



Department of Elementary Education
National Council of Educational Research and Training
Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016

National Consultation Meet on Sustainability in Context of Early Childhood Education

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*If you are thinking a year ahead, plant a seed.
If you are thinking a decade ahead, plant a tree.
If you are thinking a century ahead, educate the people.
(Chinese proverb)*



Quality Early Childhood Education is one of the goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 4.1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys receive equal treatment by going through the full cycle of free and quality primary and secondary education, leading to a genuinely useful learning, and 4.2: By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to development activities and early childhood care and quality preschool education which prepare them for primary education. Early Childhood Education (ECE) and education for sustainability - is finally beginning to be accepted as an active new field of interest. The early childhood years are the period of the greatest and most significant developments in a person's life and are generally regarded as the foundation upon which the rest of their life is constructed (Mustard, 2000; Rutter, 2002). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) affirms that all children have a right to education and Early Childhood Education has a role to play in constructing a sustainable society. It is in early childhood years that children often experience the greatest environmental challenges, and it is a time when the foundations of many of their fundamental attitudes and values are first put into place. While playing and learning in nature remains highly valued, this newer conceptualisation refers to a transformative early childhood education that values, encourages and supports children as problem-seekers, problem-solvers and action-takers around sustainability issues related to their own lives.

ECE centres have to be properly monitored for quality improvement. Unless pre-primary education is effective, it may be hard to achieve quality learning outcomes at a later stage (India ECE impact study, conducted by CECED, Ambedkar University). Quality ECE

