

## National Early Childhood Development Alliance

### National Office

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Dear All NECDA Members and ECD partners and Stakeholders,

This year, 2020, will long be remembered as a watershed year and moment in the history of ECD in South Africa.

The Covid pandemic and the crisis in South Africa provided an opportunity to put ECD under the microscope and firmly on the agenda of government, donors and funders in different ways. Whilst the lockdown led to the closure of ECD services and job losses in the ECD sector where preschool could not afford to maintain salaries of staff and thousands of young children were without services, donors and funders were quick to respond to the threats of hunger and starvation of children and families across South Africa. NECDA, as a national organisation, managed to rally the support of donors to set up an ECD Relief Fund to provide support to ECD centres and staff during this period. Government also responded in a positive manner by announcing a Stimulus Package to address the needs of ECD service providers for relief towards unpaid or underpaid staff during this period, but also to ensure that ECD services remain open and accessible to our young children for the remainder of the year.

Now, more than ever, the argument for greater investment in ECD seems to be understood as an important period and phase in the lives of young children that determines their trajectory in life and their world going forward. Now that we have the attention of government, donors and funders, it becomes our collective responsibility to ensure that all young children have access to ECD services and programmes that will prepare them for the challenges of the formal school system.

In this regard the "Real Reform in ECD Campaign" seek to draw attention to the fact that many ECD service providers are unable to become registered or benefit from the DSD Subsidy system due to the onerous registration procedures and requirements that are mostly unrealistic. Through this process we are reminding government that all young children should qualify and benefit from the subsidy system, especially those in poor communities. We are also asking government to review the legal requirements that deny and hamper young children from participating and benefiting from services in their communities.

As NECDA, we are requesting that you all consider:

- **Writing a submission to parliament before 27 November, or**
- **Signing the campaign petition by clicking on the attached links.**

We look forward to your support in this regard.

Riedewhaan Allie  
NECDA Board Member  
Advocacy Portfolio

**"Working in Partnership- Building a Better Future for Children"**