



Early Childhood Education Study Progress Report

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IEA Standing Committee – 5 October 2013



Study Overview

- ECES is a cross-national study...
 - Exploring, describing, and analysing provision of early childhood education (ECE)
 - Analyzing how ECE contributes to children's outcomes
- Aims to...
 - Provide a framework for countries to benchmark their ECE systems in an international context
 - Examine the relationships between policy aims, ECE provision, family background and child outcomes
 - Investigate the relationships between characteristics of ECE and children's competencies



What makes ECES unique?

- Provide an evidence based understanding of the components that children need to develop in order to make a successful transition to school
- Provide a reliable, robust and holistic measure of child outcomes
- Provide insight in the nature of an ECE system and which structure an ECE system needs to achieve these outcomes
- Provide detailed information on children outcomes to help inform investment decisions



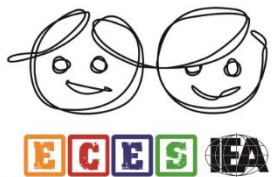
What makes ECES unique?

- Diversity of countries
- Covers different levels of ECE:
intended - implemented - achieved policies
- Covers diverse consumer perspectives (settings, practitioners, parents)
- Provide a range of outcome measures based on an international framework



Study Management

- IEA Data Processing and Research Center (IEA DPC):
Study coordination, practitioner questionnaire, sampling, data processing, analysis
- National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER):
Study framework, ECE setting and home questionnaire
- Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC):
Policy questionnaire and child assessment
- IEA Secretariat: Translation verification, quality monitoring



Sampling Design

Phase 1

Policy Questionnaire (1)

Phase 2

Focus: Children attending center-based education and care in the final year of ISCED 0

„Programmes at ISCED level 0, or early childhood education, are typically **designed with a holistic approach** to support children’s early cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and introduce young children to **organized instruction outside of the family context**. ISCED level 0 refers to early childhood programmes that have an **intentional education component**.

These programmes aim to develop socio-emotional skills necessary for participation in school and society. They also develop some of the skills needed for academic readiness and **prepare children for entry into primary education**. “ (UNESCO, 2012)

Parents/Carers
of sampled children



Child Assessment
(opt out possibility)



Target Population

- The approach is grade based, because
 - This study is about children's entire ECE experiences and outcomes
 - We want to measure children's outcomes at the end of ISCED 0
- However, we are aware of the need to
 - Develop an assessment which is suitable for children of different ages
 - To take care when reporting the results



Project Milestones 2013-2014

Date	Milestones
Jan 2013	Start development study framework and Policy Questionnaire
10-11 Jun 2013	1st Project Advisory Committee meeting (Birmingham, UK)
29 Jul-1 Aug 2013	1st NRC Meeting (Hamburg, Germany)
Aug 2013-Feb 2014	Study framework revision
Aug 2013-May 2014	Initial instrument development
Nov/Dec	Pilot Policy Questionnaire
9-10 Jan 2014	2nd PAC meeting (Hamburg, Germany)
24-28 Feb 2014	2nd NRC Meeting (Rome, Italy)
Apr/ May 2014	Main Study Policy Questionnaire
May-Sep 2014	Development draft Field Trial instruments
15-19 Sep 2014	3rd NRC Meeting (TBA)
Nov 2014	Data Management Seminar (Hamburg, Germany)
Nov 2014	Finalize Field Trial instruments



Project Milestones 2015-2018

Date	Milestones
Dec 2014-Mar 2015	Translation and verification of FT instruments
Feb 2015	Publish Report 1: Outcomes of Policy Questionnaire
Apr-May 2015	Field Test
Jun-Nov 2015	Data processing and analysis of FT results
Dec 2015	Finalize Main Study instruments
Jan-Mar 2016	Translation and verification of Main Study instruments
Feb 2016	Publish Study Framework
Apr-May 2016	Main Study Northern Hemisphere Countries
Sep-Oct 2016	Main Study Southern Hemisphere Countries
Oct 2017	Publish Report 2: Questionnaire Outcomes
Feb 2018	Publish Report 3: Assessment Outcomes
Sep 2018	Publish Report 4: Final Report
Nov 2018	Release International Database



Participants at the 1st NRC Meeting

Austria	Denmark	Norway
Bahrain	England	Poland
Belgium (Flemish)	Estonia	Russian Federation
Brazil	Germany	Slovenia
Canada	Hong Kong	Spain
Chile	Italy	Thailand
Croatia	Lithuania	Turkey (did not show up)
Czech Republic	New Zealand	USA (online)

plus representatives from European Commission and OECD ECEC Network

Other countries having expressed some interest in the study:

Abu Dhabi, Cameroon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Georgia, India, Iran, Israel, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Switzerland

Age at final year of ISCED0: 6yo 5yo 4yo



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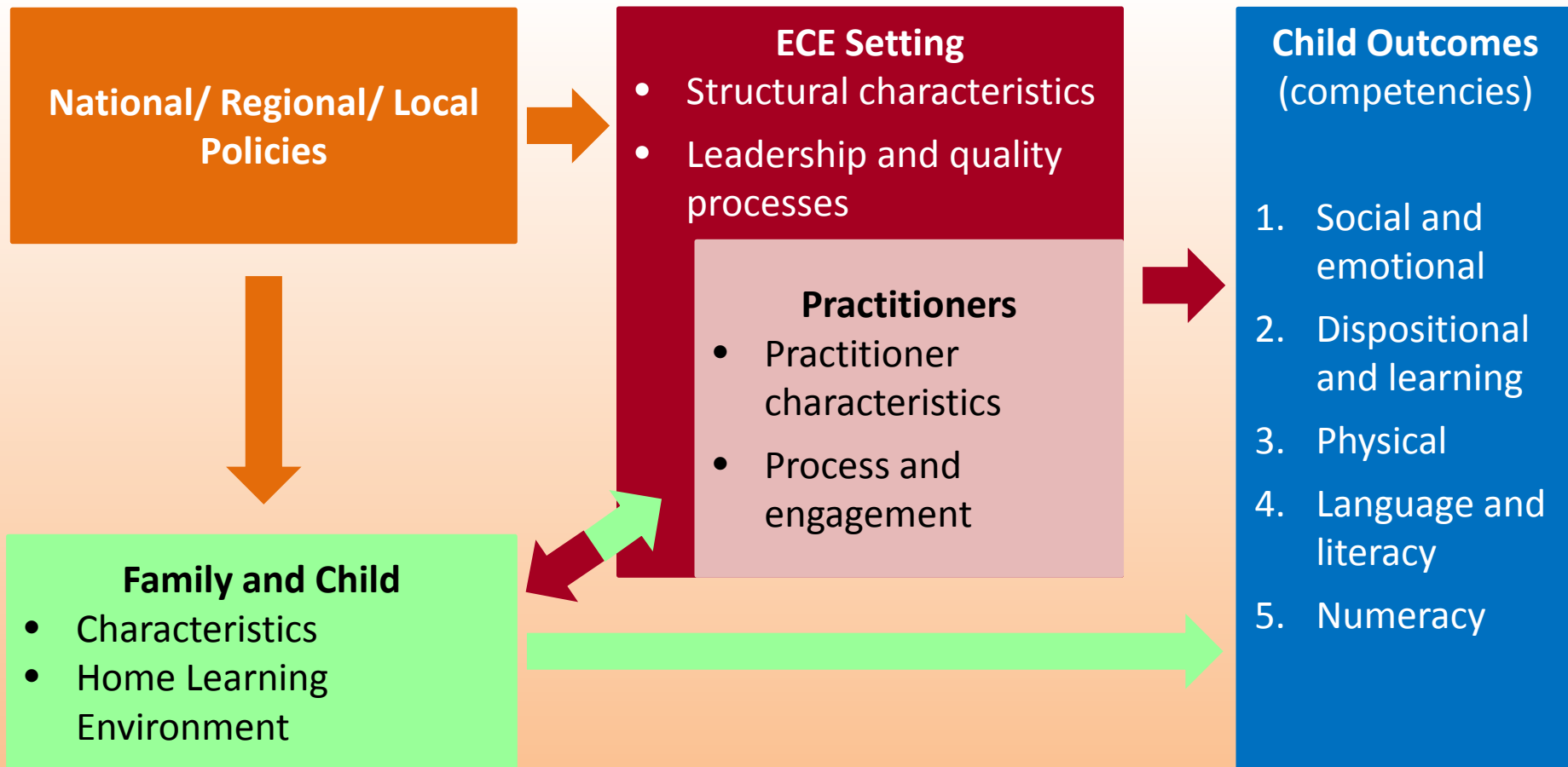
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Summary of 1st NRC Meeting

- Child outcomes are the aspect of greatest interest to country representatives
- Framework needs to be re-organized, so that the assessment module is the focus of the study
- Research questions need to be more directed to outcome measures
- There should be a greater focus on pedagogic practice
- Interest was expressed in administering the assessment earlier than the final year of ISCED 0 (as national option?)

Conceptual Diagram





ECES Research Questions

Study focus is on how ECE contributes to children's outcomes

1. What variations exist between and within countries in outcomes for children attending ECE?
2. What aspects of ECE systems are related to outcomes for children's early learning and development?
 - a. System context, policy aims and quality assurance for ECE
 - b. ECE staff qualifications and continuing professional development



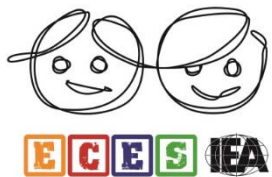
ECES Research Questions

3. What is the contribution of the ECE settings in the final year of ECE programs?
 - a. ECE setting characteristics, aims and resources
 - b. ECE staff qualifications and continuing professional education
 - c. ECE staff practices in working with children
 - d. ECE setting leadership and quality assurance systems
 - e. Communication with and involvement of families



ECES Research Questions

4. What aspects of children's personal and social background and family context are related to children's outcomes?
 - a. To what extent do these relationships differ within and between countries?
 - b. Are there particular aspects of the ECE system or setting that mediate these relationships?



ECES Instruments

Phase 1

- Policy Questionnaire

Phase 2

- Comprehensive set of contextual questionnaires
 - ECE Setting Questionnaire
 - Practitioner Questionnaire
 - Home Questionnaire
- Assessment module evaluating different aspects of children's outcomes
 - Practitioner ratings
 - Assessment tasks

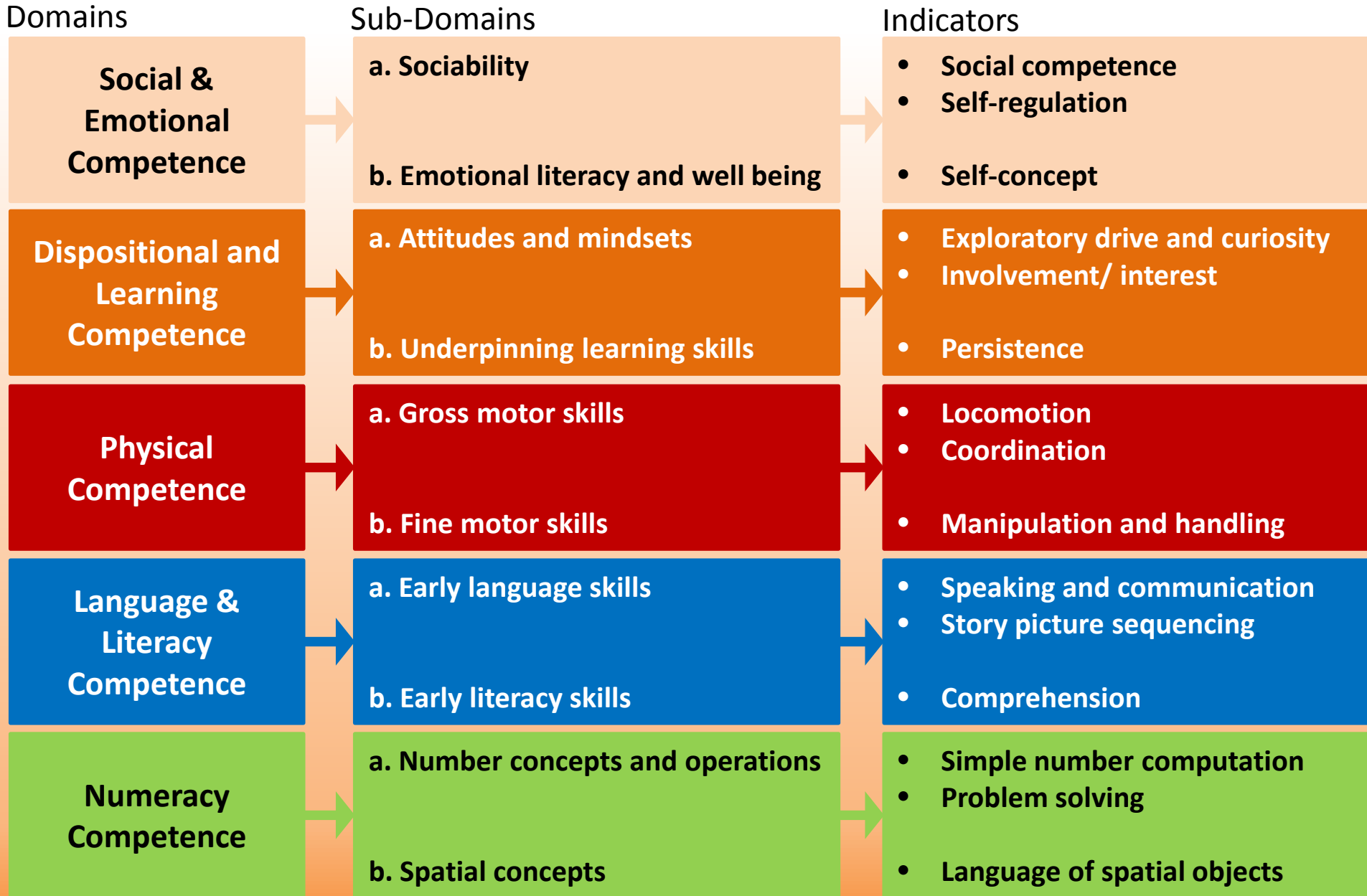


ECES Assessment Module

Identification of Key Learning Domains, Sub-Domains and Indicators

- *Theoretical Grounding:* Vygotskian socio-constructivist approach to learning which accepts children's experience and environment shape learning outcomes;
- *Empirical Grounding:* thorough review of international evidence to identify those early learning outcomes which are associated significantly with later achievement and attainment and which are widely acknowledged as important at end of ISCED 0, and which can be assessed reliably, rigorously and efficiently.

Learning Domains, Sub-Domains, Indicators





Assessment Design Considerations

- Psychometrically robust and reliable
- Inclusive of 5 Learning Domains and able to discriminate developmental differences
- Graduated assessment (possible 3-7 year span, but probably most 5-6 years)
- Ethical, respectful of children's rights and well being
- Interactive, meaningful and attractive items
- Easy to train and implement and manageable in terms of translation efforts
- Adaptable to different cultural contexts and low resource settings



Assessment Tools

Two assessment modes which will be used as a blended assessment approach for all 5 learning domains to ensure reliability and efficiency in the assessment process:

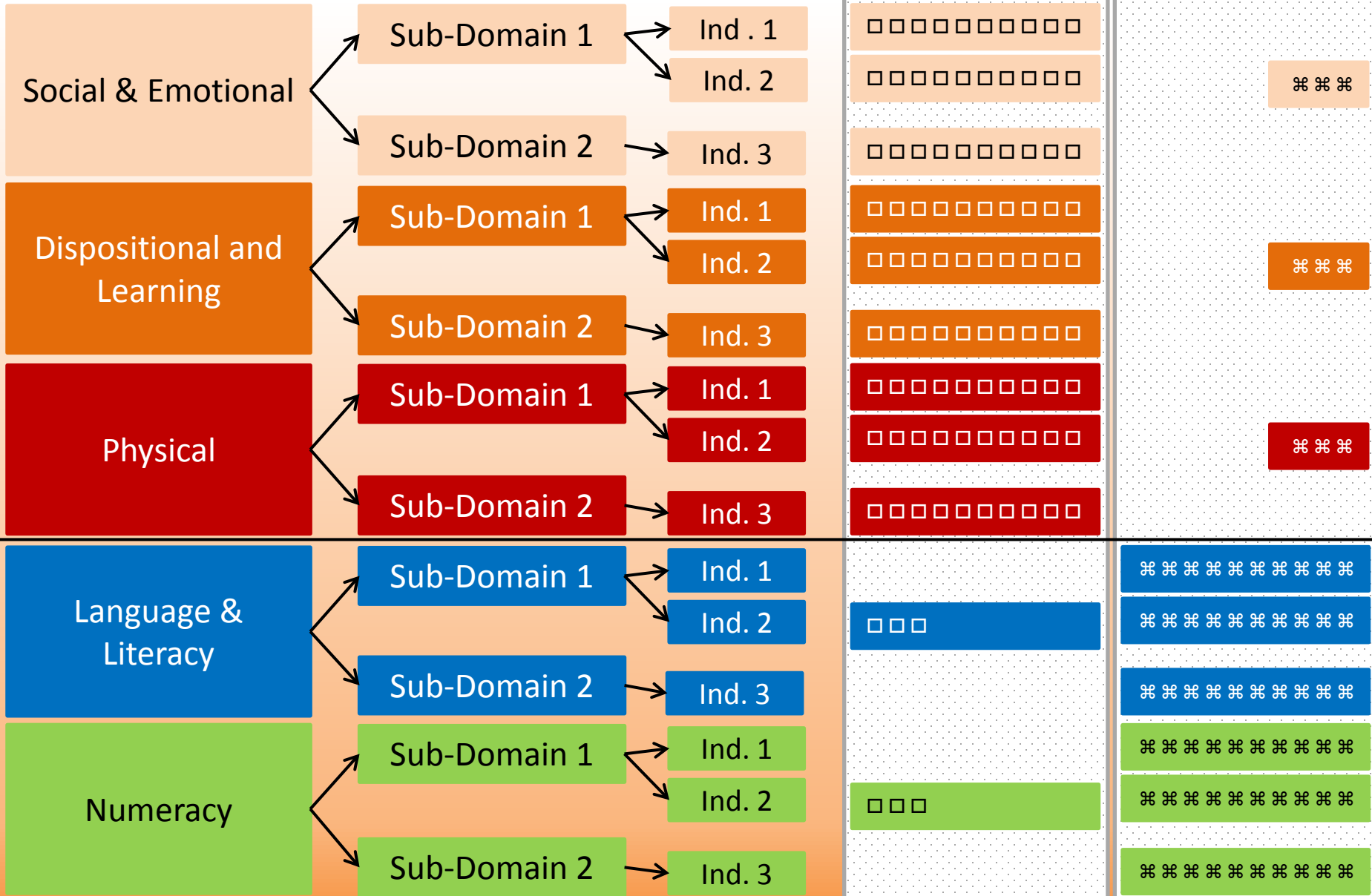
- 1. Direct Assessment Tasks (DAT)**

(by trained External Administrator)

- 2. Practitioner Rating (PR)**

(by practitioner who is familiar to the children)

Assessment Design





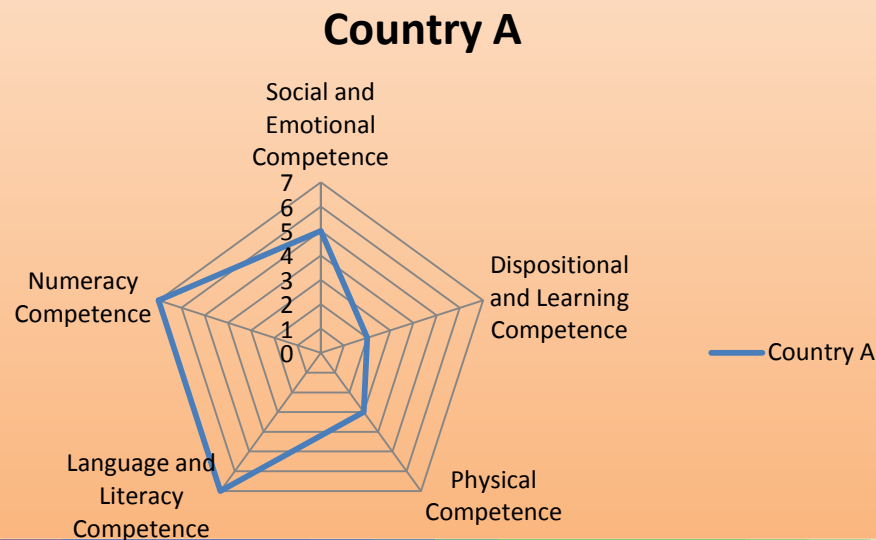
Administration of Assessment

- Direct assessment tasks administered by trained external administrator:
30 mins per child
- Practitioner ratings administered by setting practitioner:
15 mins per child
- Clear and standardised instructions for assessment administration
- 15 sampled children per setting assessed
- Assessment undertaken in 2 week period in setting during a three month window before the end of ISCED 0
- IEA Quality Assurance procedures applied



Reporting of Assessment

- No ranking of countries but could for example, draw comparisons against countries with similar models of/approaches to ECE
- Separate scales for 5 Learning Domains
- Linking of outcomes evidence to in country and between country systemic, structural and process evidence
- Country profile using radar diagrams with country mean scores, for example:





Thank you!

