feeding scheme for the youngest children in their most critical developmental stage of life. The limited financial support given to subsidized, registered ECD Centres, of which 40% is earmarked for food and nutrition, reaches less than 25% of children in the age group from birth to school-going age. The 75% of young children unreached are likely to be the most vulnerable.

We propose the introduction of a government-funded nutrition programme or the provision of nutrition vouchers to unsubsidized centres for them to meet young children's nutrition needs in line with the Department of Health's 'Nutrition Guidelines for ECD Programmes'.

Potentially, ECD Centres could become a hub for the provision of food to pregnant women and families in the surrounding community that have been identified in need of nutritional support.



## 3.3 Training of ECD Practitioners

---

As most early childhood practitioners in ECD Centres, playgroups and other programmes are either untrained or undertrained, they need capacity building on young child nutrition and health that includes being able to identify young children at nutritional and health risk.

For example, such training would hopefully be undertaken by the Western Cape Department of Health and would involve:

- Understanding and monitoring uptake of health services as per the children's Road to Health Booklets – growth monitoring; immunisation; Vitamin A; de-worming; achievement of developmental milestones; vision, hearing and dental health screening etc.
- How to do MUAC measurements to identify young children with severe and acute malnutrition.
- And in the future to regularly weigh and measure children's height to track and heighten awareness of monitoring growth and development and identification of children at risk of under and over-weight
- How to refer children to relevant health and social development services, as well as for vital documents and social grants.
- ECD Centres should become WASH compliant.



### 3.4 Training of Cooks

---

Cooks and support staff at ECD Centres need to be trained in the buying, storage, preparation and serving of nutritious food as per the Department of Health's 'Nutrition Guidelines for ECD programmes' and to follow the hygiene guidelines. Training would be undertaken by the Western Cape Department of Health.



### 3.5 Provision of Cooking Facilities/Resources

---

An assessment needs to be made of each ECD centre/programme's cooking facilities to ensure they have the necessary resources to be able to comply with the hygiene and other guidelines in the Department of Health's 'Nutrition Guidelines for ECD Programmes'.



## 3.6 Establishment of Food Clubs

---

Inceba Trust has piloted the establishment of a Food Club in the Drakenstein area to enable the registered, subsidised ECD Centres to use the power of bulk buying to reduce food costs.

The DMF is investigating the possibility of a partnership with the SPAR group to see if this could be combined with a voucher system redeemable at SPAR shops for identified healthy foods at reduced costs.



## 3.7 Strengthen Links to the Department of Health Network

---

If a stronger partnership is established with the Department of Health and the nearest clinics, clinic staff or Community Health Workers (CHW) could visit ECD Centres and programmes for outreach services such as growth monitoring, dispensing Vitamin A and de-worming medication and screening for health challenges and developmental delays.



## 3.8 Integrated Referral System

---

ECD Centres could be capacitated to facilitate an integrated, child-centred referral system to the relevant government services. This would enable the Centres to act as a referral point for nutrition, health, vital documents, state grants, social services and child protection services.

An integrated referral system such as this enables tracking and follow-up on service delivery. For example, the Department of Social Development in Nkomazi, Mpumalanga (with support from DMF) has piloted such a project and it has been found to work reasonably well.

The ECD Centres could also be responsible for the distribution of relevant information to families and communities.





## 3.9 Establishment of Model Food Gardens

---

Demonstration food gardens could be established at ECD Centres that have sufficient land. ECD centre garden staff could be trained to offer support for the establishment of home food gardens in the community, especially targeting homes with pregnant women, children under 6 and any home that has a family member with a disability. The Department of Agriculture can support the implementation of these projects.

There is an excellent example where a Community Garden functions in close partnership with an ECD Centre in Melkbosstrand. The Melkbos Care Centre and its ECD Centre, Zumpi Dumpi, partner with Ezomhlaba Community Gardens.

Ezomhlaba implements various methods of farming such as aquaponics and organic vegetable gardening onsite. The ECD receives half of the produce for their food preparation. Apart from the benefit of eating the fresh produce, there is an educational benefit as the children see the planting, growing and caring processes.



## 3.10 Links to Other Sources of Agriculture Produce

---

Already in Worcester, the Department of Agriculture staff identifies farm food products that cannot be sold and take them to a central Worcester ECD centre. The principal of this centre has a WhatsApp group of ECD Centres serving vulnerable young children and they come and fetch this surplus farm produce for their young learners.



## 3.11 Integration of Food Growing into ECD Curriculum

---

Food growing and nutrition could be integrated into the early learning curriculum, along with supporting children to understand the principles of sustainable living and protecting the environment. This would strengthen their understanding and skills in science, ecology and technology.



## 3.12 ECD Centres to have a Food Policy

---

ECD Centres need to develop a healthy eating policy so that primary caregivers understand healthy eating guidelines and agree on what food/snacks will be sent to school – i.e. not fizzy drinks, chips, sweets etc.



## 3.13 Parent / Caregiver Engagement

---

ECD centre staff could be capacitated to facilitate parenting support programmes that have a strong focus on healthy eating, health and early stimulation, as well as hygiene in the home.

For example, such a programme (entitled 'Eat, Love, Play, Talk') is under development by the DMF and will be piloted in 2022 with 6 ECD Centres in Worcester, before expanding to other centres.

**In addition, ECD Centres/programmes could be encouraged to establish the following:**

- Pregnant mums support group
- Breastfeeding mums support group
- Parent support groups
- Health and nutrition jamborees could be hosted by ECD Centres



## 3.14 Support to Cadres of Home Visitors

---

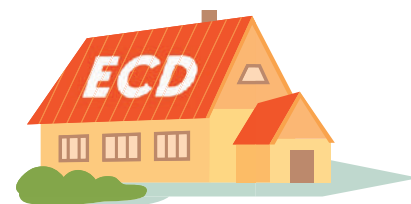
The cadre of home visitors, including CHW (Community Health Workers), CWP (Community Works Programme), EPWP (Expanded Public Works Programme) and even SAWs (Social Auxiliary Workers) could play an important role in identifying young children and families at the ward level facing food insecurity and poor nutrition outcomes.

This cadre of home visitors could be trained in this regard and a referral system established. They would need to be coordinated, supported, mentored, managed and resourced.

ECD Centres/programmes could be a coordination and support hub for these cadres of staff.

# Scalable Project

## Possible suggested interventions [Nutrition HUBS]



Suggested Scalable Project	Description	Recommended Duration
Registration & Subsidy Support	Mentoring and Administrative support to meet DSD/ DBE requirements	Monthly ECD centre Support (onsite) Quarterly Forum gatherings
Nutrition Subsidy / Food Voucher System	Financial support for nutrition using vouchers and online system for distribution	Monthly subsidy in line with SASSA recommendations
Training of ECD Practitioners	Practical training of the National Nutrition Guidelines for ECD Programmes Training Manual & Toolkit (2 day training)	2 day training with DOH support monthly mentorship for 1 year post training to support ECD centre/principal
Training of Cooks	Practical training of the National Nutrition Guidelines for ECD Programmes Training Manual & Toolkit (2 day training) Cooking Demonstration	2 day training with DOH support monthly mentorship for 1 year post training to support ECD centre/principal
Provision of Cooking Facilities and Resources	Kitchen audit and supportive facility upgrades	Quarterly reviews and applications for kitchen/cooking support
Establishment of Food Clubs	Savings programmes run through the Child Forums (Monthly savings with regular meetings)	Minimum quarterly meetings supporter by local NGO / administrator
Strengthen links of Department of Health Network	Regular technical committee meetings with DOH personnel	Quarterly meetings with technical committee Support ECD link via Young Child forums
Integrated Referral System	Map and document referral system with stakeholders	Review Documented referral system
Establishments of Food Gardens	Garden and seed products Training and support	Monthly mentoring and food garden clubs
Links to Agriculture and Produce	Links to DOH	Via the quarterly child forums
Food Growing into ECD Curriculum	Integration of nutrition concepts into ECD curriculum	Quarterly workshops
ECD Food Policies	Assistance with developing a food policy during child forums or workshops	Once off workshops on nutrition support and food policies done with ECD centres Possible mentoring to support implementation
Parent / caregiver engagement	Parent support workshops Basics of malnutrition Breastfeeding Complementary feeding Proteins Starches Fruits & Veg  Facilitation training for ECD principals	Monthly parent support gatherings (+7 month duration) Breastfeeding support groups (monthly)
Home visits (CHCW)	Training of CHCW	

**4.**

## **Next Steps**

## 4. Next Steps

The following recommendations were put forward at the multi-stakeholder engagement on 15th September 2021, hosted jointly by Inceba Trust and DO MORE FOUNDATION. This multi-stakeholder engagement included the Western Cape Office of the Premier; Western Cape Department of Health, Nutrition; Western Cape Department of Health, Cape Winelands District; Cape Winelands District Municipality; Stellenbosch University, Nutrition; University of Western Cape, Food Systems; the DG Murray Trust and other donors and civil society partners.



### 4.1 Development of an Agreed Vision, Principles of Engagement and Implementation Plan

This could be a facilitated process that also clarifies roles and responsibilities, as well as agreed outcomes to be achieved and reported against.



### 4.2 Need for a “Driver” to Catalyse, Advocate, Mobilise and Coordinate

Both Inceba Trust and DMF are prepared to play this ‘champion’ role in their respective areas and report on implementation, progress and learnings.



### 4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

At the multi-stakeholder engagement mentioned above, the importance of data was stressed. All these systems would need to be in place. Mapping of existing services, including ECD Centres/programmes, needs to take place and a baseline conducted.

The process needs to be documented and the outcomes and impact evaluated to provide evidence that this could work before there is any attempt to scale it to other areas.



### 4.4 Communication

Regular, clear and motivational communication with all stakeholders, especially primary caregivers, is critical. All public media, including community radio, need to be mobilised.

DMF currently sponsors a weekly ½ hour radio programme ‘Love, Play, Talk’ for parents of young children through Valley FM.

An electronic resource hub and website could also be built to support this effort.

**5.**

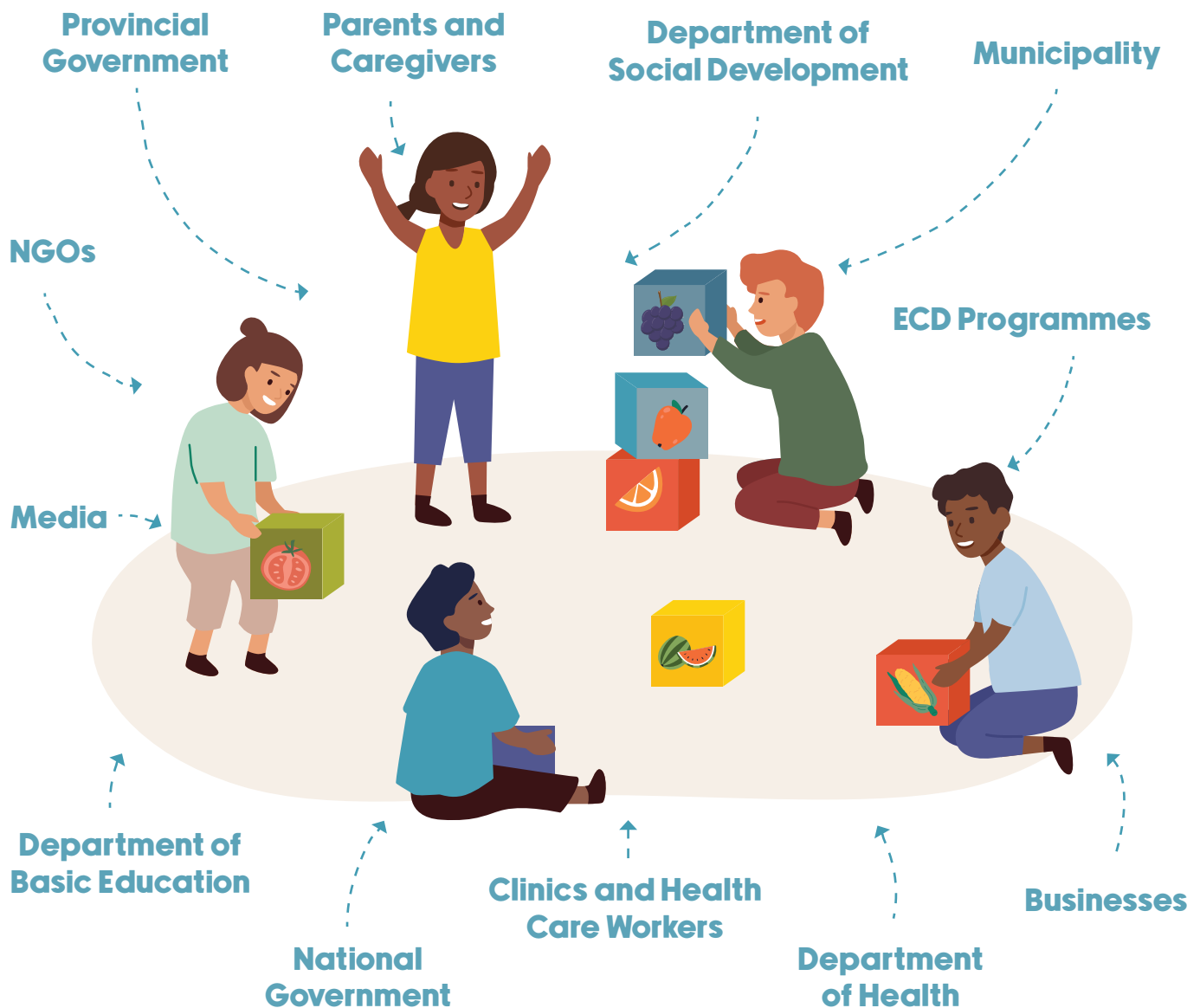
## **An Opportunity for a 'Game Changer' in the Western Cape**

# 5. An Opportunity for a 'Game Changer' in the Western Cape

**Collaborative public / private partnerships** need to support the implementation of these strategies to have a measurable impact on supporting better nutrition and health for young children to enable them to achieve their potential.

Research provides ample evidence of the impact of stunting and poor nutrition on young children's brain development and how it robs them of the chance of achieving their potential, succeeding at school and becoming productive citizens able to contribute to their communities and country.

**The building blocks are in place – together we can do so much more!**



## NUTRITION FOR A WINNING NATION

