



ECDAN Executive Leadership Council (ELC) Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2022

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

In Attendance:

- **Executive Leadership Council Members:** Borhene Chakroun (UNESCO), Ghassan Issa (ANECD), Liana Ghent (ISSA), Erinna Dia (UNICEF), Eduardo Queiroz, Sheldon Shaeffer (ARNEC), Joan Lombardi (Early Opportunities), Youssef Hajjar, Marcy Vigoda (SUN), Boniface Kakhobwe (UNICEF), Amanda Devercelli (World Bank), Samyukta Pratham (Pratham), Prashansa Chavan (observer)
- **ECDAN Secretariat:** Elizabeth Lule, Brett Weisel, Sarah Marjane, Paul Crystal, Natalie Cola, Shekufeh Zonji

Apologies: Muhammad Musa (CARE), Lynette Okengo (AfECN), Peter Laugharn/Lisa Bohmer (Hilton Foundation), Sherrie Westin (Sesame Workshop), George Werner Former Minister of Education, Liberia, Zsuzsanna Jakab/Dr. Anshu Barnajee (WHO), H.R.H Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan

Welcome and review of the agenda and prior ELC Meeting minutes

- ECDAN's Executive Leadership Council (ELC) Co-Chair, Borhene Chakroun, welcomed ELC members, the Secretariat, and observers to the first in-person ELC meeting.
 - The Co-Chair framed the meeting as a forward-looking discussion to position ECDAN partners to demonstrate the urgency to address the huge challenges facing children and do more and better collectively. Virtual and in-person attendees introduced themselves.
 - The ELC unanimously approved the April 2022 ELC Meeting minutes.
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Statement by the ECDAN Executive Director

- ECDAN's Executive Director (ED), Elizabeth Lule, thanked everyone for joining the first in-person ELC meeting and thanked those who joined virtually given the time differences with Tashkent. As an introduction to the discussion of the secretariat's brief report on the past six months and the 2020-2021 progress report, she noted opportunities, challenges, and progress made in the last six months, highlighting:
 - The worsening situation of the world's children is a huge and worrying concern requiring urgent action through effective leadership, stronger political will, more collective action, more coordination, better collaboration between ECDAN partners, and ensuring that ECDAN as a global platform is fit for purpose to address the huge challenges facing children.
 - The need for champions at the far ends of the scale: high-level and grassroots champions to influence and generate demand to make young children a policy and investment priority.

- The opportunity to develop a shared vision and agree on joint priorities focused on where we can jointly have the most impact connecting global, regional, and country levels actions.
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Feedback and Recommendations for the ECDAN Progress Report

- ELC Members' feedback on the progress report included:
 - Determining how the network will shape its movement in terms of levers and vectors, their related cost-benefit, and KPIs to measure impact.
 - Noting the importance of recognizing the interplay between the global, regional, and national levels in ECD programming.
 - Recommending that ECDAN produce reports in other languages to reach a wider audience.
 - Acknowledging the importance of strengthening the humanitarian and development nexus and recommending looking at specific case studies.
 - Recommending examining cases where applying systems thinking was successful so more stakeholders can understand the “how to” and incorporate it into their work.
 - Observing that much of the discourse around transforming education and learning is around formal education and ignores the home learning environment or the value of non-formal provisions. There are concerns about Ministries of Education not investing enough and being too focused on integrating early childhood care and education into the formal system.
 - Noting the need for more effective advocacy as ECD is not included in major documents or events, such as the Learning Recovery Report and Transforming Education Summit, and the need to increase awareness and understanding of ECD. Specifying the narrative on ECD the network wants to use and the audiences it should target.
 - Acknowledging the importance of champions while raising concerns about the high cost of supporting the champions and ambassadors.
 - Recommending being more strategic and collaborative rather than having many projects and Communities of Practice that overlap and lack synergies.
 - Recommending establishing an accountability framework around impact and articulating more clearly who is ECDAN's primary audience.
 - Suggesting leveraging other partnerships, for example with an invitation to participate in the Scaling up Nutrition Latin America regional meeting in Panama in December.
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Presentation of the 2022 Financial Report and Budget

- PATH's Director of Finance and Operations (PADM), Sarah Marjane, reported on ECDAN's 2022 financials and budget, noting the following:
 - Acknowledging a current execution rate of 50% and partly attributing it to staff turnover.
 - Predicting that there will be a much higher execution rate in Quarter 4 as travel expenses and labor from new staff are charged.
 - Observing that since April 2022, ECDAN has received \$1.6mil USD to support collaborative initiatives and operational support.
- The ELC Members appreciated the current fundraising trends and the steady increase and diversity of sources over past years and recommended that fundraising be directly

linked to achieving ECDANS' objectives, as outlined in the strategy and determined by its partners.

Committee reports

- This agenda item was tabled due to lack of time.
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Updates on The World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (WCECCE)

- The Co-Chair described the WCECCE as an intergovernmental conference that would be attended by about 1,600 people, including 60 ministers, with the following statements:
 - Emphasizing that member states would be responsible for determining the outcome document, known as the Tashkent Declaration, as well as the process for finalizing it.
 - Noting that 20 member states had already provided feedback on the draft outcome document and expressed confidence that it reflected the interests of multiple stakeholders.
 - Documenting three follow-up items:
 - Undertaking a political push to ensure that countries make ECC a policy priority.
 - Proposing an annual meeting with partners and the production of a bi-annual global ECD report.
 - Operationalizing the global partnership strategy (GPS) in collaboration with different partners.
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Co-Chair discussion on looking forward and updating the strategic plan

- The Co-Chair began the forward-looking discussion by asking the ELC members whether ECDAN needs to develop a new strategy or refresh the existing one. The Co-chair then asked the ELC to reflect on the aspects of the current 2020-2023 strategy that they want to keep and prioritize.
- The ELC Members' discussion points included:
 - Noting that the functions are well-entrenched, but the context in which ECDAN's work is rapidly changing.
 - Recommending that the results framework should be leveraged for both the overall platform and the Secretariat's learning.
 - Suggesting conducting a survey for all partners.
 - Noting that work in countries is not explicit in the strategic plan. Country impact (which the Secretariat cannot influence) must be clarified, especially the mechanisms through which partners can engage collectively to achieve country impact.
- The ED clarified that ECDAN is a global platform that facilitates the collaboration and alignment between partners and reminded the ELC that the current strategy was developed in a very participatory manner through six task forces and through consultations with the broader ECD community. The Secretariat facilitated the process and implements the strategic plan through annual work plans approved by the ELC.

- The discussion closed with a reminder that the ELC has one year to consider the strategy refresh and determine the process to continue the discussion and reach consensus.
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Closing Remarks and Reflections from the Co-Chairs

- The Co-Chair closed the meeting by thanking the attendees and summarizing the key takeaways and next steps, including the following takeaways:
 - There have been significant changes in context and there are dramatic changes at macro- and micro-levels that are affecting young children. The background for ECDAN's strategy will need to be updated.
 - It is necessary to consider both the results of the ECDAN Secretariat and the results of the global platform.
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Action items and next steps

- As several ELC members were absent from the meeting, the Secretariat will send the meeting minutes to the rest of the group.
- The ELC and Secretariat will work with the Steering Committee to prepare the ground for the strategy refresh and prepare a larger in-person meeting in six months with the whole ELC.
- The Secretariat and committees will create a calendar of events to identify the key influencing events (e.g., the 2024 Summit of the Future and the SDG Summit in September 2023).
- ELC members will prioritize building relationships and engaging with influencers and ministers across sectors.
- The Secretariat will prepare a two-page guidance note on the process to move the discussion forward with the Steering Committee.