



**ECD Census 2021**

because children count

# The South African ECD Census

Building data and systems for Early Learning

Dr Nicholas Dowdall, LEGO Foundation



Social Development  
Basic Education

The **LEGO** Foundation



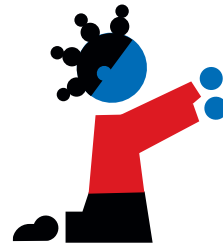
Read to Lead  
A Reading Nation is a Leading Nation



# BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE



# Proposed ECD Function Shift



 **social development**  
Department:  
Social Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ECD



**basic education**  
Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



2019

2022



# Need for comprehensive data

- In 2013 DSD conducted an Audit of ECD provisioning, services, staffing, resources, governance and infrastructure across the country.
- Since then, various initiatives were introduced to improve the quality of ECD including:
  - Adoption of the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy
  - Roll-out of the National Curriculum Framework for Birth to Four-Year-olds
- No accurate sense of size of the sector – estimates ranged between 18,000 – 40,000
- There was no masterlist, no Education Management Information System and no unique identifiers for ECD programmes



# Purpose of the Census

Locate and map out all ECD programmes in SA

Develop a national Masterlist of programmes and ultimately an EMIS for ECD



DATA COLLECTION



# No Ward Left Behind

For every ward (over 4000), enumerators had access to addresses and contact details of:

- “Known” Early Learning Programmes
- DSD district officials
- Ward councillors
- ECD networks

ikapadata

93%

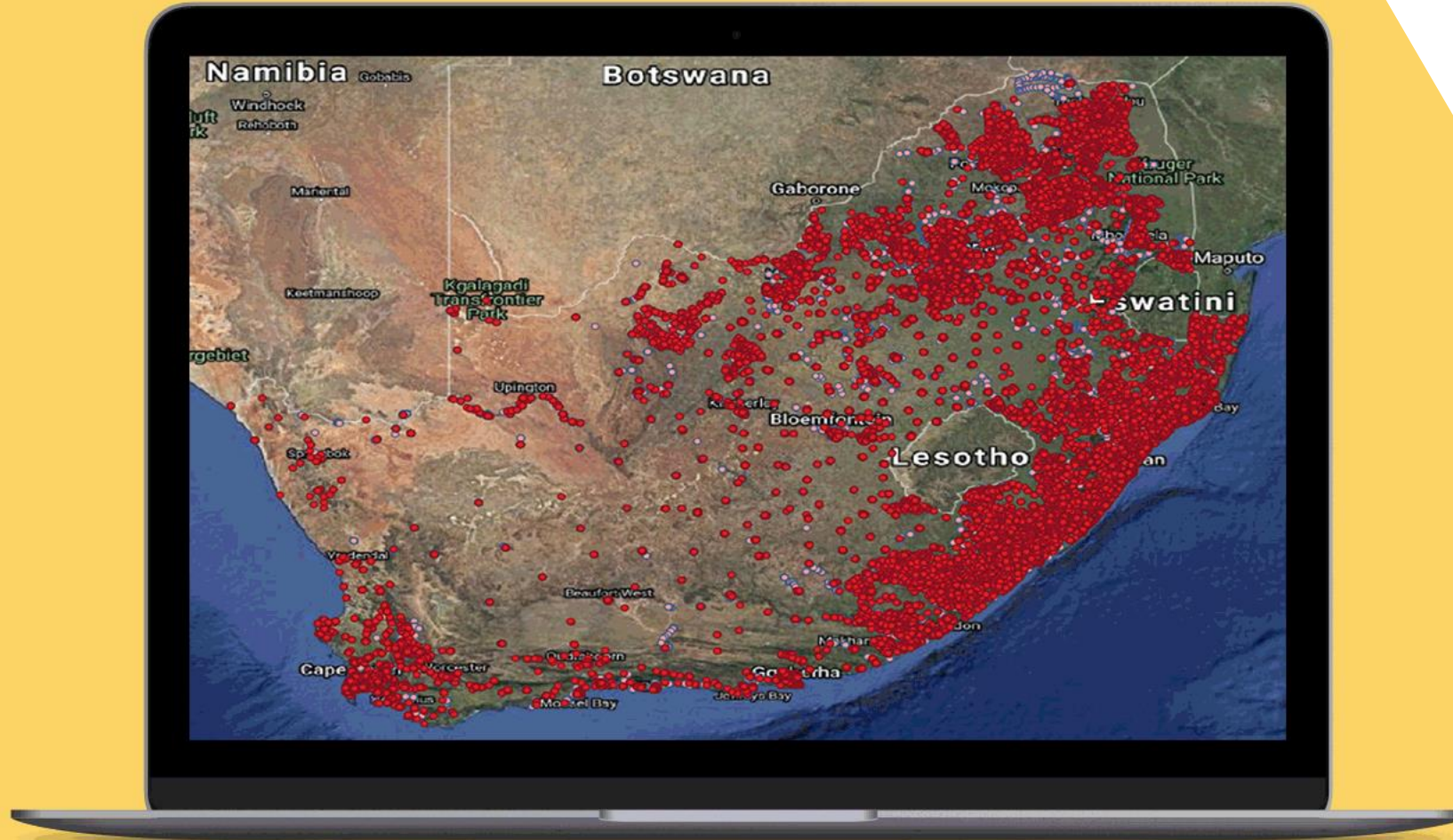
On more than one day

240,000

GPS locations captured











# Data Collection & Quality Control

**Data collection:** August 2021 – March 2022

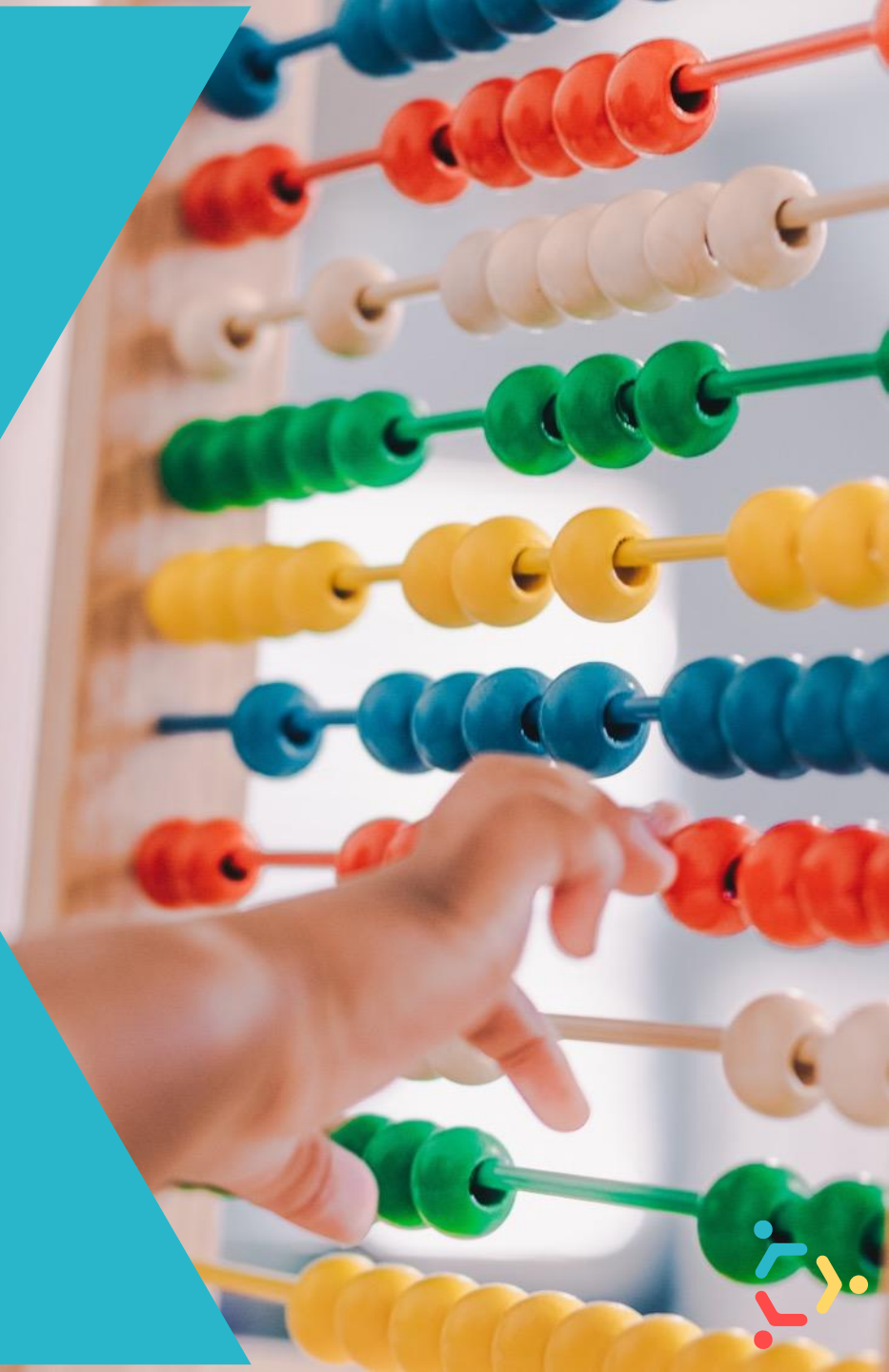
**Mobile data capture** on tablets

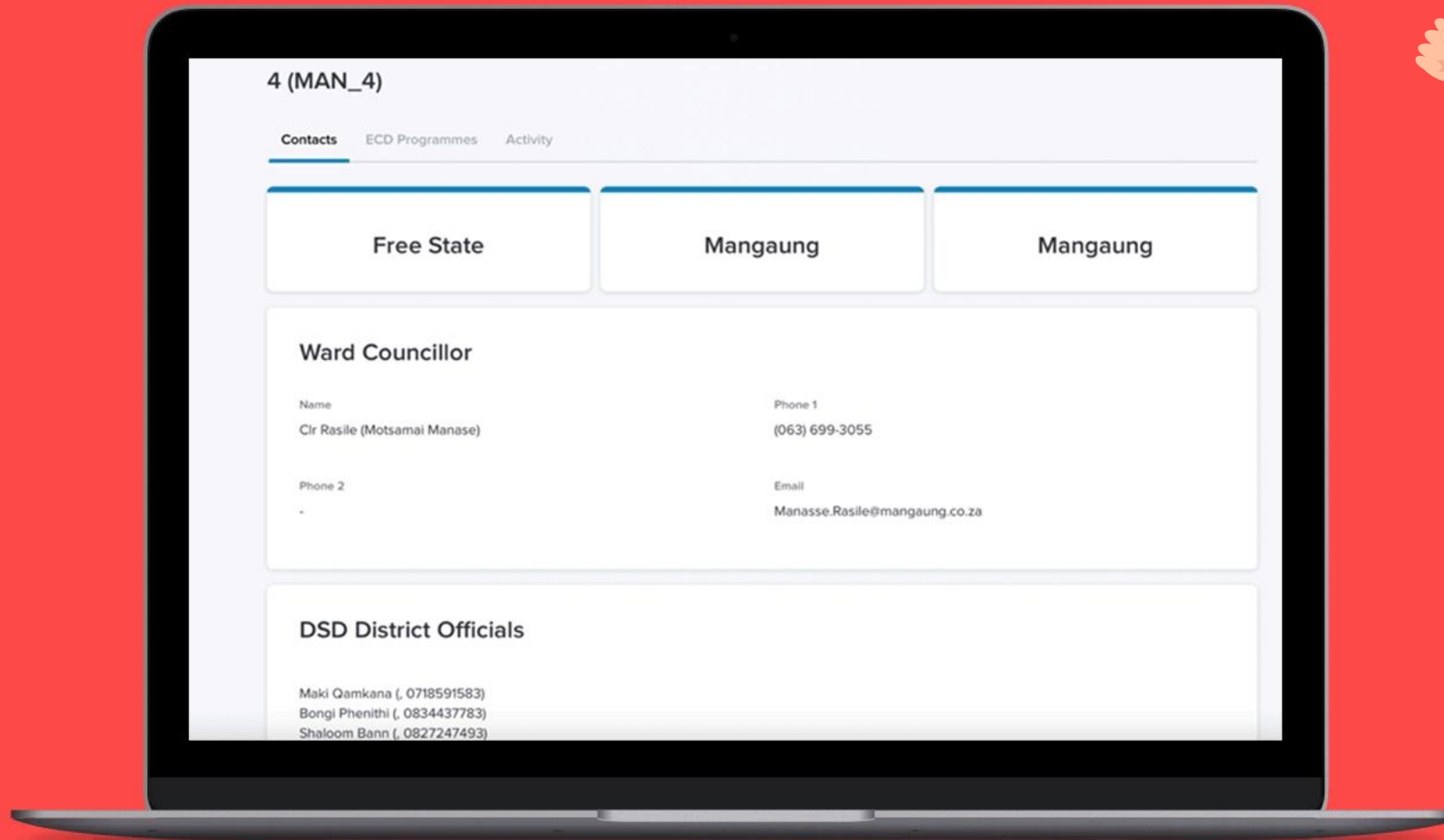
Dedicated online **fieldwork portal**

Online **dashboard** for progress tracking and preliminary results

**Real-time data checks** and alerts (Slack)

**Ward completion protocol:** maps and data check by office staff before move to next ward





# Coverage





42,420

PROGRAMS COUNTED

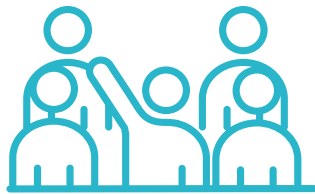


# Enrolment & Attendance



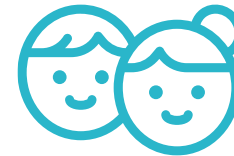
Enrolment

**1,660,317**



Usual Attendance

**1,476,536**



Ave. Children  
per Programme

**39.1**



Ave. Staff per  
Programme

**4.7**



Staff Count

**198,361**



# Key Results





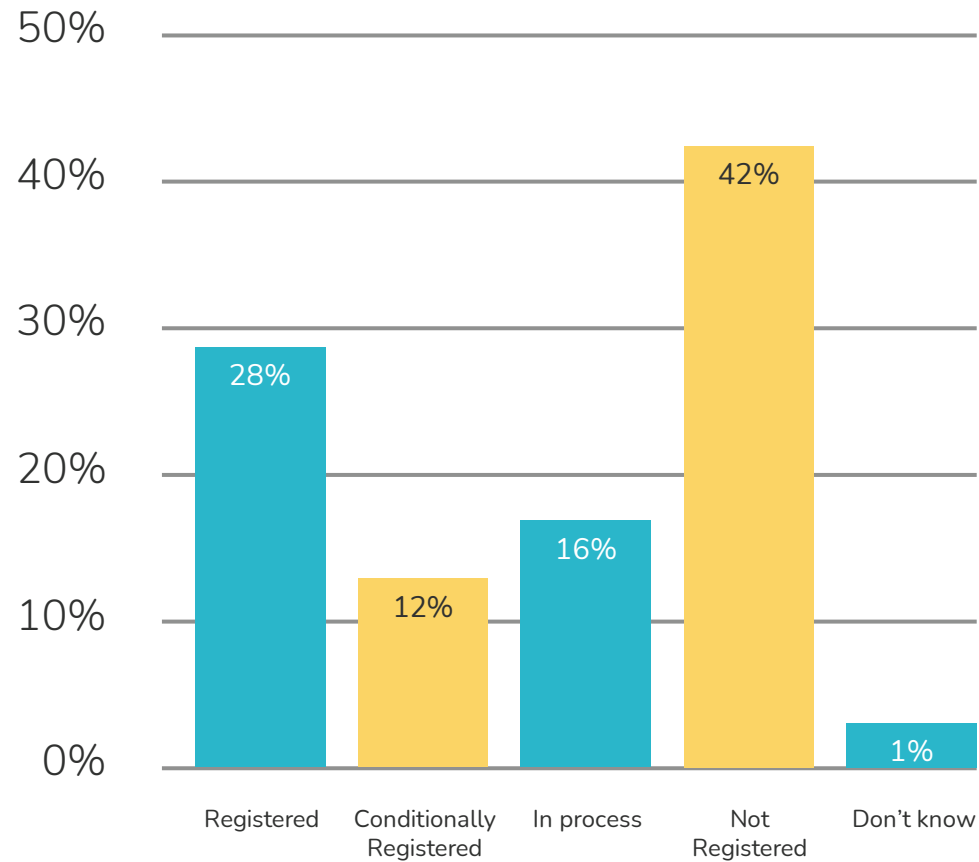


# R509

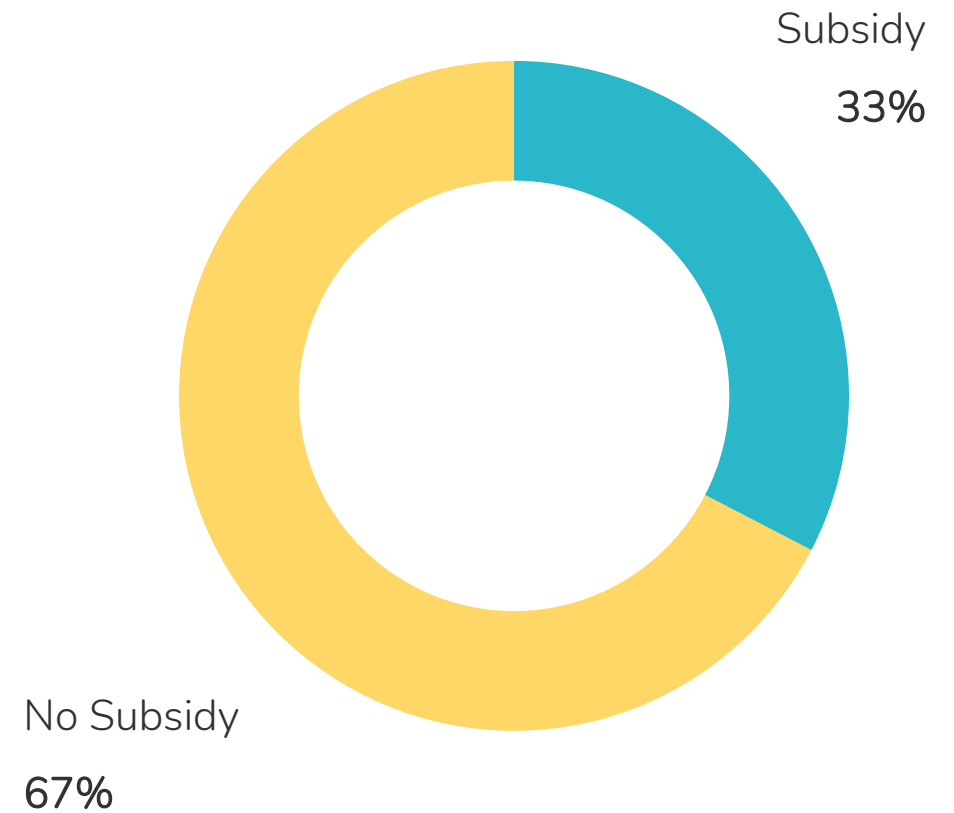
MEAN MONTHLY FEES  
AMOUNT (MAXIMUM)



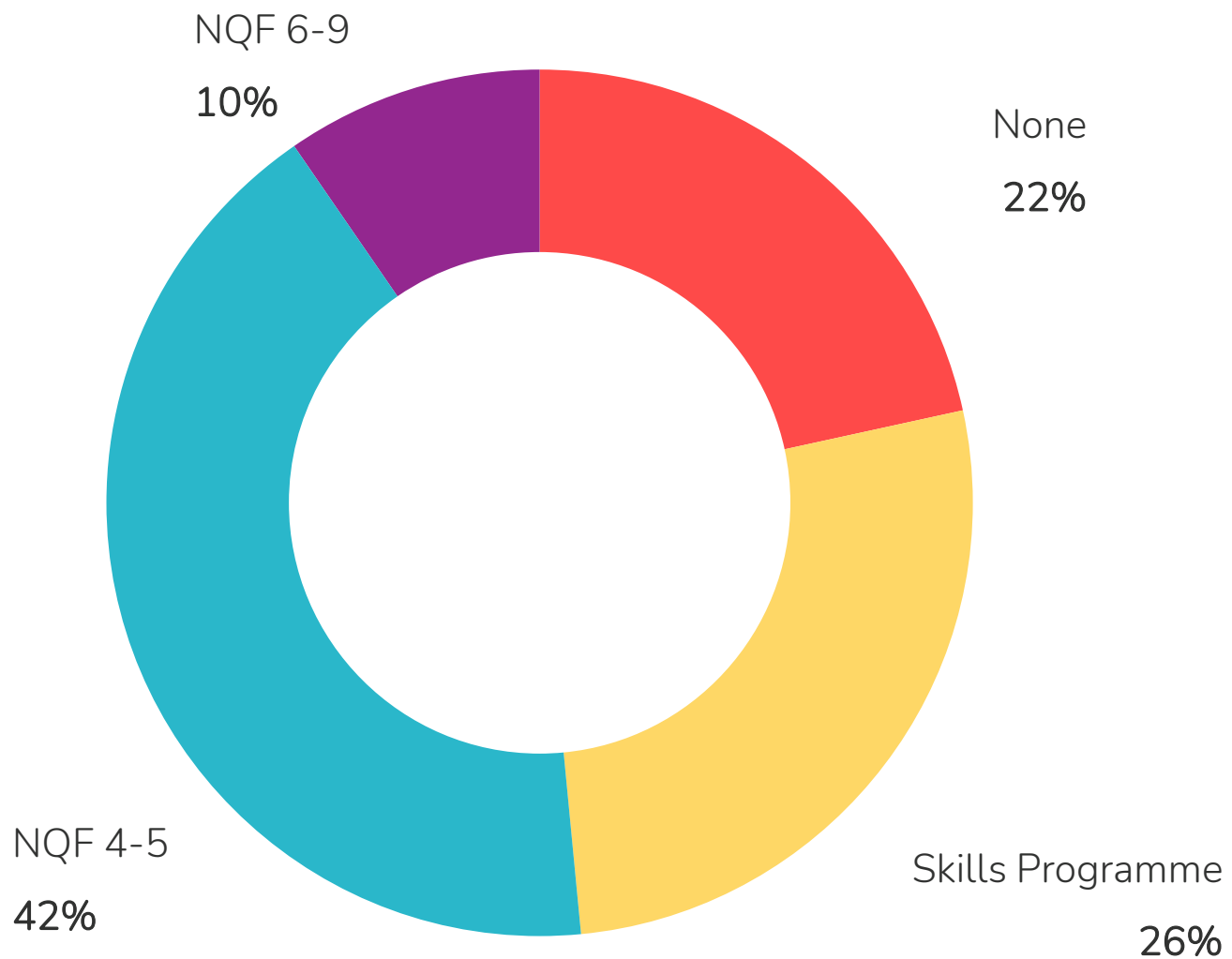
# Registration with DSD



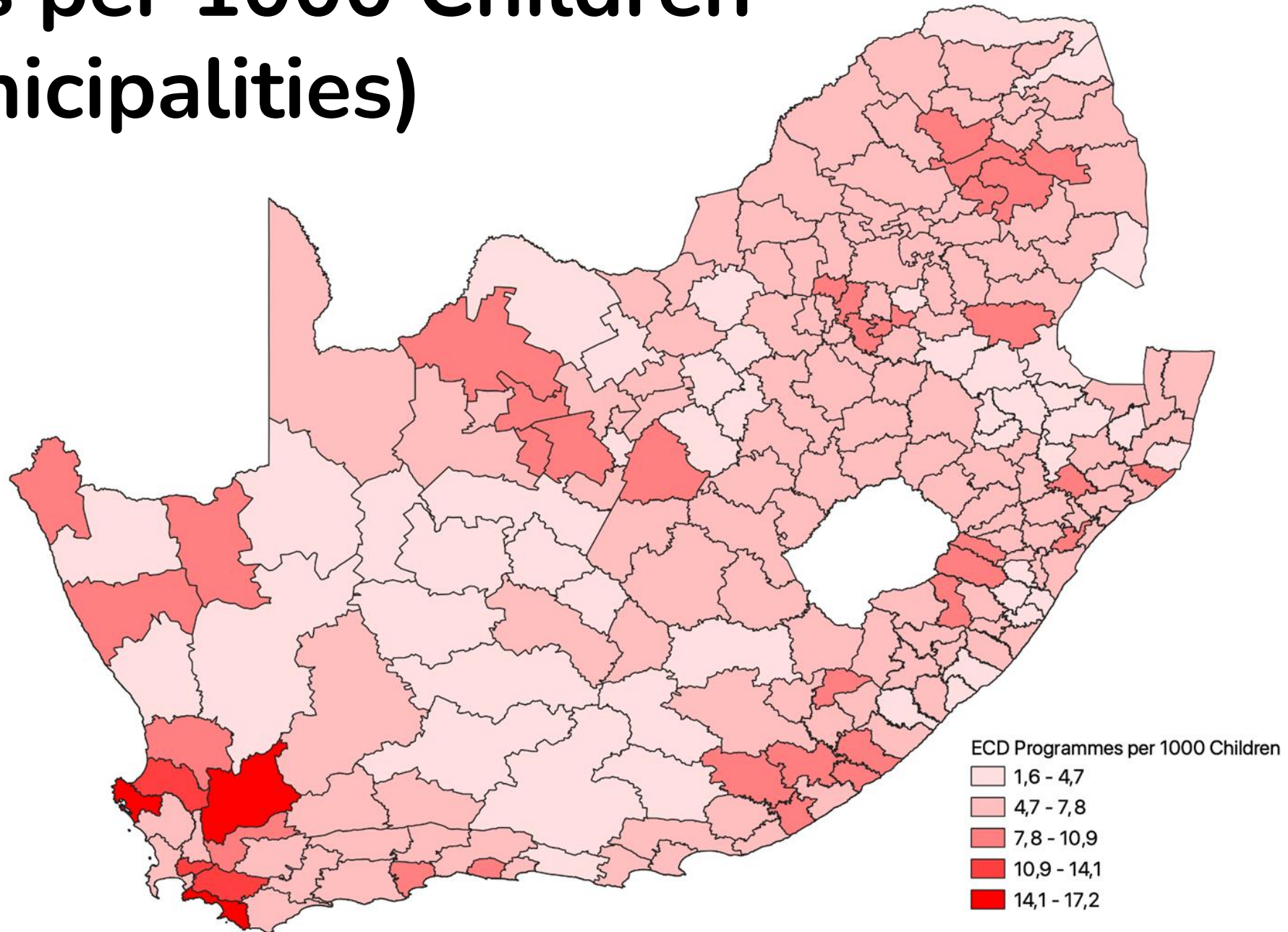
# ELPs Receiving DSD Subsidy



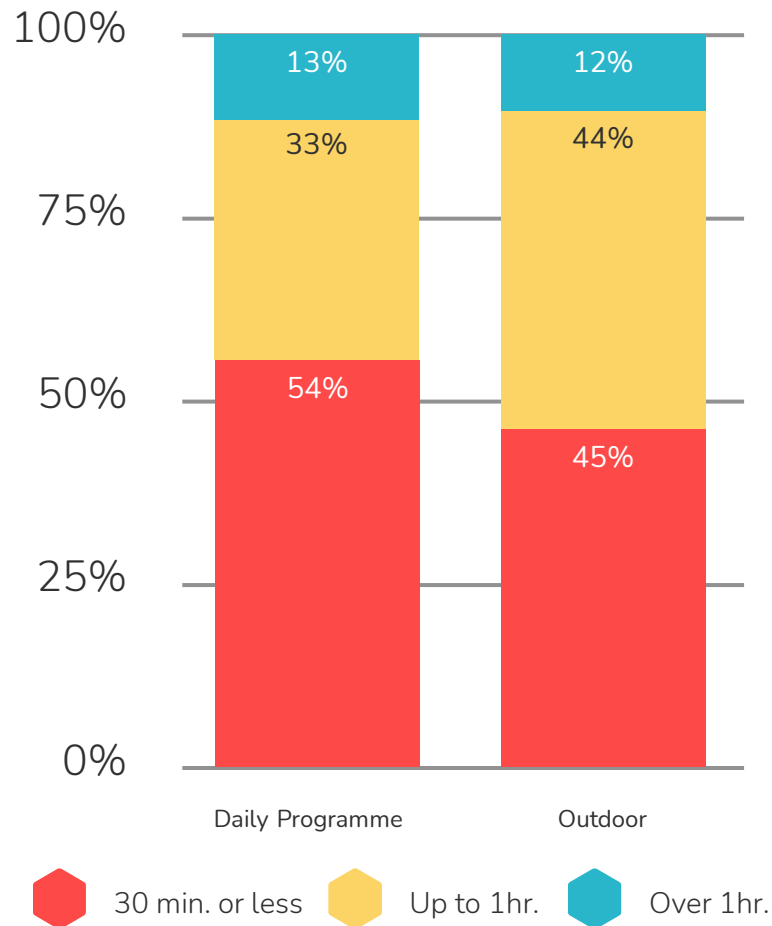
# Qualifications of Practitioners



# ELPs per 1000 Children (Municipalities)



# Average Time Spent on Free Play



34%

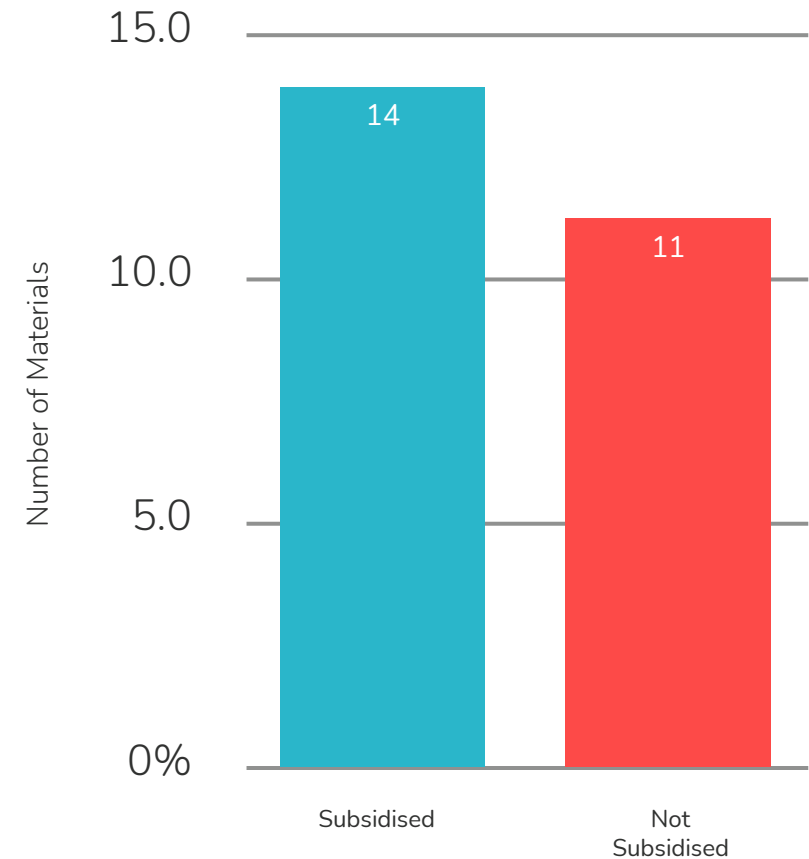
do not have access to an outdoor playground with suitable equipment

56%

have access to age-appropriate books for different age groups

# Learning Materials:

Subsidised vs Not Subsidised



Lessons







# Key lessons for similar undertakings

- Work closely with stakeholders on the ground
- Create awareness
- Branded collateral
- Small teams are better
- Use tools effectively



Impact





# So what has happened since?

- Data made publicly available and being used
- DBE released masterlist
- EMIS development ongoing
- Data used to make business case to Treasury
- Govt, funders, NGOs using data to prioritise most vulnerable



# Thank You

For More Info:  
[www.ecdcensus.co.za](http://www.ecdcensus.co.za)



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