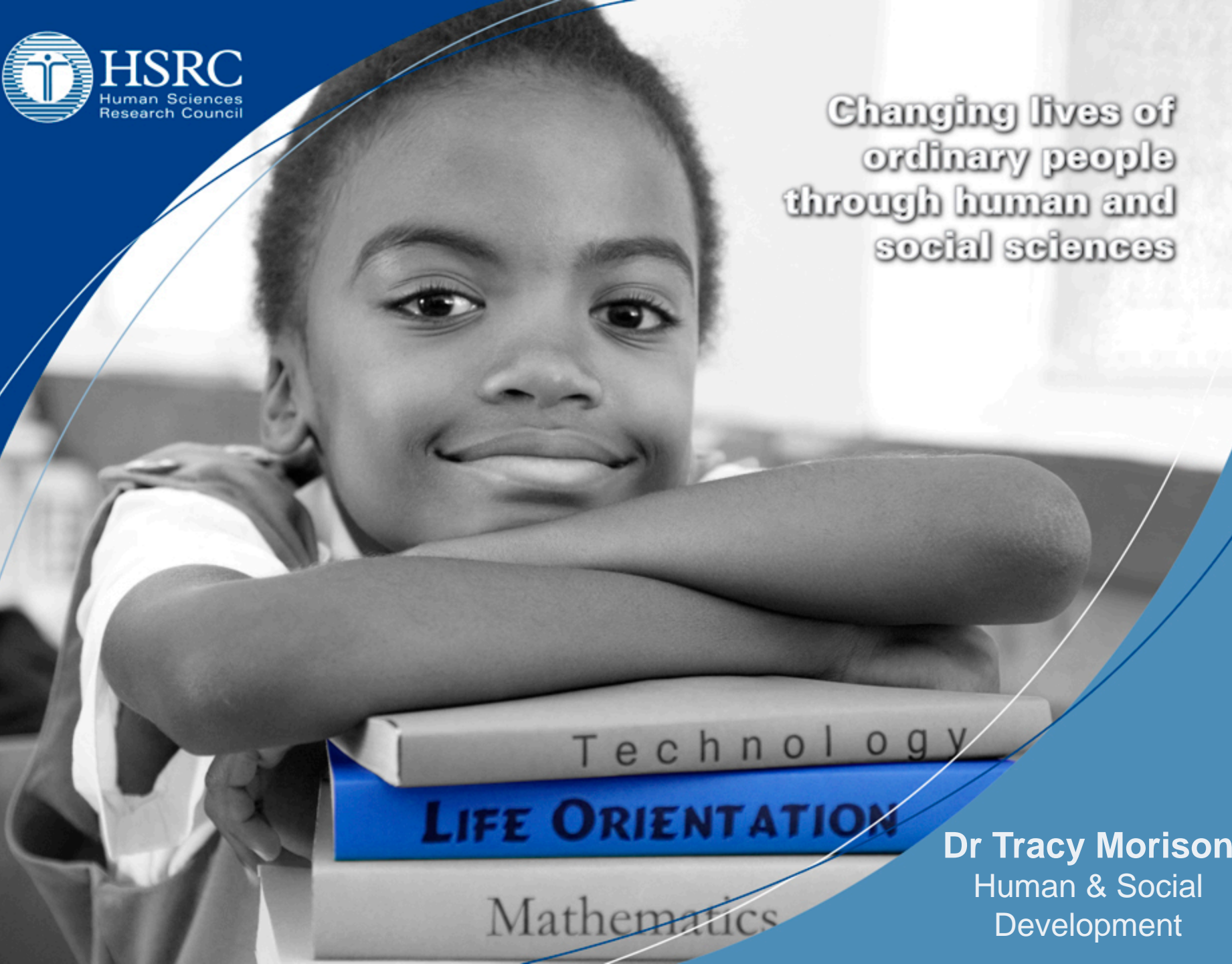


**Changing lives of  
ordinary people  
through human and  
social sciences**



**Dr Tracy Morison**  
Human & Social  
Development

# **The status of South African Early Childhood Development (ECD) services: Work by the HSRC**

SALGA  
Roundtable,  
Pretoria

# Aims

- 1. Conceptual issues**
- 2. The Value of ECD**
- 3. Background**
  - a) ECD research by HSRC
  - b) Zooming in on under-fives
- 4. Coverage, access & use**
- 5. Service quality**
- 6. Monitoring**
- 7. Recommendations: Lessons from SA**

# ECD: Conceptual Issues

- **Ecological view of ECD** – physical, moral, spiritual, emotional mental and social development from birth – 9 years
- **ECD services**
- The **significance** of ECD:  
A wellbeing perspective vs.  
a human capital approach





# Background: Research

- The HSRC is a body set up by parliament to assist policy development through research that provides evidence
- Since 2007 HSRC:
  - ECD research focusing on children under 5 years
  - Leading a research project to *Scaling Up of Quality ECD (0-4) Services*

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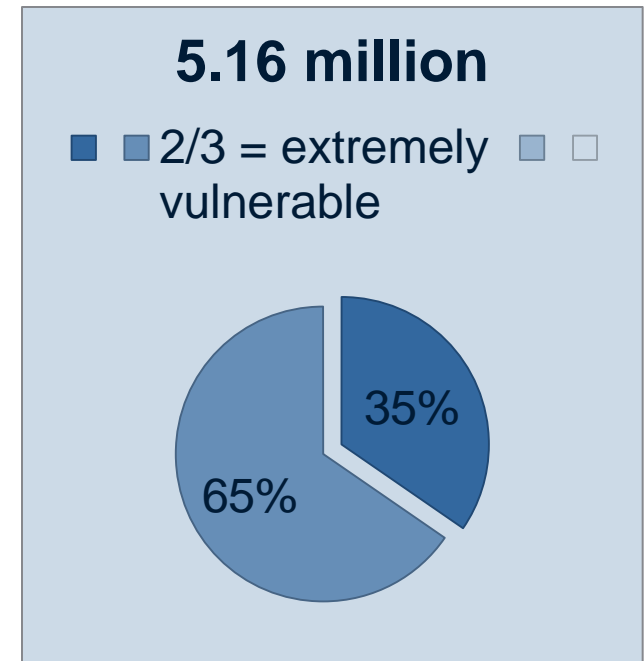


# Background: Research

- Early Childhood Development policy and child profile (0-4 year olds) in South Africa: A summary of policies and services.
- Review of current Early Childhood Development service delivery in South Africa, including a government indicators and monitoring system, education and training in the ECD sector, current delivery models, and the approach of government budgeting towards ECD.
- Innovations to inform improved Early Childhood Development outcomes, scaling and job creation.
- Identification of potential innovations that could be tested to rapidly scale-up quality ECD (0-4) services.
- A review of income and expenditure in 21 ECD sites in the Western Cape.
- Evaluation of EPWP phase 1

# Background: Zooming in on under-fives

- Poverty: 65%
- Disability: 20 000
- Chronic illness + HIV/AIDS: 4%
- Orphaned: 21%
- Abuse: 56 539 (nearly ½ sexual)
- Stunted/underweight: 1 in 4
- Mortality:
  - 43 per 1000 before 1 yr.
  - 62 per 1000 before 5 yrs.



# Background: Need for ECD for under-fives

- under age 5 ECD is a major service delivery gap
- Majority of 0 – 5 year-olds not in any ECD service
- Attendance inversely proportional to age – skewed to older children
- Services for under-fives usually community-based or NGOs – variable quality & access levels
- Lack of government funding







# Coverage, access, & use

- Public funding – lacking & differential
- Access to services skewed by
  - Age
  - Class/Geography
  - Race
- Children with disabilities are excluded

# Service quality

Variable quality of services

- Worst off 'Black' & 'Coloured' living in KZN, EC, Limpopo
- Poor quality may increase risks
- Factors associated with positive outcomes
  - Accessibility, safety, & standard of facility infrastructure
  - Learning materials used
  - Practitioner/caregiver training, supervision, & motivation
  - Varied curriculum, holistic care
  - High adult/child ratios
  - Parent & community participation
  - Sustainable management & financing



# Children to practitioner ratios

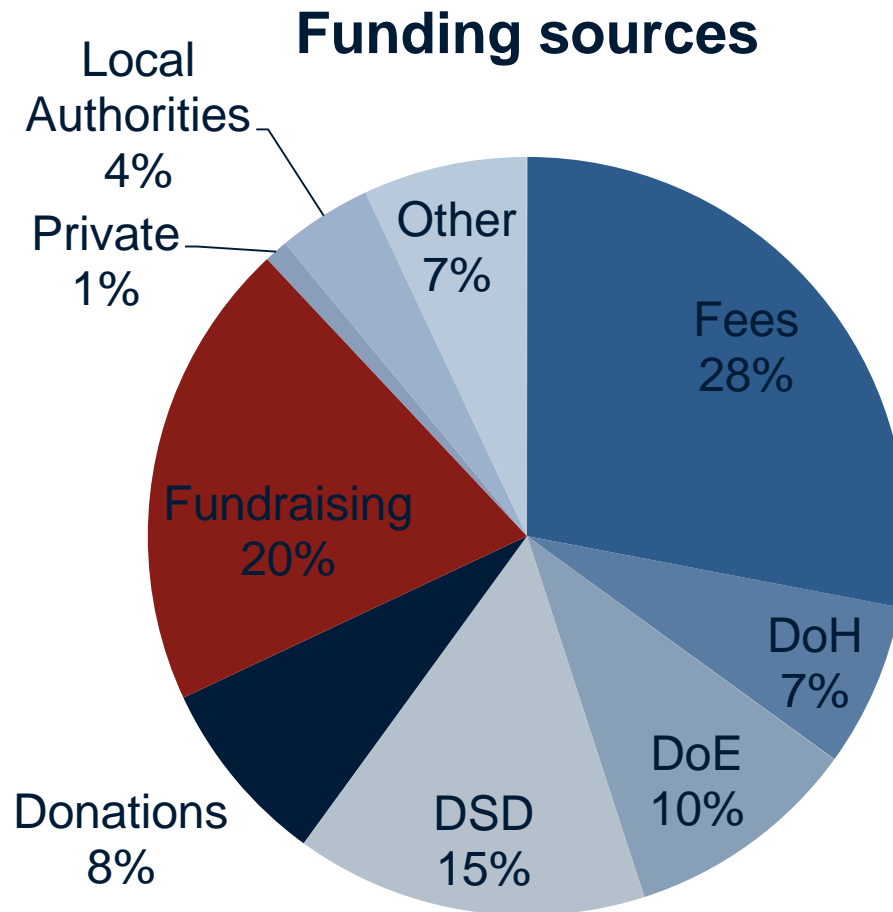
Child age	Practitioner : child ratios
0 – 18 mo	1:6
18 mo – 3y	1:12
3 – 4 y	1:20
4 – 5 y	1:20
Grade R	1:30

Motala, 2009

Audits: Nation-wide ECD audit findings (DoE, 2001) & Audit of W.Cape ECD facility quality (Makoae, 2010)

Expanding early childhood development services: Labour market challenges (Altman, 2008)

# Funding



Source: Biersteker, 2001

# Limited reach of government funding for ECD centres

Province	Children subsidised	% of poor children subsidised
EC	59 940	3
FS	28 558	13
G	21 117	6
KZN	59 000	8
L	56 223	10
MPA	35 095	10
NC	12 600	23
NW	15 165	5
WC	44 655	24
<b>RSA</b>	<b>332 353</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Motala, 2009



# Monitoring

- Important to track
  - Extent of service provision
  - Inequities in service provision & access
  - Variable quality of ECD services
- Indicators
  - Coverage, access, & use
  - Programme quality
  - Political will (policy & financing)
  - Costs & expenditures
  - Status of/effects on children



# Lessons from SA & abroad on quality ECD



- **Begin early**
- **Integration**
  - Clarification of roles
  - Budgetary commitment
  - Joint programmes
- **Continuum of programmes**
- **Advocacy & communication**
  - Politicians, officials
  - Primary carers
  - Wider public
- **Collaboration**
- Lower child/caregiver **ratios** & smaller group sizes
- **Training** and supervision

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