Introduction

Dr Maggie Koong
Global Project Director
Play & Resilience Symposium 2018

Outline

1. Introduction by Dr Maggie Koong, Global Project Director

2. Project progress in China
   • Overview and Shanghai baseline study by Dr Li Zhang
   • Guanxi baseline study by Professor Limin Hou
   • Project interventions by Dr Hao Liu

3. Project progress in Africa by Dr Maggie Koong on behalf of Dr Binyam Sisay Mendisu, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA)

4. Q &A and comments from the audience
Project Design
OMEP Play and Resilience Project

- Phase 1 (2016) consisted of collecting good practices across the globe
  - Received 36 project entries from 18 countries
  - 7 projects selected as having demonstrated outstanding qualities and potential
  - Presentation at the first Play and Resilience Symposium during the 2016 OMEP World Conference (July 2016)
Play and Resilience Project Phase 2

A China-Africa Collaboration Project for Building a Peaceful and Sustainable Future

Goal: To enhance young children’s resilience and potential to contribute to a peaceful and sustainable future

Objectives:

1. **Awareness**: To raise awareness among parents, families and communities as well as policy makers about the importance of early childhood care and education and the value of play in building children’s resilience;

2. **Tools development**: To develop and disseminate practical and adaptable materials and tools to improve the quality of childcare and learning environment and processes;

3. **Capacity development**: To train preschool and nursery administrators, teachers and caregivers in developing and implementing effective curriculum on resilience building through play;

4. **Relationships**: To foster sustainable collaborative relationships for children among families, preschools and communities to continue this work beyond the project.
Expected Results

**Impact:** Young children in disadvantaged communities of rural China and sub-Saharan Africa are developing attitudes, competencies and skills relevant to resilience

**Outcomes** (behavioural changes)

1. Parents and families, teachers and care givers as well as policy makers **increased awareness and understanding** to protect, care and educate their young children, particularly, the value of play on improving children's resilience

2. Parents, families, teachers and care givers have **increased capacity** to facilitate young children's resilience building through play

3. **Sustainable collaborative relationships** for children among families, preschools, communities, local government and non-governmental agencies
Main activities

1. Pilot implementation (China and Africa)
   • Development of multimedia play materials and tools
   • Family and community outreach (community consultations and needs assessment; identification of available resources; parent/family guidebook; parent/family workshops)
   • Teacher capacity development
   • Policy-level advocacy: policy brief
   • Organization of play activities with children with ongoing support for parents and families

2. Dissemination and China-Africa exchange of experiences
   • Peer reviews
   • Field visits
   • Play & Resilience Symposia
   • Web portal: http://www.worldomep.org/play&resilience
Play and Resilience Project - Partnership

Play and Resilience Project Phase 2

World OMEP with Victoria Charitable Trust Fund

China
(Gwangxi, Shanghai)

OMEP China
UNICEF China

Africa
(Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa)

UNESCO with governments
China

1. Target groups:
   a) Hechi in Guangxi province: 120 to 160 left-behind children in four counties
   b) Pudong New Area of Shanghai: 150 to 200 children of migrant workers

2. Approach: quasi-experimental design
   - Pre- and post-intervention screening of children’s risk factors and socio-emotional development in 3Cs (confidence, connection and control) and measurement of the effect size
   - Interventions: development of play materials, organization of play activities as well as awareness raising and training of parents, teachers, social workers, etc.
1. Target groups:
   a) Nigeria (Numan and Guyuk in Adamawa State; Ohaozara and Onicha in Ebonyi State) – internal displacement as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency as well as herdsman and community clashes;
   b) South Africa (Mashamba, Gumbu and Gunda) – predominantly rural groups that inherited former apartheid homelands with high incidence of child poverty and child- or female-headed households.
   c) Zimbabwe (Manicaland, Masvingo and Matabeleland North) – a high number of deprived, disadvantaged and vulnerable children with particularly limited access to quality early childhood services;

2. Approach: complement the existing efforts by governments at the national and local levels through capacity development and material production
Conceptual Framework
Facilitation guide for early childhood practitioners
(Pearson, Umayahara and Ndijuye, 2017)

Provides:
- conceptual clarifications of ‘play’ and ‘resilience’ in early childhood
- an evidence-based overview of current issues and important considerations in planning to incorporate a focus on resilience in play-based approaches
- practical exercises to support reflection on and preparation for incorporating resilience into early childhood settings using play-based approaches
The value of play

Play can support children’s physical, social, emotional and intellectual development, as well as their imagination and creativity.

✓ Allows children to experiment, problem-solve, change behavioural sequences and actions ⇒ supports the development of higher-order cognitive skills.

✓ Promote social competence (e.g. sharing, perspective taking and negotiating); Pretend play can enhance conflict resolution skills and enrich self-concept.

✓ Lack of play opportunities can diminish capacity for communication, joy of learning ⇒ tendency towards aggressiveness and violence; passiveness.
Resilience – Definition

The capacity of the individual to demonstrate the personal strengths needed to cope with some kind of challenge, hardship or adversity

(Noble and McGrath, 2012, p. 20)
Decades of research point to the single finding…

Children exposed to hardships and adversities can end up doing well if they have had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.

- to provide protective, responsible and nurturing environment for the child
- to build the child’s key skills and capacities for resilience
Building resilience requires...

Outside Supports
- Caring relationships
- Role models
- Community resources

Inner Strengths
- Confidence
- Character
- Coping skills
Building resilience involves attention to interactions between a range of risk and protective factors and not simply a focus on attempts to develop particular characteristics that are unique to individual children, such as self-regulation.
Building resilience = Balancing exposure to risk and protective factors

Source: http://www.centerforresilientchildren.org/home/about-resilience/
‘7 Crucial Cs’ of resilience

- Competence: Ability to handle situations effectively
- Confidence: Belief in one’s own abilities
- Connection: Close ties to family, school & community
- Contribution: Understanding of the importance of personal contribution
- Character: Sense of right and wrong
- Control: Ability to control the outcomes of their decision
- Coping: Ability to cope effectively with stress

Source: Ginsburg and Jablow (2015)
Play and Resilience Project Framework

- **Macrosystem** (society and culture)
  - Project focus:
    - Policy-level advocacy

- **Micro- and Exosystems** (The environment the child lives in)
  - Project focus:
    - Family and community outreach
    - Teacher capacity development

- **The Child**
  - Project focus:
    - Building ‘7 Crucial Cs’ of resilience through play
China-Africa exchange of experiences and good practices
A Peer Review Meeting
6-7 February 2018, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

• Discuss baseline assessments as well as the achievements, challenges, lessons learnt of the project implementation in 2017
• Share and discuss good practices from China and Africa
• Review training manuals for teachers and parents in Africa
A Peer Review Meeting
6-7 February 2018, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

School visits by all project teams
Study visit by the African teams
20-25 May 2018, China

OMEP China hosted a field visit of kindergartens in Shanghai, Zhenjiang (Yangzhong and Jurong) and Anji for the delegates from African countries to observe the play curriculum practices in China and discuss play interventions for the “China-Africa Collaboration Project”
Study visit by the African teams
20-25 May 2018, China
Thank you

http://www.worldomep.org/play&resilience