

The Yinthway Approach

«We first try it ourselves, then we do it with our partners. With our support this then helps our partners to mold their environments and communities. All of this becomes a way of advocating and showing results at the highest system levels»

Yinthway Foundation is a Myanmar-based, local nongovernmental Resource Center dedicated to bringing ECCD and CCA to children, communities, and the wider environment.

Alice Mundhenk, Nwe Nwe Aung, Patrick Renz

Essentials

- *Yinthway Nge* in Myanmar means ‘*our precious young children*’ and is a phrase which brings a smile to even the most cynical adult’s face. With this in mind, Yinthway Foundation (YF) chose this name to capture its essence: all of *the precious young children* of Myanmar and their holistic development is the focus of this local organization. To reach these children, their families, and their communities throughout the country, YF develops the capacity of local partners to implement their own early childhood programs.
- Yinthway Foundation is proud of its cultural coherence and the seamless integration of its high impact work in the multi-language and multi-ethnic complexity of Myanmar. The Foundation's staff and its local partners come from a variety of ethnic and language groups, thereby literally mirroring this complexity. YF fuses the latest international research in the field of early childhood development and education with the traditional customs, such as lullabies, stories, games, and child-rearing practices, of these ethnic groups.
- This holistic understanding lays the base for our vision to be an integrative player and a resource center. To give our deep understanding of local and ethnic particularities a concrete face, YF identifies children’s needs for early childhood programs; trains trainers for training early childhood teachers; develops training materials for trainers and teachers; sensitizes community leaders; develops a variety of children’s books, including a series of traditional folk tales, a series of culturally based children’s books, and a series of culturally informed adaptations of western children’s books; develops parent education materials; advises and provides limited financial support to women’s cottage industries to produce children’s play and learning materials; consults with international donors and NGOs about how to channel their efforts in Myanmar; networks with and provides technical assistance to community-based organizations, faith-based groups and local government to strengthen their early childhood programs; and supports partners’ efforts to train teachers nationwide, thereby assuring high ECCD quality.
- In doing this, YF has become the only resource center for those interested in Early Childhood Care, Development, and Education in Myanmar.
- The following description shows some details of this unique and highly systemic approach which has organically grown over the last twelve years, based on very high commitment, with very little financial resources, but continuously reinventing itself. The result of this is a very effective approach with high impact and system-reinforced sustainability.

The Yinthway Approach – A systemic view

Country

Roof organization/Head-office/INGOs
Government paid preschools with
Department of Social Welfare, Faith based
organizations, New emerging organizations

Region

**Trainers for
ECCD and CCA
initiatives**

**Community
leaders**

Community

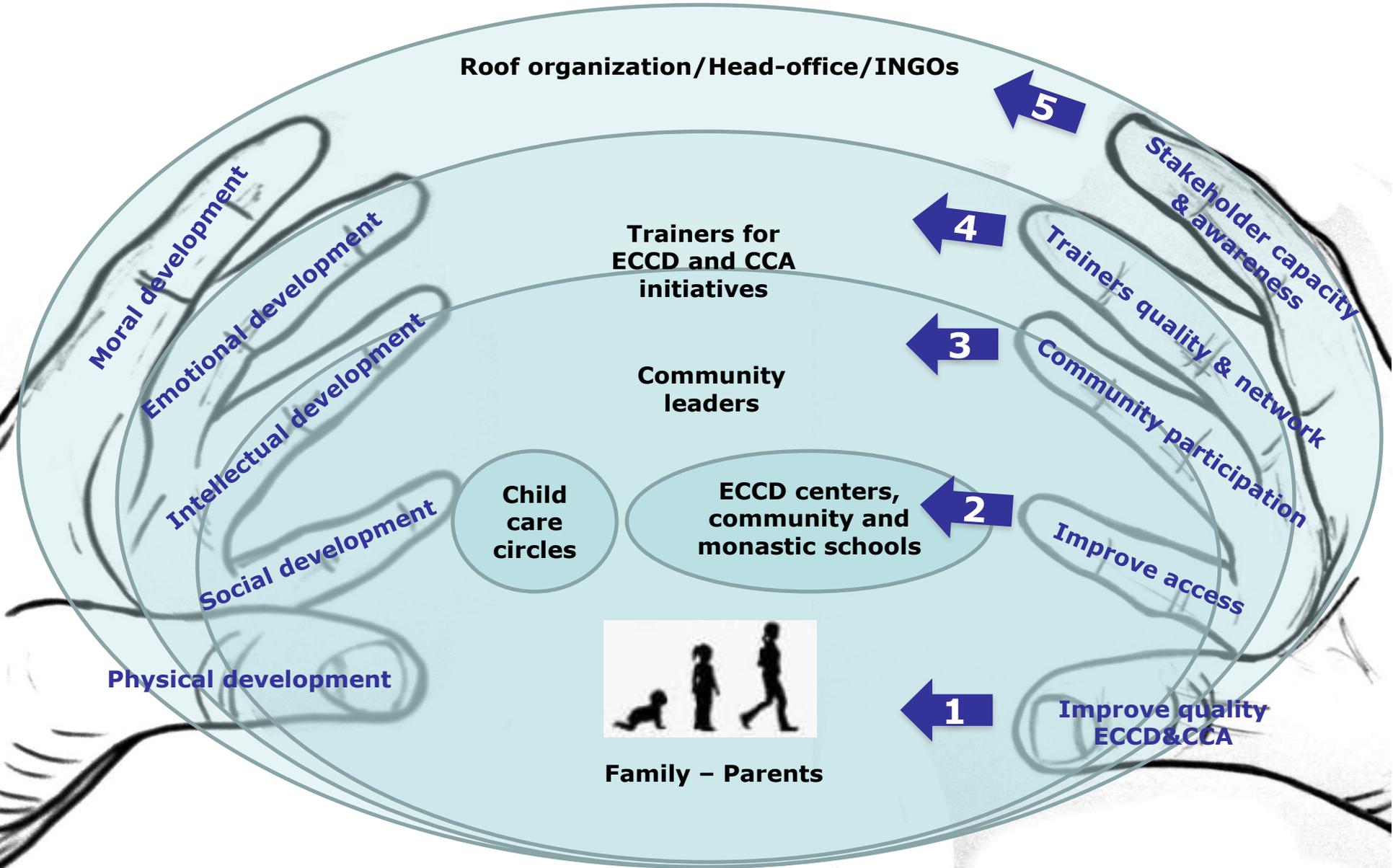
**Child
care
circles**

**ECCD centers,
community and
monastic schools**



Family – Parents

The Yinthway Approach – A systemic view

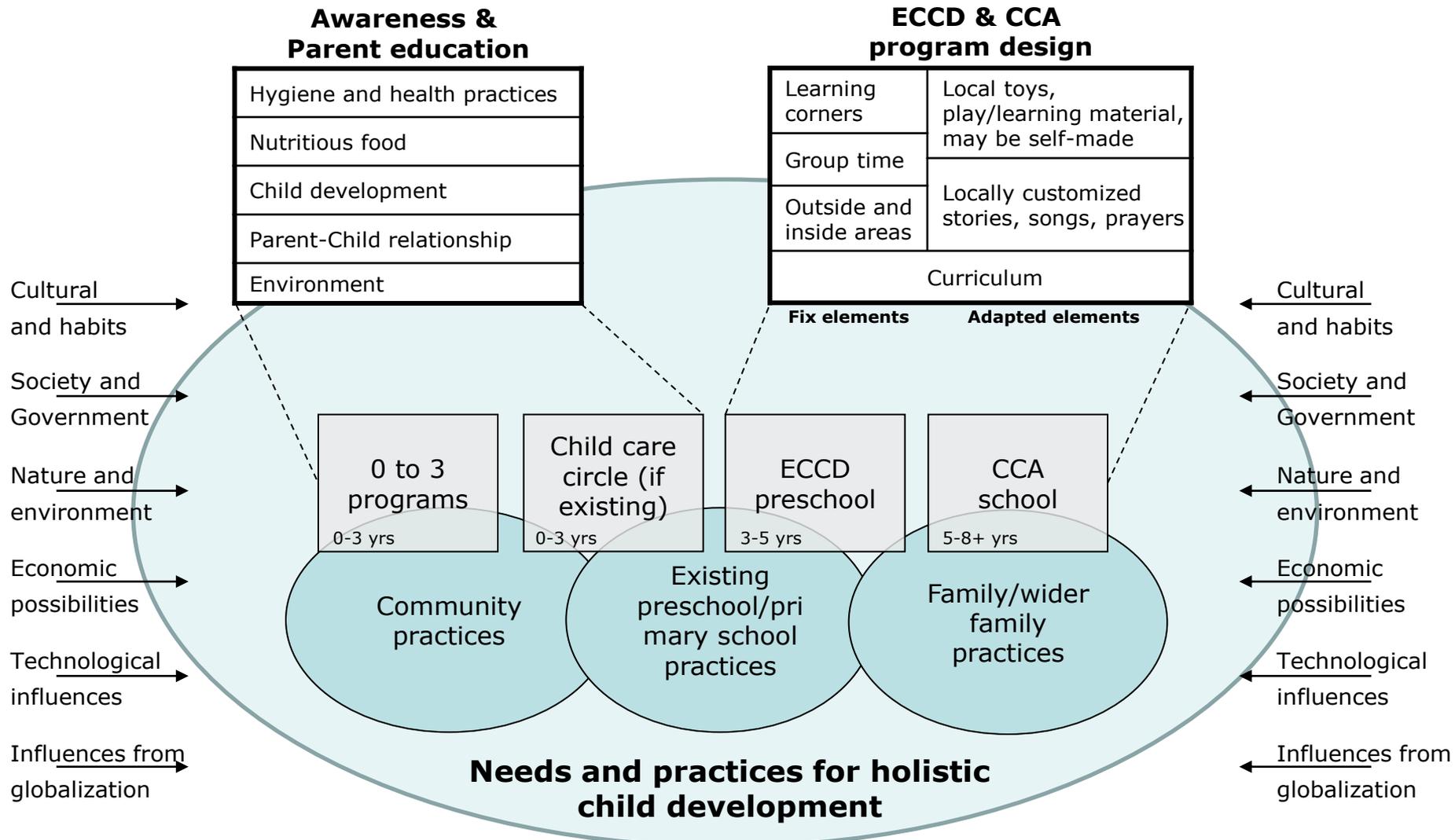


The Yinthway Approach to ECCD and CCA: a closer look



The Yinthway Approach to ECCD and CCA: a closer look

Good practices for caring for and educating young children result through tailoring a holistic child development approach to the regional culture and needs



5 levels of interventions and defined instruments (1/3)

Level	Instruments from YF
<p>1. Direct school level: improve quality of ECCD and CCA schools and action research</p>	<p>11. Develop smart teacher training (30d) and teacher refresher courses (5d)</p> <p>12. Conduct teacher training (30d) to improve quality of ECCD preschools, once a year mainly to non-associated (for instance private preschools) or loose yet self-initiative preschools. This has often been the entry door to convince the wider organization.</p> <p>13. Exchange on ECCD, follow-up and quality control: 2 regional conferences for selected teachers (5d)</p> <p>14. Finance follow-up visits of trainers to the schools, collecting also input for M&E (IN DEVELOPMENT)</p> <p>15. Develop model schools to improve CCA quality (action research): Select model schools, train them in CCA through 3 mini-workshops (5d, 3d, 3d), mentoring (2 weeks, 3 times a year), monitoring and improving</p> <p>16. Internal reflection workshops to improve quality of CCA and ECCD trainings and approach.</p> <p>17. Development of children's learning materials, books and posters in several languages</p>
<p>2. Improve access to good quality ECCD & CCA</p>	<p>21. Co-financing of teacher trainings</p> <p>22. Physical delivery of play/learning materials</p> <p>23. Fostering exchange and cross-learning through financing teacher exchange visits</p> <p>24. Help trainers to provide the trainings with occasional observation from YF staff</p> <p>25. Occasionally provide demonstrations on good learning/play material usage</p>
<p>3. Indirect level I: Enhance the participation of local communities to support ECCD through partner trainers certified by YF</p>	<p>31. Design smart community trainings (with input from senior trainers) to facilitate and educate the community, from various angles, in order to create an ECCD favorable community (so far only for communities that have or plan to have an ECCD preschool)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation seminar (4d) for <i>community leaders</i> to understand the essence of ECCD and what is needed to put an ECCD initiative into practice • Training for ECCD management committee members (4d) to understand their roles to support ECCD in their community • Toy making workshop (4d) for creative community members and ECCD teachers to produce local play/learning material • Parent education facilitators trainings (6d) for facilitators to support parents in understanding the needs and practices for holistic child development. IN REVIEW • Strengthening daycare circles through caregiver training (10d) to understand the ECCD needs and practices for children under the age of 3

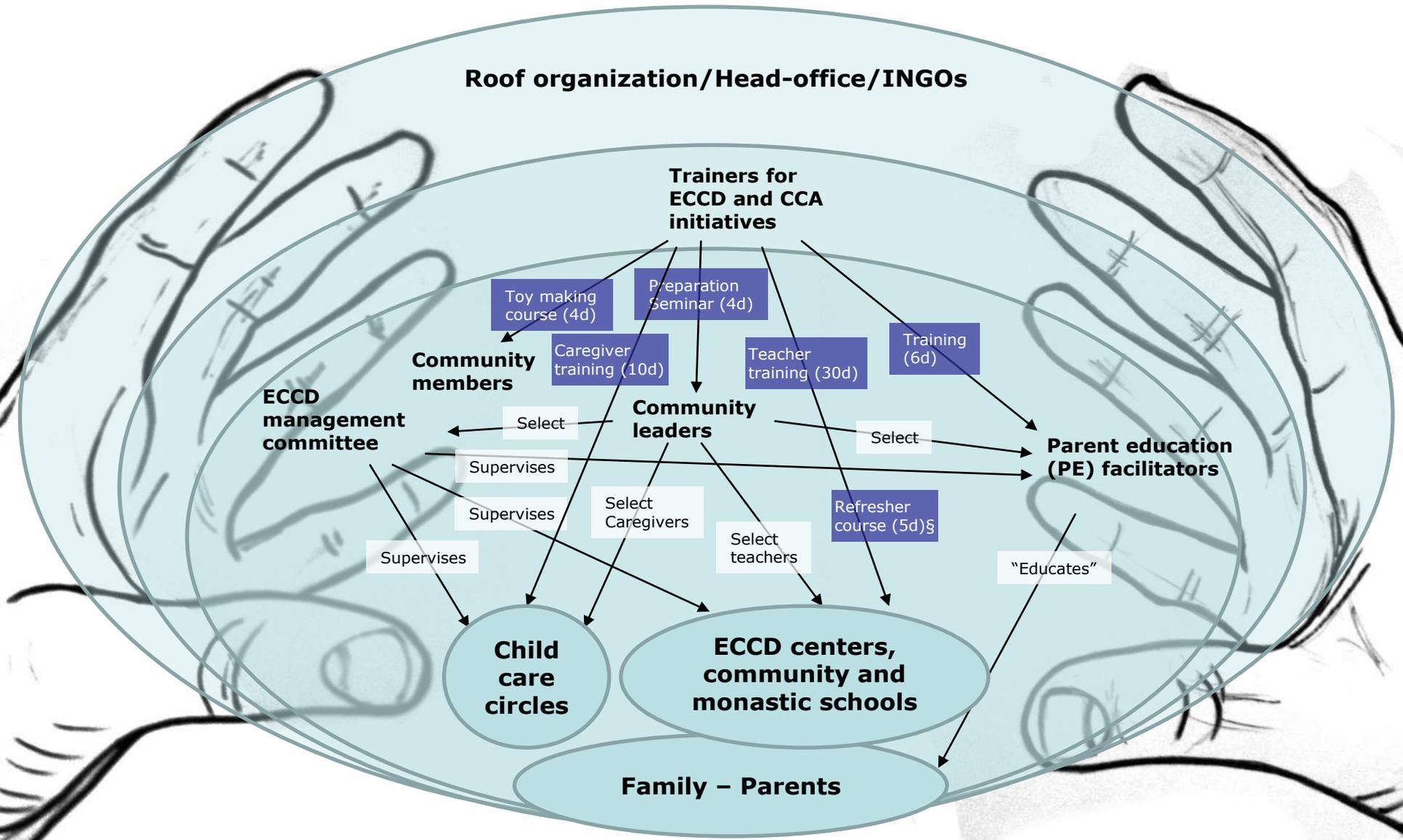
5 levels of interventions and defined instruments (2/3)

Level	Instruments from YF
<p>3. Indirect level I: (continued)</p>	<p>32. Co-financing of community trainings</p> <p>33. Co-financing of follow-up visits by trainers (for follow-up and monitoring)</p> <p>34. Monitoring and advocacy visits to communities by YF's own staff</p> <p>35. Optimizing community training designs with input from partner trainers and communities</p>
<p>4. Indirect level II:</p> <p>Build ECCD & CCA trainers and build a trainers network (= sustainable multiplication)</p>	<p>41. High quality ECCD trainer certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of trainers for ECCD teacher trainers (10d) • On the job training with senior trainers in all trainings created by YF (89d) • Reviewing workshop (incl. monitoring and reflection) and certification (3+d) <p>42. Organize network events for exchanging best practices, cross-learning and monitoring within ECCD & CCA trainer community: Yearly conference (6 days), plus capacity building workshop (4d) for trainers that receive financial assistance from YF</p> <p>43. High quality CCA trainer certification (IN DEVELOPMENT):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of trainers on CCA basics (20d, currently using designs by Unicef consultant, to be enhanced by YF) • CCA pedagogical skills (10d) for subject specific application <p>44. Continuously develop, action research and adapt the above smart ECCD & CCA training designs</p>

5 levels of interventions and defined instruments (3/3)

Level	Instruments from YF
<p>5.</p> <p>Indirect level III:</p> <p>Build capacity of stakeholders, create broader awareness for ECCD and CCA, serve as a resource center and advance research</p>	<p>51. Convince umbrella organizations (for instance roof organizations of faith based conventions), through understanding & accepting ECCD & CCA concepts, to invest in ECCD and CCA trainers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings with leaders (during field visits) for exchange and informal follow-up <li>• Establish partner agreement for the support and co-financing of ECCD and CCA trainings and workshops (trainers become ambassadors within their association) <li>• Network and coordinate between various partner organizations through strategy planning workshops (1d) <li>• Run workshops for organization executives (1d) on ECCD and CCA basics <p>52. Offer policy advice and expert input on ECCD and CCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal and informal policy advice <li>• Provide senior trainers to local NGOs and INGO programs for specific training <li>• Evaluations of local ECCD and CCA initiatives <li>• Input in other disciplines (health, children’s rights, nutrition, child protection) <p>53. Awareness creation and networking through conferences, meetings, workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run yearly national conference for trainers and stakeholders (6d, see above) <li>• Lead quarterly technical ECCD meetings (2d) <li>• Participate in inter-agency meetings (LRC, CBI, MNN - Myanmar NGO Network, APEC) <p>54. Provide ECCD toys and learning/play materials at various Yinthway resource centers, and advise local producers of children’s education toys to create ECCD & CCA appropriate toys</p> <p>55. Advance scientific research and university education on ECCD and CCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as external examiners of master level thesis’ <li>• Studies, research, evidence based studies <li>• Provide field study and thesis opportunities on ECCD and CCA for university-level research (investigating) <li>• Training for YF staff and networking <li>• Providing higher level early childhood and education materials in Myanmar language <p>56. Exceptionally: get involved in disaster relief work (Nargis cyclone in 2004)</p>

Detailed look at the community level



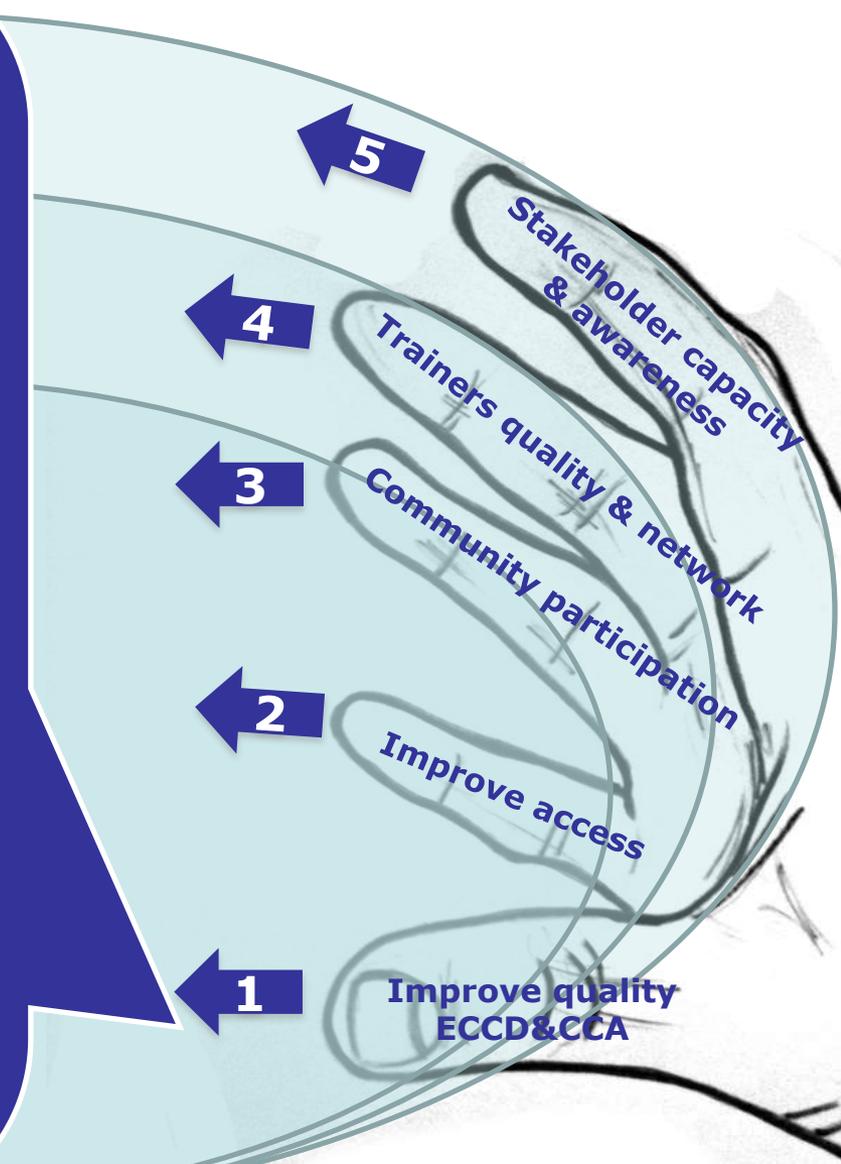
Success stories

Anecdotes on level 1: Children and preschools

Not only teacher training, but also initiatives by YF, such as supporting and organizing exchange visits between regions for teachers, improve the quality of preschools and also impact parents relationship with & care for their children.



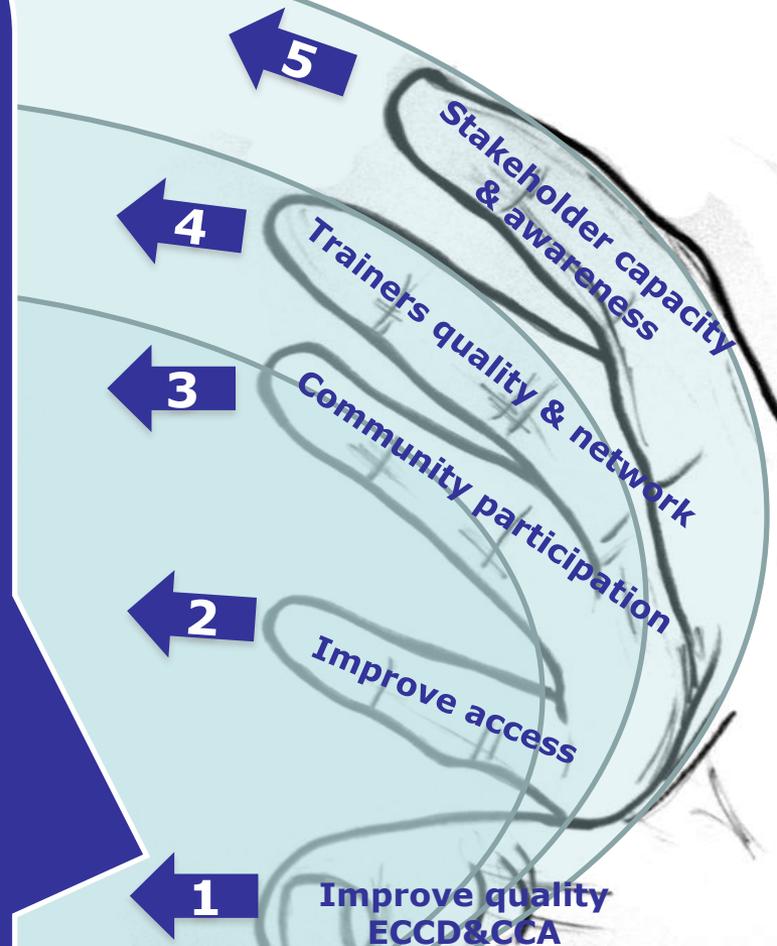
"We had a teacher exchange visit between our state & another state. I noticed a lot of difference between what we are doing and what they are doing. I was encouraged by actually seeing this and realizing that we can change. So, I have changed the inside learning corners, according to the needs & interests of the children. I also shared what I learned with our ECCD committee members. I also became aware of how to support parents to understand their children's needs. I have become very passionate about my work and would like to continue this until my very last breath!" (Daw Khawn San, Ahlekhone village, Kachin State)



Anecdotes on level 1: Children and preschools

When developing the training and workshop designs for ECCD and CCA programs, teachers and trainers from partner organizations participate and learn how to reflect on their own practice and experience, share that with others and, based on that, draw a training design that will achieve the outcomes they are aiming for.

"I haven't had the experience, as a community primary school teacher before, of being here at a workshop like this. Now, I am here to share my teaching and learning experiences about multi-grade teaching during my childhood life as well as a community school teacher. I got a chance to share how I taught mathematics to Grade 4 and Grade 5 students at the same time in my community school. Then, I learnt from others who shared the techniques they used in their school for multi-grade teaching. After that, we all drew together this multi-grade teaching training design outlines. I never imagined I could develop training designs for our monastic and community school teachers. This is an amazing dream for me!" (Monastic school teacher Daw Yinmar, Mawlamyingung Township)

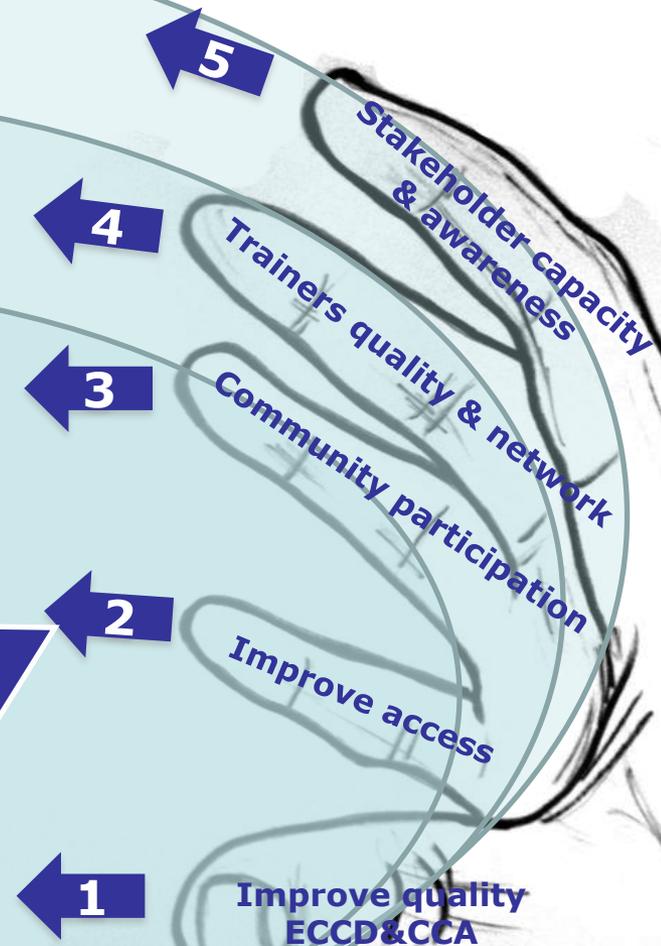


Anecdotes on level 2: Improved Access to ECCD and CCA

Remote communities have access to early childhood development & education initiatives through their organization's partnership with YF.



"Thank you so much for inviting me to this conference. I come from a very remote area in the north, far from the road, so no one ever visits us. There are 3 different militias fighting in our area & we always have to run into the hills so we don't get killed. But the children in the preschool feel secure as they know they will always come back to the preschool and I and the other teacher will be there. That is why I love my work, but I have never before had a chance to share my experiences or hear new ideas. So this conference is wonderful for me." (Preschool teacher attending regional teacher conference in Mandalay, 2006)

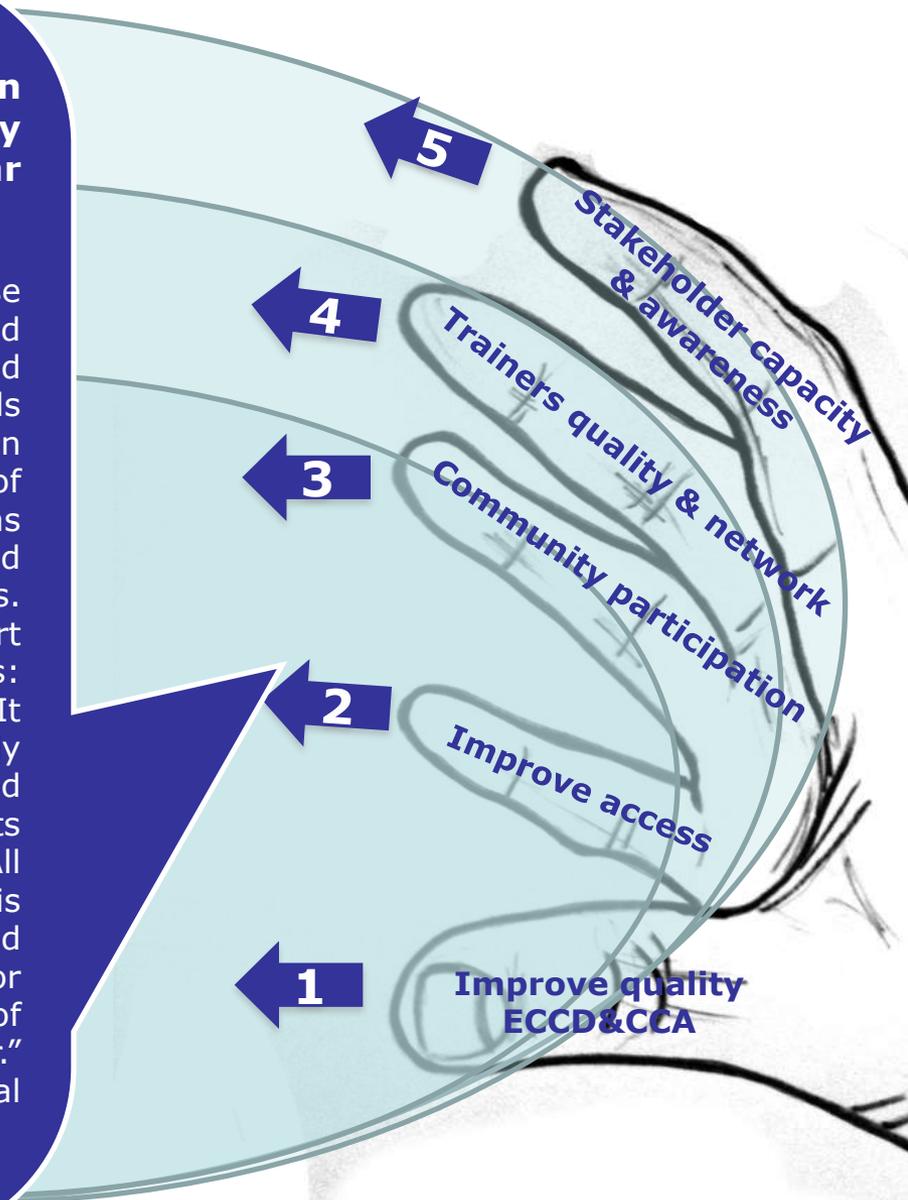


Anecdotes on level 2: Improved Access to ECCD and CCA

Because we at YF provide demonstrations on how to use good play/learning materials, story books and posters, more children in Myanmar access quality services from their teachers.



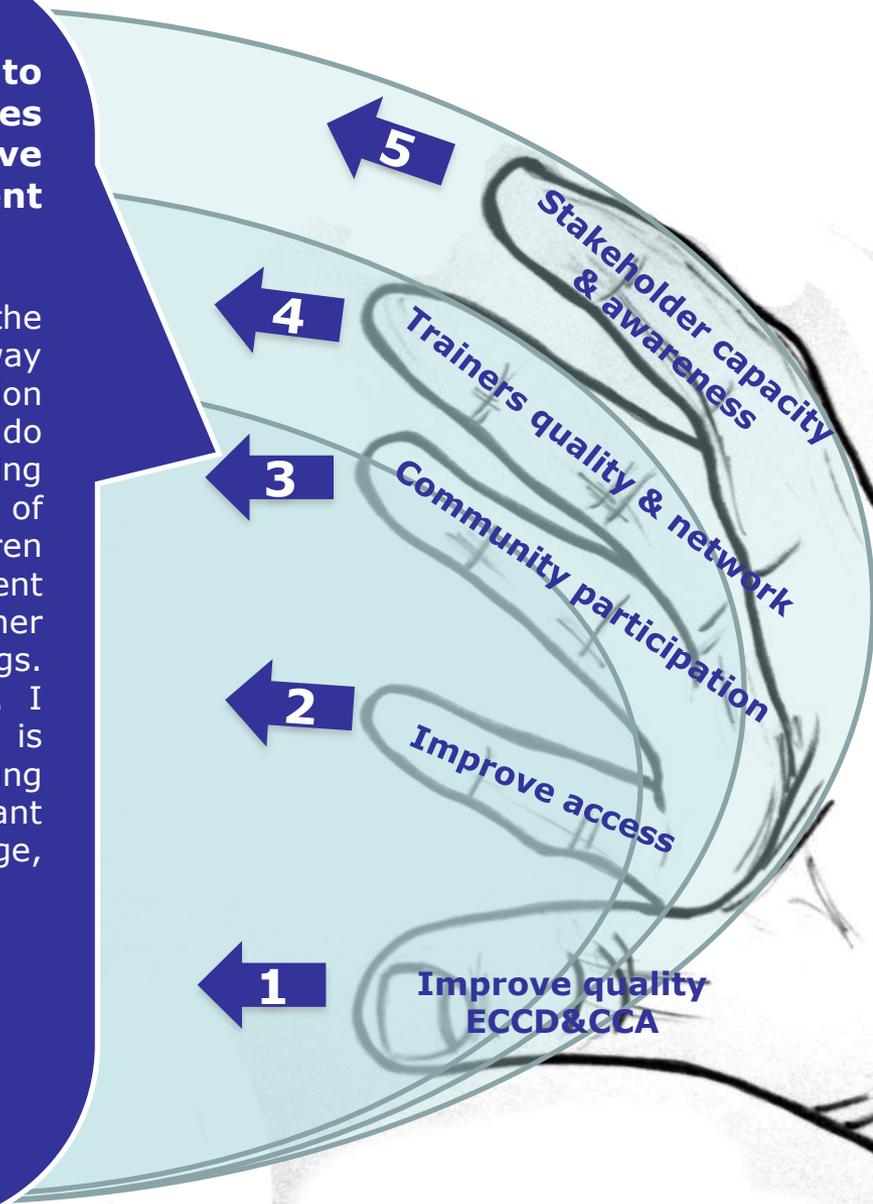
"That's very exciting to me. These participants are not our trained teachers. However, they received learning and play materials produced by Yinthway Foundation because of the assistance of one of the big donors in Myanmar. I as usual conduct several trainings and workshops for our partner trainers. Haven't provided such a short demonstration on our products: posters, story books and games. It is a short one, indeed. But, really effective ways to spread good practices for supporting the benefits of our Myanmar young children. All teachers who attended this demonstration gained good teaching learning approaches for young learners. This day is one of my happiest days in my career."
(Thin Ei Wai, CCA Technical Focal Person for YF)



Anecdotes on level 3: Community participation

Parent and community members are beginning to change in their child care practices and attitudes towards their ECCD programs due to the effective interventions of the trained community parent education facilitators.

“In our La Chaung village, altogether 6 villagers attended the parent education facilitator training supported by Yinthway Foundation. Each of them is now conducting parent education meetings every week in our village. Parents, including me, do not hit their children anymore. They give more time to caring for their children. We are getting a better understanding of how children develop. So, we are now caring for our children in some of the ways that we learned at these parent meetings. We are also sharing some of this ideas with other parents who haven't had a chance to attend these meetings. Before, we weren't aware of the importance of ECCD. I thought that contributing money to the ECCD preschool is wasting my cash. Now I realize that I'm supporting our young children to develop holistically develop at this very important stage in their lives.” (U Yain Paw, parent, La Chaung Village, Wimaw Township, Kachin State)

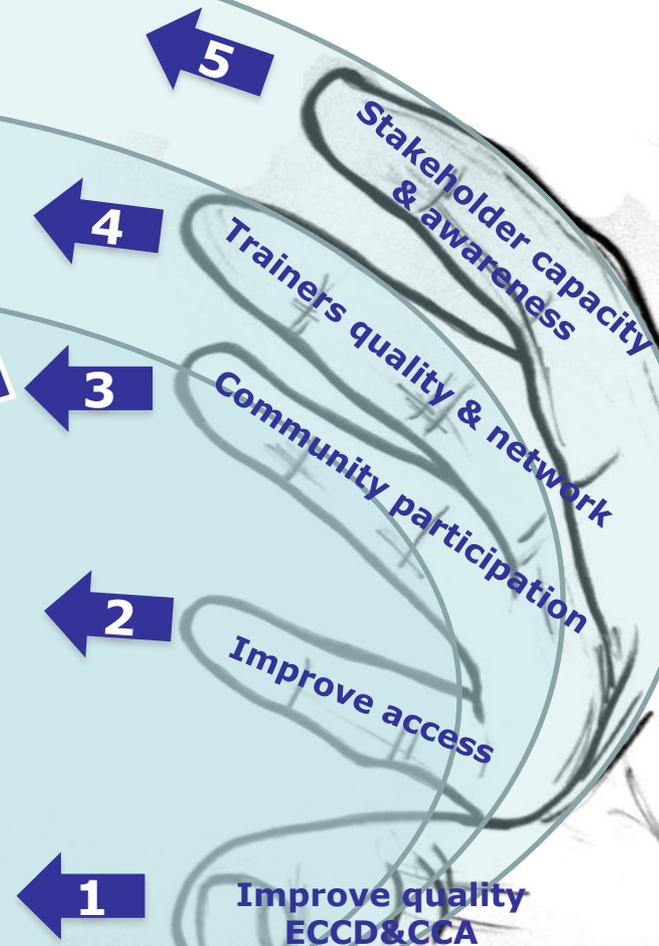


Anecdotes on level 3: Community participation

Communities take responsibility for their own ECCD program through seminars, workshops, & trainings for leaders, committee members, & parent educators.



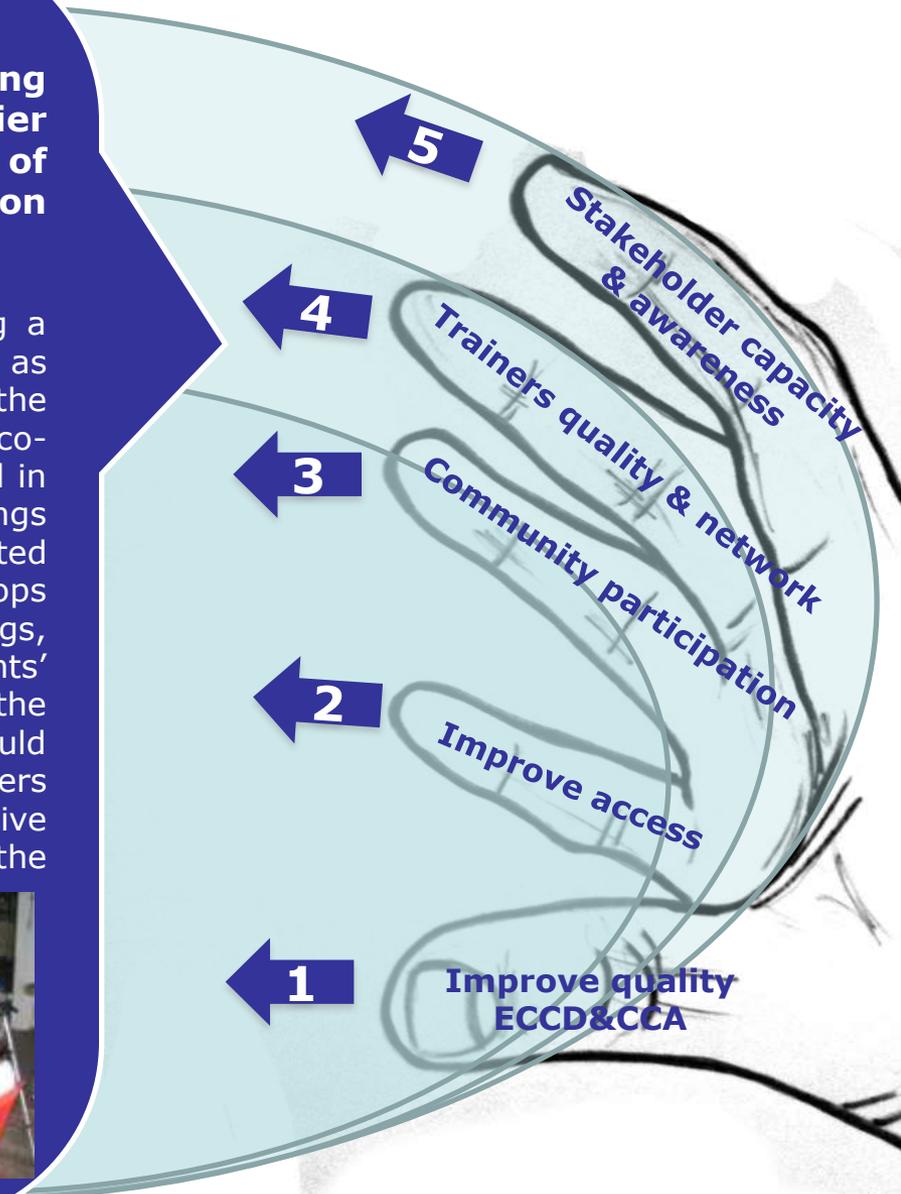
After receiving the ECCD management committee workshop, I led and organized the villagers to raise the funds & help construct our ECCD centre. All of the village ward leaders, board of trustees, youth leaders, ECCD preschool teachers, as well as parents actively participated. We discussed with the ECCD trainers and teachers how to construct the outdoor play equipment as well as the building itself. It is now well equipped. Besides that, parents and other community members have become friendlier and more cooperative with each other due to this ECCD centre. We take on the duties and responsibilities and have learned how to talk to others in order to help them understand. (U Eaike, Management Committee Member, Kawkami village, Kayah State)



Anecdotes on level 4: Trainers quality and network

Becoming confident trainers through attending TOT and refresher trainings, conducting multiplier trainings, having the support & assistance of experienced & capable trainers, and reflection meetings

"Now, this training is my sixth experience of conducting a CCA training. I now have knowledge, skills and confidence as a CCA trainer. After attending the TOT conducted by the UNICEF consultant, I shared what I learned to my co-teachers at the Salay Monastic school. Then, I participated in several subject matter skill trainings and refresher trainings conducted by Yinthway Foundation. Now I have conducted community primary school teacher trainings and workshops for community leaders. While conducting these trainings, experienced trainers helped me to observe participants' feelings and concentration on the topics discussed, to ask the participants probing and open ended questions so they could learn to think more critically, etc. Every afternoon, trainers have a reflection meeting to review the training and give feedback to each other in order to insure the quality of the training. Now I feel confident that I am a capable trainer for our CCA program." (Hnim Hnim Htwe, CCA trainer, Salay Monastic School, Mandalay)



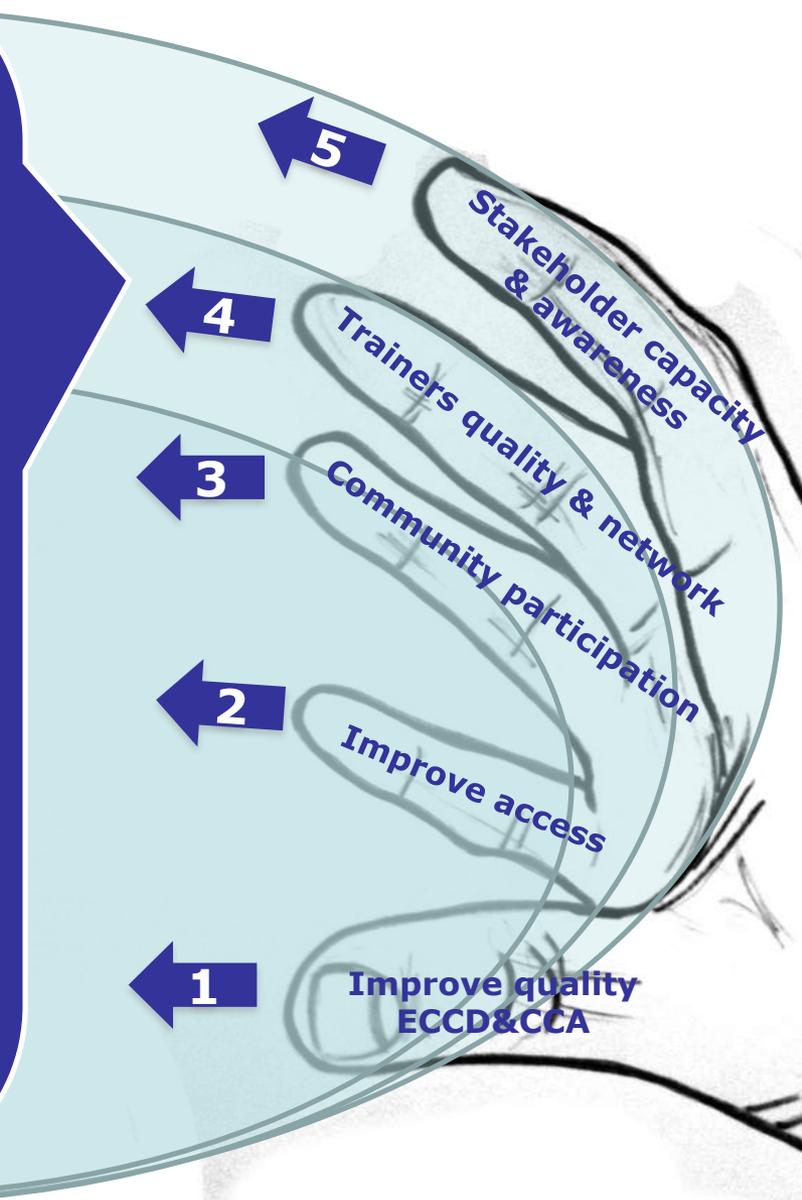
Anecdotes on level 4: Trainers quality and network

The results of the initial TOT, followed by on the job training and mentoring by senior trainers in different regions, are capable & qualified new trainers as well as the development of a 'community of trainers' in the country.

I attended the training of trainers for new ECCD trainers in 2008-2009. I am from the Falam Chin ethnic group in Kalay Myo and am now conducting various trainings and workshops for the Falam. Because I'm still not very experienced, I have been travelling with senior trainers to the field. With these trainers as my mentors, I have learned to help communities to improve the quality of their ECCD centers. We met parents, ECCD management committee members, and community leaders and had meetings with them. I gained many experiences in how to organize and mobilize communities to support a successful ECCD program. I am using these experiences to help me improve my training skills. Also, as a trainer, I attend Yinthway Foundation's annual ECCD conference, where I not only have learned how to write proposals and reports, but have also shared experiences with trainers from many parts of Myanmar and from difference kinds of organizations.

All of this has enabled me to become a confident and competent trainer, so I am very happy and satisfied with my job.

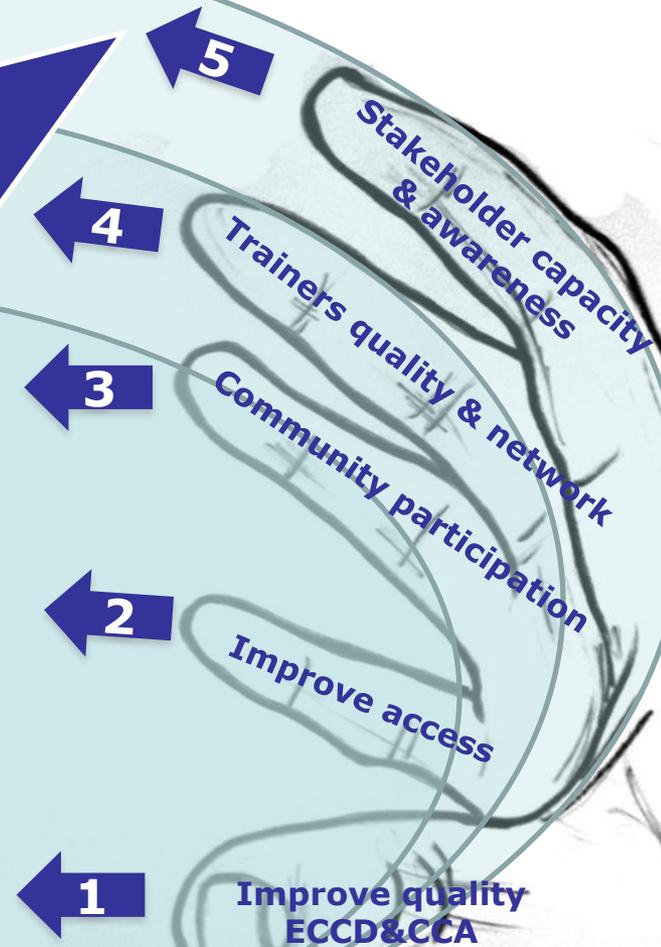
(Myo Myo Htay, Falam Chin Trainer from Kalay Myo)



Anecdotes on level 5: stakeholder and awareness

Religious leaders and community leaders are willing to support and co-finance their ECCD and CCA programs after realizing the basic concepts of child development and how important developmentally appropriate practices are for children's future.

"I am so glad to attend the child centered approach awareness training. To me, as a monk, it is a very new experience to participate in such a wonderful training as this. Before I hadn't understood how children learn from their environment. Also, I now know how to support primary school children to develop to their full potential. I am very grateful for the trainers who conducted this awareness training and I really welcome the child centered approach trainings for my school teachers and committee members. If possible, I would like to join again in similar trainings for our children." (Monk In- Charge, Wayluwann Monastic school, Tagyum Township, Shan State)



Anecdotes on level 5: stakeholder and awareness

National level leaders are becoming advocates themselves for the need of ECCD and CCA, when they see changes through successful ECCD programs in their organizations

"I requested to be appointed to this post because I believe that an ECCD program is very crucial in order to develop a community. While working in this ECCD field, I noticed that communities which had participated in the various trainings - preparatory seminar for leaders, parent education training, management committee training, & preschool teacher training - were very successful. Therefore I plan to encourage all of the church communities to participate in this way".
(Religious Ed. Director of the Pwo Kayin Baptist Convention)

