Policy Engagement Plan:

Increasing access and improving the quality of Early Childhood Development in South Africa:
Effective early childhood development programme options meeting the needs of young South African children.

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planning, monitoring and evaluation
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PART A
Overview of Research

Summary of Research

- **_Significance of the research:_**
  - Our expected output is to provide the DPME and the EU with detailed ECD programme option guidelines, together with costs of each programme option that can also be used to bring into effect ECD policy changes towards increased service delivery of quality ECD services.
  - Our overall expected result is that systems are improved by ensuring that the right knowledge is available for decision-making and that government and ECD non-profit providers can effectively reach high numbers of children, ensuring that they are in quality ECD programmes, through a range of ECD programme options.

Overall objective

To conduct a research study across all 9 provinces of South Africa which will analyse, review and evaluate ECD programme options which will increase the access and improve the quality of ECD for young children in South Africa, over a period of 18 months.

Objective 1
To determine, review, analyse and evaluate the various early childhood development programme options in South Africa.

Objective 2
To understand what makes ECD programme options effective and develop quality ECD programmes guidelines.

Objective 3
To provide the South African government ECD policy makers with a comprehensive package of ECD services that can be used to increase the quality and quantity of early childhood development in South Africa.

Summary of Research

Methodology:

1. Engage with government and 62 ECD NPOs & others – obtain ECD programme option information and analyse	2. Purposively select and interview the ECD programme providers	3. Visit and study the various ECD programme options
4. Obtain statistical information and secondary data	5. Data will be transcribed, analysed and a report written	6. Develop set of implementation guidelines

Progress, next Phase(s) and Time frames:

- Conducted comprehensive desktop research
- Engaged and interviewed ECD specialists to understand the various ECD programme options and what makes an ECD programme option effective.
- Sent out a 'call for participation' to NPOs across the country.
- Received 57 ECD programme submissions from 23 NPOs.
- Currently analysing and assessing ECD programmes submitted for inclusion as case studies and in the guidelines.
- Time Frames: Engage with ECD programme option providers (April – June 2016); Develop quality ECD programme guidelines (July – October 2016); Provide the South African government with a comprehensive package of ECD services that can be used to increase the quality and quantity of ECD in South Africa (November 2016).

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Key (emerging) research findings

Some Statistics:

- Interviewed *7 ECD specialists* in the ECD NPO sector, government, and a global child-focused NPO.
- Sent out *call for participation* to *62 ECD NPOs and 23 other NPOs*.
- *23 organisations* have responded with *57 comprehensive case studies*.

Key findings from ECD specialist interviews:

- There is a significant need to focus on the importance of out-of-centre ECD programmes.
- Approximately 73% of children that do have access to ECD centre-based programmes.

Key findings from ECD NPOs:

- Our emerging findings:
  - a great deal of variation, particularly in terms of the quality of programmes that are provided;
  - the varying target numbers; as well as
  - varying cost breakdowns for similar programmes.

Key (emerging) research findings cont.

Policy relevance of findings, benefits and opportunities, and how these findings will be utilised to engage policy makers:

- Previous ECD Policy
  – In need of in reworking and updating
  – Largely focused on ECD centre-based programmes
  – Significant gaps

- 9 December 2015 Cabinet approves new ECD policy
  – Significant consensus on new ECD policy
  – Integrated,
  – Fills previous policy gaps,
  – Has the potential to achieve universal, quality ECD provision for our young children.

- The challenge now will be the implementation of this new ECD policy.

- This provides an opportunity for our research to engage with decision makers and service providers in the ECD sector, including government, providing them with practical implementation guidelines to achieve the aims of the new ECD policy.

PART B
Implications of emerging findings for policy engagement planning

Spheres of Influence Diagram:

Mapping of actors influencing the policy arena
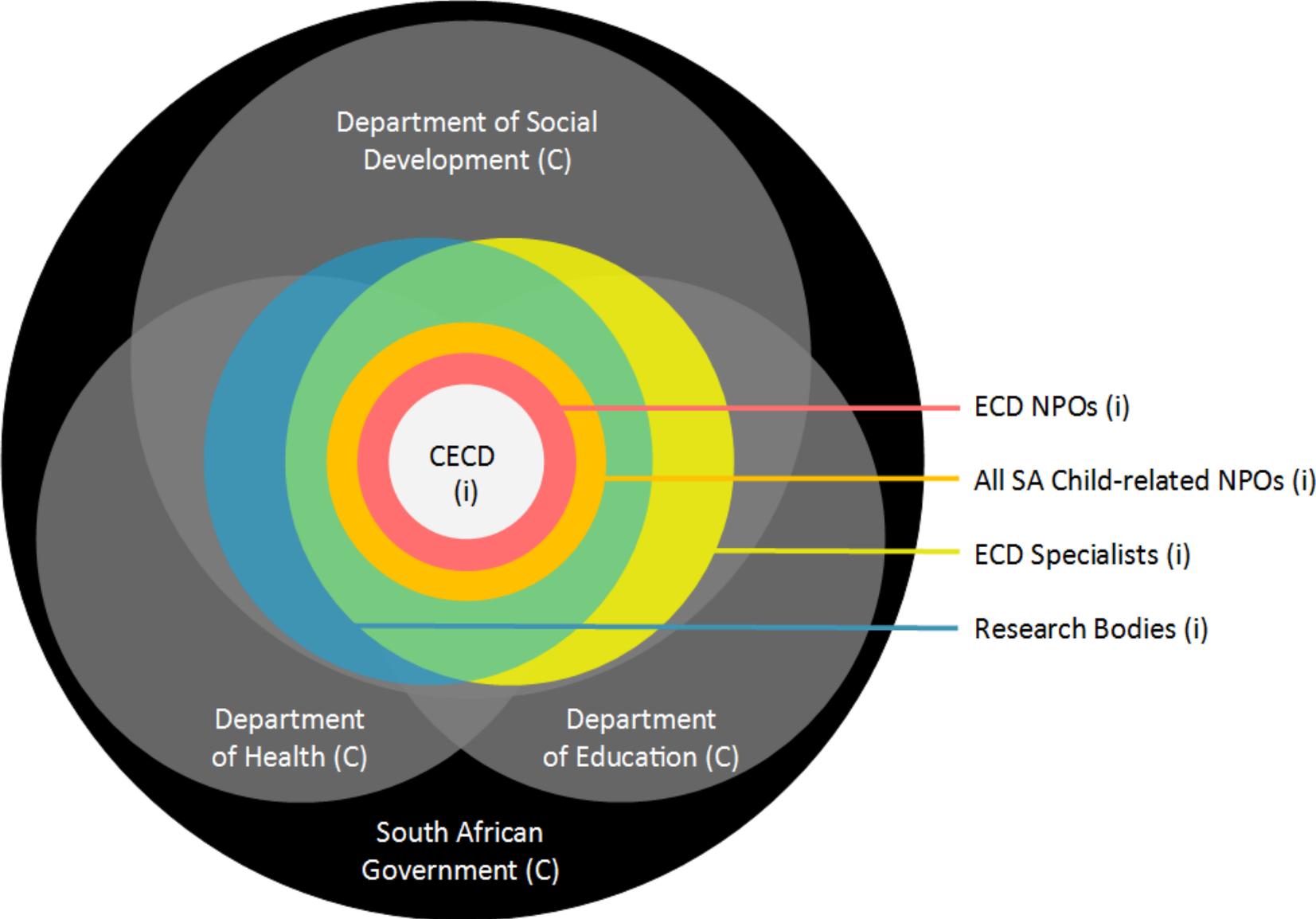
Draft Policy Engagement Plan...suggested process

Stakeholder	Level of Power	Engagement Strategy	Anticipated Challenges
Centre for Early Childhood Development (CECD) - *Fully aligned interest*	Have evidence-based knowledge on ECD programmes that improve quality of ECD provision and increase access of early learning programmes across South Africa, as well as detailed cost-breakdowns of how much these programmes cost to implement successfully.	1. We will disseminate final report and implementation guidelines. 2. We will engage with all key stakeholders in order to ensure implementation of new policy strategies. 3. This will be done through print, emailers, meetings, conference presentations & online dissemination. *All engagement strategy activities will be carried out by the core research team.*	Getting access to the relevant stakeholders, and decision-makers.

Draft Policy Engagement Plan...suggested process (cont.)

Stakeholder	Level of Power	Engagement Strategy	Anticipated Challenges	Support to Policy Actors
ECD NPOs, Child-related NPOs, ECD specialists, Research Bodies - *Fully aligned interest*	1. They have knowledge, expertise and evidence-based research on what constitutes quality ECD, and how to increase access to quality ECD. 2. They are the implementers of ECD programmes that work to realise the objectives of ECD policy.	We will engage at each level of groupings in order to ensure maximum knowledge-sharing and implementation of new policy strategies.	1. Service providers openness to accepting the guidelines and to implementing new/different ECD programme options included in the guidelines (as opposed to continuing with their current approaches and ECD programme service provision).	1. We will produce and disseminate a summarised version of the new ECD policy for better understanding. 2. Along with the dissemination of the final research report, we will disseminate a summarised more visual version.
DoSD, DoE, DoH, South African Government - *Fully aligned interest*	1. Make the final decisions as to what is included in policy and what the programme implementers need to adhere to.	Engage at each level of government in order to ensure maximum knowledge-sharing and implementation of new policy strategies.	1. Government's openness to accepting the guidelines and to implementing (and funding) the ECD programme options included in the guidelines. 2. Openness to changes in funding strategies (with regards to non-centre-based programme funding).	1. Along with the dissemination of the final research report, we will disseminate a summarised more visual version.

Thank You!