



# AFLATOT

## Training of trainers manual



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## Welcome to the Aflatot Training Manual!

Dear ECEC Practitioner, dear Teacher, dear Facilitator,

Welcome to the revised version of the Aflatot Training Manual. This manual has been developed to guide facilitators to train adults involved in early childhood programmes and interested in the implementation of the Aflatot programme. The Aflatot programme is intended for children who have not yet entered primary school (from 3 to 6 years of age) and it lays the foundation for social and financial literacy.

This manual has been designed to ensure an active and participatory approach to training: we believe that adults as well as children learn best when all their senses are involved and when they are engaged in their learning. For this reason, the focus of the manual is not on lecturing or listening to the “expert talks”, but rather to help participants gather their own knowledge, share it and learn from each other’s experience. It promotes the enhancement of each individual’s skills and knowledge, and builds further knowledge from these starting points. This active approach towards learning is what the Aflatot curriculum for Early Childhood is impregnated with: we could not build a training in any different way.

The manual has been designed to plan and deliver a **Master Training workshop**, in which the participants will attend a 5 days training, and will then be invited to practice the training by replicating it with other teachers or Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) practitioners during the following 3 days. Nonetheless, the structure of the sessions is flexible and it can also serve the purpose of a **shorter training of teachers**. In this case the training is planned to last between 3 to 5 days.

The manual and the training has been developed with the main objective of helping *you* guide participants through the Aflatot book and help them familiarise with its content and core themes. At the same time it focuses on some key pedagogical and methodological elements which contribute to creating good ECEC practices, which stimulate an active and engaging environment for children, and which place children at the core of the learning experience. While the task might sound overwhelming and the time allocated too short, this manual has been created keeping in mind the different skills and abilities of the various facilitators that will be conducting trainings all over the world. For this reason, it has been created and written in a simple and personal way, so that *you* can tailor-make your workshop and adapt it to your specific needs. The manual will be your best support in enhancing your training skills and in guiding you by providing facilitation questions that will help you engage participants and foster their knowledge.

At the same time, because each facilitator is different, the manual is also flexible. It is flexible in the way you can use the sessions: you will easily recognise which sessions are needed in any training, and which ones you can skip if you are working with ECEC practitioners with many years of experience. It is flexible because you can adapt the activities: there are plenty of facilitation tips and printable checklists that you can decide to utilise or not based on your own facilitation experience and the skills and knowledge of your group of participants. It is flexible because each activity has been designed to guide your steps in the implementation of the session, while at the same time giving you the freedom to improvise if you feel comfortable and confident!

Finally, we want to take the chance to THANK YOU! Thank you for taking the time to go through these pages and for helping us implement the Aflatot programme. This manual would be worth nothing without your commitment!

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## Terminology Note

In this book, for ease of reading we have used the terms “Participants” and “Facilitators” to refer to the training attendees. Nonetheless, the training is addressed to all teachers, carers, and volunteers that work in ECEC settings.

In the same regard, the term “ECEC practitioners” is used regularly in this book to refer to these professionals who work with children in child-care, in toddlers’ playgroups and any other professional provision for children aged 3 to 6.

We also refer solely to “families” throughout the manual, although the term is not limited to the nuclear family but also includes parents, caregivers as well as grandparents or other close primary carers of the child.

## Facilitator’s Instructions

- To create a friendly and warm atmosphere, and to emphasise that the training is a meeting of equals, make sure to arrange the chairs in a circle and, if possible, avoid having participants sit behind tables. Place your chair somewhere in the circle and leave all your training materials on a table outside the circle. When necessary for activities, regroup the participants in smaller groups around separate tables.
- It is advisable to start and /or end the day with a wrap up/recap activity. To make these part of the days more fun and provide diversity we have included a series of options for wrap up/recap activities at the end of the manual.
- Another good practice while facilitating a training is to use various energisers during trainings to make sure that the energy level is high, to help participants stay focused, or to help them get started after the lunch break. Energisers should be fun activities with a duration of 4-5 minutes, which trigger the mind or the body and generally do not have specific learning objectives. Except where necessary, we have not included energisers within the daily training structure. However, you will find a few energiser examples as well as online resources at the end of the manual. Feel free to choose from these or use your creativity!
- Note that many activities will require you to provide participants with various printouts (either parts of the Aflatot book, or checklists from this manual). Each printout needed is indicated in the “materials” list of each activity, but to facilitate your work you will also find a complete list of necessary printouts at the end of this training manual (see *List of Printouts*).

## Suggested Agenda for a 8 days' workshop with Master Trainers

	Session Name	Suggested Relevance
Day 1	S1: Overview and Introduction to the Training	○
	S2: Aflatoun Programme Orientation	◊
	S3: Early Childhood: how young children grow, learn and see the world	●
	S4: The Aflatot approach on Early Childhood Education	○
Day 2	S5: Using Multiple Teaching Methods: The Toolbox Strategy	○
	S6: You, Me and Aflatoun - The Child-centred Approach in the Aflatot curriculum	○
	S7: Me and Money - Story telling Techniques	○
	S8: Children's Rights - brainstorming technique	○
Day 3	S9: Save, Spend and Share - the use of songs and games	○
	S10: Letting the messy in - the central role of free choices and free play	●
	S11: The Aflatot Fair - working with limited resources	○
Day 4	S12: Family Involvement: Why is it important? Why is it Challenging?	●
	S13: Family Involvement: Which Strategy?	○
	S14: The Outdoor Space - Contextualising the Aflatot activities	○
	S15: Inclusion in Early Childhood Education	●
Day 5	S16: The space around us: the emotional space	●
	S17: The space around us: the use of time in our classroom	●
	S18: the space around us: the physical space	●
	S19: The facilitator's role	□
Day 6	S1: Overview and Introduction to the Training	□
	S2: Aflatoun Programme Orientation	

	S3: Early Childhood: how young children grow, learn and see the world	
	S4: The Aflatot approach on Early Childhood Education	
Day 7	S5: Using Multiple Teaching Methods: The Toolbox Strategy	
	S6: You, Me and Aflatoun - The Child-centred Approach in the Aflatot curriculum	
	S7: Me and Money - Story telling Techniques	
	S8: Children's Rights - brainstorming technique	
Day 8	S9: Save, Spend and Share - the use of songs and games	
	S11: The Aflatot Fair - working with limited resources	
	S12: Family Involvement: Why is it important? Why is it Challenging?	
	S14: The Outdoor Space - Contextualising the Aflatot activities	

**Suggested Relevance Symbols:**

○ Include this session in ALL trainings

◇ Include this session ONLY in trainings with new partners (limited knowledge of Aflatoun programme)

● Include this session in trainings with participants with limited ECEC experience

□ Include this session ONLY in Master Trainings

## Before Starting: Evaluating the Aflatot training

It is a good practice to start the training by asking participants to fill in the **Pre-training Survey** and conclude it with the **Post-Training Survey**. In this way we can assess the effectiveness of the workshop. This in turn can help us modify our approach in the hope of improving outcomes.

Before starting the first session of the workshop please gather together your participants and ask them to fill in the Pre-training Survey on their own. You can find the Pre and Post-Training Survey at the end of this manual.

Reassure them that they are not expected to know all the answers of the survey. Make it clear that the objective of the survey is to be able to evaluate how their knowledge and skills have changed thanks to the workshop attendance. Explain that they will fill in a similar form at the end, and by comparing the two we will be able to know if the Workshop is effective.

Once gathered all the filled in forms, please submit them to [research@afatoun.org](mailto:research@afatoun.org).

THANKS!

## Session 1: Overview and Introduction to the Training

✓ 1h

### Content:

Before starting a training it is essential to establish a positive atmosphere, to let participants feel at ease and to set the goals of the training. It is crucial that you as a trainer explain the central approach of the Aflatot training: participants will not be expected to sit and listen but will learn by playing games and doing activities. Also, it is important to explain that this workshop is based on an experiential approach: participants' knowledge will be valued and the training will focus strongly on learnings sharing.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will know more about each other and will have a brief overview of the workshop objectives and the active learning approach.

### Activities Overview:

<i>Brief Introduction to the Workshop</i>	10 min
<i>Partners' Presentation: My Childhood Toy</i>	20 min
<i>The Approach of the Workshop and the Rules</i>	15 min
<i>Hopes and Fears</i>	15 min

## Brief Introduction to the Workshop (10 min)

### Objectives:

To help participants feel reassured about the content and methodology of the training by providing them a brief outline of what they will be doing during the workshop.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- **Reassure the participants:** The teachers are likely to be nervous about the nature and content of the workshop and they will have many questions. Reassure them that later in the day time has been allocated for their questions. This is not the time, however. You want to give them a brief overview and get straight to work. Try and cover the following points in a style that is comfortable and natural for you and that draws on your own experience.
- **Thank them!** Thank people for coming. Stress that they are a valued part of the delivery of a powerful programme. Emphasise that Aflatoun respects facilitators and teachers and knows that only they can make the concept and programme succeed. That is why you have invited them to be here to work together with you. Aflatoun sees teachers as being at the heart of the programme!

- Create space for active learning: Ask participants to get rid of pencils and papers laying in front of them and reassure them that they will not be spending much time listening to lectures or presentations. Rather, they will learn about Aflatot, the curriculum, and its guiding principles by doing activities, playing games and using the curriculum. Explain that we want the Aflatot curriculum to be true to the childhood spirit of playful inquiry and that active learning will be central to the programme.
- Explain the main objectives of the workshop: Give a brief overview of what you will be doing during the next days. In particular, clarify that you will give a short presentation on the Aflatoun programme and concept, that you will introduce some basic aspects of the pedagogical approaches of working with Early Childhood children and that they will directly engage with the Aflatot manual by reproducing some activities with the group. Remind them that all this will be done in a playful and engaging way.

### Partners' presentation: My Childhood Toy (20 min)

#### Objectives:

To facilitate partners' introductions, establish an atmosphere of playfulness and get participants used to taking an active role.

#### Materials:

Papers

Pens/markers

#### Steps:

- Ask participants to sit in a circle. Give each participant a paper and pen.
- Give participants 3-4 minutes to draw a childhood toy they liked when they were young.
- Once they are done, explain that each participant has 2-3 minutes to introduce him/herself by stating their name, their work experience with Early Childhood Education and briefly describe the drawing and why that toy was important to him/her.
- Participants might want to say a lot about themselves: try to keep this activity short and remind them that they only have 2-3 minutes each to introduce themselves. Explain that there will be plenty of other occasions during the following days to get to know each other better.

### The Approach of the Workshop and the Rules (15 min)

#### Objectives:

To understand the nature of the workshop and to involve everybody in the collective negotiation of guidelines for the workshop. To encourage a feeling of equal ownership of the workshop.

#### Materials:

Flipchart

#### Steps:

- Explain to the participants that some rules are necessary to keep the workshop effective, but in order to ensure their efficacy and shared ownership of the workshop, these rules will be negotiated with the whole group.
- Begin by asking the participants to sit in a circle with you and suggest rules.

- At the beginning of the workshop, participants might still be a bit shy and hesitant to openly share their opinions. If participants struggle to get started and offer suggestions for the shared rules, try providing some examples regarding time-keeping, rudeness, aggressiveness, swearing, smoking or mobile phones.
- Remember not to put words in their mouths and reiterate the nature of the workshop as a dialogue between equals and that all participants are here to learn from each other.
- As the participants make suggestions, ask the group if they agree with the idea and the wording. As the rule is agreed upon, note it down on a flipchart.
- Note that it can help to create a better atmosphere if the rules are positive rather than negative. For example, “We must always speak politely” instead of “No swearing.”
- After negotiating the rules, ask each participant to come to the flipchart and sign the chart as a symbolic agreement of the entire group and to generate a sense of ownership.
- Briefly explain the nature of the workshop to the participants. Advise them that this workshop will include ample time for personal and group reflection. Encourage them to critically reflect on their previous experiences, their own teaching practice, their philosophy of education and some of their underlying beliefs and assumptions about children, and the purpose of financial and social education in early childhood. Inform the participants that this workshop is built on experiential learning through practical sessions where teachers can see a model of learner-centred pedagogy being demonstrated.

## Hopes and Fears (15 min)

### Objectives:

To let participants voice any worries they have. Also, to let participants share their expectations of this training.

### Materials:

Post-it notes

One flipchart divided into two columns with headings "Hopes" and "Fears"

### Steps:

- Ask the participants how they are feeling. If necessary, explain that it is natural to feel either excited or anxious at the beginning of a workshop. Tell them that you want to begin by finding out what hopes and fears they have brought with them. Tell them that the work will be easier if we are all honest and open about our feelings.
- Hand out two post-it notes to each participant.
- Ask them to work individually and write down three things they hope to achieve through the training and three things about the training that make them feel uneasy or worried.
- Once they finish, ask each participant to read aloud what they wrote and to place the post-it on the flipchart.
- At the end of each training ask the participants to have a look at the flipchart again and ask if these are still a fear for them. If not, remove it from the flipchart. Do the same for the hopes.

## Session 2: Aflatoun Programme Orientation

🕒 1h

### Content:

Sometimes you will be training facilitators who have never heard about Aflatoun before, or who know very little about it. It is necessary to provide them with some essential background information before going any further with the training. The following exercises are designed to demonstrate what Aflatoun involves: a concept (balanced social and financial education for children), a programme (all the activities that children can be involved in, such as classroom activities, enterprise projects etc.) and a network (the global family of partner organizations who take the programme and make it their own). At the same time, introducing Child Social and Financial Education (CSFE) in an ECEC setting might sound challenging and unnecessary: it is crucial at this point that you reassure them of the playful and age-appropriate way CSFE is introduced to young children in the Aflatot programme and of the importance introducing these concepts at an early stage.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will know more about the Aflatoun concept, programme and network, they will be aware of the specificities of the Aflatot programme compared to the Aflatoun and Aflateen one (for children 6 – 14 and 14 up). Also, participants will be aware of the importance of introducing CSFE at an early age.

### Activities Overview:

<i>Brief presentation on the concept of CSFE and the five educational themes</i>	<b>30 min</b>
<i>Why CSFE for Early Childhood?</i>	<b>30 min</b>

### Brief presentation on the concept of CSFE and the five educational themes (30 min)

#### Objectives:

To give participants essential information about the concepts behind the Aflatot book. To help participants understand how these concepts are introduced in an ECEC setting.

#### Materials:

None

#### Steps:

Use the following notes to help you as you explain the concepts to the participants. Try to find your own way to convey this information. Be creative: you can choose to just read the following lines to the participants, or you can use alternative strategies to make this activity more engaging. For example you can make copies of these pages and distribute them to the participants. Invite them to read the document and then invite some of the participants to give some answers to the key questions listed at the beginning of each paragraph (*see questions in italics*). Alternatively, you can invite participants to barnstorm together on the questions in italic, and afterwards you can give them a short lecture by explaining the main concepts included in the following pages.

## **Concept**

*What do we mean by Child Social and Financial Education?*

Aflatoun involves a balance of social education and financial education for children. These two must be kept in balance. By social education we mean helping children develop their character, teaching them about child rights and encouraging them to design projects to do with social justice. By financial education we mean teaching children to save, to plan or make a budget and to design projects for income generation.

While Social and Financial Education can be introduced to children of all ages, younger age groups are exposed to the building blocks of these skills and knowledge. Strong emphasis will be put on self-exploration, emotions expression, empathy, saving, spending, sharing and budgeting non-monetary resources, and delayed gratification.

*How do Social and Financial Education make each other stronger?*

Unfortunately there are times when knowledge of our (child) rights is not enough on its own. For example, we can tell a girl she has the right to an education. But if she cannot even afford the bus fare to school, or if her parents cannot afford her uniform, what good is this right to her? Similarly, we can tell a boy he has the right to play, but if he doesn't even have a few coins to buy a toy, how does it help him to know about this right? Often, people need some money if their rights are to have meaning.

So how does social make financial stronger? At Aflatoun we do not take a relaxed attitude towards teaching children about money. We know that money brings with it all manner of temptations and complications. So before we get down to the business of financial education we try and give children a sense of social justice and some understanding of ethics. We encourage them to see themselves not just as individuals, but as members of families and communities. We are careful not to present money as a guaranteed source of happiness. Money is just as likely to bring problems as it is solutions. We want children to understand that as individuals they can benefit from saving and from enterprise. But we place an equal emphasis on the potential for enterprise to have positive impact at community level.

*What are the five main education themes and what sort of things do children learn from them?*

### **i. Personal Understanding and Exploration**

We encourage children to understand themselves and to value themselves so that they grow up confident and feeling able to direct their own lives. Children learn to become more aware of their emotions, and to express them. They learn that we are all unique and special, but that nobody is more important than anyone else. We also want to help them think for themselves.

## **ii. Rights and Responsibilities**

Aflatoun is rooted in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We want children to understand that they have rights and it is the fact that all children share the same rights that makes them equal. We all have different ways of looking at the world, whether religious or political or other, but the one set of values that we have all signed up to is the UNCRC. However children learn that their rights must never deprive somebody else of theirs. We are also careful to teach children that if they have a right they also have a corresponding responsibility. For example, if a child has a right to play she has a responsibility to play safely. If she has a right to food, she has a responsibility not to waste food.

## **iii. Saving and Spending**

Children are encouraged to develop a savings mind-set that teaches them not to waste anything, whether it be money, food, time, water or other natural resources. The emphasis is on saving small amounts regularly i.e. on developing the discipline of a savings habit. Children learn the difference between a need and a want. The idea is not to encourage children to dream about becoming millionaires. It is to give them discipline so that they can look after themselves as they grow up.

## **iv. Planning and Budgeting**

If we teach children to save, we also need to teach them planning and budgeting skills to help them set savings goals. They also learn how to organize their other resources, including time. While in the Aflatoun and Aflateen programme (children age 6 – 18) there is also an emphasis on teaching children to keep basic financial records, such as income and expenditure columns, in the Aflatot programme children learn that planning and budgeting is an integral part of their everyday life and implies making choices.

## **v. Child Social and Financial Enterprise**

Children are encouraged to develop their own little social and financial enterprise projects at school. Social enterprise projects could be anything that makes the child's life, or the school or community fairer, safer or healthier. The creation of a small enterprise helps children put in practice all the previous four skills and knowledge in an active and creative way. Clearly, the types of enterprises will vary per age: within the Aflatoun and Aflateen programmes (children aged 6 – 18), children plant trees around the school to provide shade and privacy and to grow fruit. Or they campaign against smoking, alcohol and other drugs. In the Aflatot programme the Enterprise is embedded in the Aflatot Fair, where, with the guidance of the teachers, children will exhibit their artworks, present small theatre plays or make little markets with the craftworks they created during the Aflatot programme. Also, in the Aflatot programme the teacher or facilitator has a more prominent guiding role, compared to the Aflateen and Aflatoun one.

## **Why CSFE for Early Childhood? (30 min)**

### **Objectives:**

To help participants reflect on the importance of introducing CSFE at an early age to equip children with some of the appropriate tools to help them reach their full potential in life and tackle some of the challenges they might face.

### **Materials:**

CSFE Activity Scenarios (See below) *Optional*

**Steps:**

- Ask participants to form four groups.
- Assign to each group one of the following scenario. You can print them out or read them out loud to the groups.

## Printout: CSFE Activity Scenarios

**Gabriel** is a 5 years old child from São Paulo, Brazil. His dad is a professor and his mum is a doctor. He lives in a big villa, with 3 dogs. He loves playing computer games or using his mum's mobile phone although sometimes his mum gets angry about that. He also loves chocolate, kites and his friends from the kindergarten. His grandparents live far away from him, but he visits them every summer. He likes going there because Grandma makes great pies and she secretly gives him a few coins he can spend as he wants.

**Sophie** is 3. She lives in a social house in the suburbs of Paris, France. She loves to go to the park with her dad, but there are no parks nearby. She would love to go play in the small garden near the building where she lives but her mum does not allow her to go there because it is dangerous, she says. In her kindergarten there are lots of children whose parents come from other countries, such as Algeria, Senegal, or China. Sometimes their French is a bit difficult to understand for Sophie.

**Destin** is 5 and she comes from Kigali, Rwanda. Her dad is unemployed and her mum works very long hours at the supermarket. She also has to travel a lot to reach work. She feels very sorry for them, especially when she hears them fighting. She spends lots of time with her Granma and Grandpa, she loves being with them and Granma is teaching her how to make some delicious mizuzu, her mum loves that dish.

**Zhao** just turned 3. He is from Duoyishu, a small farm village in China. Both his mum and dad work the land, and sometimes they let him help. He likes touching the soil and playing with the little bugs. His dad said that next winter he and his mum will not be with him: they are going to move to another city to look for a better job. He will have to stay with Granma and Grandpa, they will come and visit once a month. He is very sad about that.

- Provide each group with a flipchart paper and markers.
- Explain that each group has 20 minutes to reflect on the following questions and note down their answers on the paper:

“What do you think are some of the possible social, economic, developmental, emotional, physical challenges or threats that the child in your story might be facing?”

“How do you think Children Social and Financial Education could help him be more prepared to face these challenges?”

- Once finished, ask each group to present their scenario and their answers. Explain that they have 5 minutes for the presentation.
- At the end, summarise the main points of the presentation. Make clear that the emphasis is on a balanced social and financial education programme which empowers children to be resilient, to learn to identify their strengths and be equipped with the skills and knowledge to empower them in their life.

## Session 3: Early Childhood: how Young Children Grow, Learn and See the World

🕒 2h 20 min

### Content:

Early Childhood is a period of constant change, growth and development. Young children learn new things every day and sometimes we are amazed by their abilities and skills. To be able to effectively enhance these developments through our work as ECEC practitioners it is necessary to gain a general picture of how young children grow and learn. Talking about child development and developmental domains might sound intimidating, but remember that we all have experience of these developmental changes linked to our childhood memories, because we are parents ourselves or we have been taking care of siblings or friends' children etc. It won't be difficult to help participants build further knowledge, starting from these essential personal experiences. At the same time, each child is unique and his/her uniqueness should be understood and valued to ensure an effective learning. The developmental domains and steps should be interpreted in a flexible way.

In this session we will also help participants understand what cultural values and beliefs about children and childhood are and how these values influence the way we perceive children's uniqueness and the way we work with them.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be aware of the way young children grow and learn, they will have an idea of what the children's developmental domains are and how each Aflatot activity has been developed to support and stimulate children's holistic development.

### Activities Overview:

<i>Warming-up Activity: my Childhood Memory</i>	20 min
<i>Exploring how Young Children Grow</i>	30 min
<i>The Developmental Domains in Practice</i>	40 min
<i>Every Child is Unique</i>	20 min
<i>Images of Childhood</i>	30 min

## Warming –up activity: My Childhood Memory (20 Min)

Note: a more extensive version of this activity is present in the M. Irvine (1999)'s book: "Early Childhood Education: A Training Manual", Bernard Van Leer / UNESCO publication, p.86. You can find it here: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001194/119438e.pdf>

### Objectives:

To help participants realise that they already possess knowledge about the child development, based on their personal experience; to introduce participants to child development and developmental domains.

### Materials:

Small pieces of paper

Pens

Flipchart

Markers

### Steps:

- Give each participant a piece of paper and pen, and ask participants to reflect on the following question:  
"What was one of the things you enjoyed doing when you were a child?"
- Give them 2-3 minutes to note down their answer in a short sentence (for example, "loved playing in the playground", "being with my grandparents").
- Once done, ask some volunteers to share what they have written.
- Now ask participants to work in pairs and, together, identify the **needs** that correspond to the childhood memory and write it down on their paper. Explain that they have 2-3 minutes to complete the task. For example, "loved playing in the playground= need for actively play outdoor", "being with my grandparents = need for love and affection".
- Once done, ask each pair to share the needs identified with the group, and note it down on a flipchart on the wall.
- Now, point out how each need corresponds to different aspects of the child's persona: as an example, point out how some correspond to **physical needs (need to play, need to eat etc.)**, while other correspond to **social or emotional needs (need to be with friends, need to be loved and cared for , need to express my feelings etc.)**. Note that at this initial stage you will only distinguish between these two categories: a further and more refined distinction between all different needs and corresponding developmental domains will be done at a later moment.

## Exploring how young children grow (30 min)

### Objectives:

To deepen participants understanding of the children's developmental domains; to demystify the technical terminology utilised.

### Materials:

Flipcharts

Markers

Flipchart paper with developmental domains headings (see below)

### Steps:

- Ask participants to form groups of 4-5 people.

- Give each group a flipchart paper and a marker.
- Ask each group to draw the outline of a 4 years old child. Ask them to imagine who this child is (is he a girl or a boy? where does he/she live etc.). Explain that they have 20 minutes to note down all the things this child **is able to do** and all the things he/she **likes doing**.
- After 20 minutes, show participants the **developmental domains flipchart below**. Invite each group to place these skills and interests of the child under each heading. Ask each group to avoid repeating characteristics that have already been listed before.

Developmental Domains Flipchart			
Physical development	Social Development	Emotional Development	Cognitive development *

- Invite participants to reflect on how these skills and competencies might change over time. Ask participants:  
“How would these skills and abilities change between a 3 years old child and a 6 years old child?”
- Remember to involve the whole group after each presentation and engage them through higher order thinking questions by asking: “Who has a different idea? What makes you think that?”
- Now ask participants to try and define together each developmental domain:  
“How can we define ‘physical development’? And what about Social development?”  
If time allows, ask some volunteers to write the definition at the end of each column on the flipchart.
- Make sure to collect all the posters with the children’s characteristics developed by participants. You will use them again in the next activity “Every Child Is Unique”.

#### Facilitation Tips:

The Developmental Domains listed here are the ones utilised in the Aflatot book. If you want to have a further look at them and read more about how Aflatot tries to enhance and support children’s holistic development, have a look at the Aflatot curriculum, Introduction Section, p. 8 English version.

Also note that child development can be categorised differently, and not one approach is right or wrong.

A useful resource to look at children’s developmental domains in depth and get to know a more comprehensive and detailed way of categorising children’s development is the World Bank “Toolkit for Measuring Early Childhood Development in Low- and Middle- Income countries”, that you can find here

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/29000/WB-SIEF-ECD-MEASUREMENT-TOOLKIT.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

## The developmental domains in practice (40 min)

### Objective:

To understand how each activity can stimulate different developmental domains using the Aflatot Curriculum.

### Materials:

Lesson Plan A: The Aflatot Book Activity 2 "Aflatoun Song", p.21

Lesson Plan B: Activity 17 ""A world for children", p.69  
 Lesson Plan C: Activity 23 "Talent show", p.110  
 Lesson Plan D: Activity 32 "I can reach my dreams", p.142  
 Flipcharts  
 Markers

**Steps:**

- Start with a short brainstorming activity and ask participants to reflect on the following questions:  
 “How singing a story and miming the rhymes to a young child helps his/her development. How does it help his/her physical development? What about his cognitive development? Could it also help his/her social or emotional development? How?”
- Now invite participants to form 4 groups
- Give each group one of the Aflatot Book Lesson Plans, a flipchart and markers.
- Invite them to read the activity and reflect on how each activity helps develop children in a holistic way. In particular, ask them to note on their flipchart **how the activity helps the development of the child**. Encourage them to distinguish between the various developmental domains and to list their answers on the flipchart, using a table similar to the one below.

Cognitive Development	Physical Development	Emotional Development	Social Development

- After 20 minutes ask each group to give a few examples of the answers they have provided. Give each group 3-4 minutes to give their examples. There is no need at this point to look at the entire table.
- Always remember to engage the whole group: it helps you understand whether the concept and importance of the developmental domains is clear at this point. It will come back often in the next sessions!

**Facilitation Tips:**

To help you define each developmental domains, here are some simple keywords:

**Physical Development:** Motor skills, body structure etc.

**Social Development:** Norms and values, Relationships and interactions with others, etc.

**Emotional development:** Expressing feelings, coping with emotions, etc.

**Cognitive development:** linguistic skills, speech, thinking, creating, imagining etc.

## Every Child is Unique (20 min)

### Objectives:

To help participants realise that each child develops in a unique way; to identify the factors that can influence children's development.

### Materials:

Posters with children's characteristics from previous activity (*Exploring how young children grow and learn*)

Post it notes (*possibly of two different colours*)

Markers

### Steps:

- Hang the children's characteristics posters on the walls of the room or spread them on the floor next to each other.
- Give participants some post its (possibly all of the same colour) and invite them to walk around and look at each poster and add a post-it note next to each characteristic or interest indicated on the flipcharts which they do not agree represents a 3 years old child and briefly note down why they disagree (for example, "3 years old are too young to be able to do that"; "this skill is acquired earlier in life" etc.).
- After 10 minutes give participants another set of post it notes (all of the same colour, possibly different from the previous one).
- Invite participants to look at the previous post-it comments and place a new post it note next to these comments they do not agree with, noting down why they don't agree. Try to walk around and help them reflect on what their thoughts are about each post-it and be critical about what they read.
- After 5 minutes ask the participants to look around the posters and the post- it. The posters should now be covered with plenty of comments.
- Trigger a discussion by asking:  
    "What do you think just happened? Why do you think there are so many comments and disagreements around the skills and interests of these 3 years old?"
- If needed, put an emphasis on the concept that every child is unique: have a look at the **facilitation tips box** below to help you guide the discussion.

### Facilitation Tips:

From the previous activity (Every Child is Unique) it should be now evident that there is not one right answer on the developmental stages of a 3 years old child: each child is unique. While the domains that make up a child are strictly connected to each other and each child will develop as a whole person in his/her physical, emotional, cognitive and social domains, following similar sequences and milestones, not one child will develop in the same way and at the same time as the others.

Also, a child development is uniquely influenced by a complex series of biological and social factors, which makes it impossible to compare one child with the other. Things like nutrition, healthy environment, parental support and care, are just some of the ingredients that, together with a safe, supportive and engaging ECEC setting influence a child's growth and development.

## Images of Childhood (30 min)

### Objectives:

To reflect on our cultural values and beliefs around children and childhood; to understand how our cultural values and beliefs influence our everyday ECEC practices.

### Materials:

Flipcharts

Markers

### Steps:

- Ask participants to form 4 groups. Give each group a flipchart and markers.
- Ask each group to briefly reflect on the following questions:  
“How is childhood defined in your culture? What values does your culture hold towards children and childhood? “
- After 10 minutes, ask each group to provide you with their answers and facilitate a discussion pointing out differences and similarities in terms of views, values and beliefs between different groups or different people.
- Now, ask each group to reflect on the following question and give them 10 minutes to formulate some answers:  
“How do you think ‘childhood’ was defined by your grandparents? What values did their culture hold towards children and childhood? What were their expectations towards their children? “
- Trigger a discussion in the group on the differences and similarities between the values and beliefs we have nowadays towards children and childhood and these of our grandparents.
- Point out that adults have always had specific values, beliefs and views on children and that these values have changed over time and differ per social class, culture and even per person.
- Ask participants:  
“How do you think different values, views and beliefs influence the way we work with children?  
“
- Reassure them during the teaching practices we will look more in depth at how our teaching practices are influenced by our views and values.

### Facilitation Tips:

The way the Aflatot curriculum has been developed reflects a specific series of believes, values and views on children and childhood we hold. In particular:

- Children are creative, engaged, curious, active agents and social actors
- Children have an active role in the construction and determination of their own social lives
  - Children are capable and competent
  - Children have needs and rights and responsibilities
- Children have knowledge, experiences and interests around which the leaning should be focused.
  - Children learn by independent exploration
    - Children are naturally curious
    - Children learn through play
  - Children learn from Social Interactions

This interpretation follows a physiological and sociological approach developed in the recent years. Among others, it reflects the approach introduced by James, Jenks and Pout. See for instance James, Jenks and Pout, 1998, *theorising Childhood*, Cambridge University Press.

As you will notice, there is no mention of strict milestones or developmental stages of the child in this manual. This is in line with our idea that children develop in a flexible and unique way rather than in defined stages of cognitive and physical growth as developmental psychology interprets it. Again, this is in line with a specific view of the child which favours child uniqueness rather than standardisation (See for example, Woodhead and Faulkner (2000). 'Subject, object or participants, dilemmas of psychological research with children', in P. Christensen and A. James (Eds.), *Research with Children*, London, Routledge Falmer.

## Session 4: The Aflatot Approach on Early Childhood Education

2h

### Content:

The Aflatot programme and book is based on a constructivist vision of the child, it is child-centred, play-based and uses an active learning approach. In this session we will try to introduce these concepts in a playful and accessible way. Note that participants with an ECEC background might already be very familiar with these terminologies, while for others they might sound very intimidating. It is useful to gain an idea of the level of experience of your group to be able to tailor the following session accordingly. Also, to help you guide this session, you can use the additional documents you will find in this session.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be familiar with the pedagogical approach utilised in the Aflatot programme. They will be able to understand the value of a child-centred curriculum and active learning approach and learn to embed these pedagogical approaches in their ECEC practices.

### Activities Overview:

<i>Brainstorming: children learn best when...</i>	<b>20 min</b>
<i>The Active Learning Approach in Practice</i>	60 min
<i>The Aflatot book: a Child Centred Curriculum</i>	40 min

### Brainstorming: children learn best when... (20 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants understand how to actively engage and stimulate children's learning; to introduce participants to the concept of *ECEC pedagogy*.

#### Materials:

Post it notes

"Children Learn Best When..." Flipchart with 4 headers (see below)

Markers

#### Steps:

- Start with a brainstorming exercise: ask participants to reflect together on what type of activities are stimulating and engaging for children.  
"When do you think children listen more attentively to the facilitator in class? When do they get bored? What happens when the facilitator is lecturing? What is that makes their enthusiasm and creativity sparkle? When do they start yawning?"  
If participants have experience working in an ECEC setting ask them to refer to specific episodes, if not help them reflect of possible situations.

- Give each participant a few post it notes and ask them to note down some of the “things” that stimulate young children’s learning. Invite them to complete the following sentence:

**“Young children learn best when...”**

Explain that they can interpret the word “thing” as broadly as they feel, including ECEC practitioners’ behaviours, teaching methods etc. For example, “Young children learn best when the teacher uses plays and games”, or “young children learn best when they trust the teacher”.

- After 5 minutes show participants the poster with the following headers :

ECEC practitioners’ practices	ECEC practitioners’ believes and values	Curriculum content	Teaching Methods
Young children learn best when...			

- Ask each participant to read their post it notes out loud and to place them under the column they think best fits their answer. Note that some answers might fit under more than one column.
- Here is an example of some possible answers and how they could be categorised:

ECEC practitioners’ practices	ECEC practitioners’ believes and values	Curriculum content	Teaching Methods
<b>Young children learn best when...</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The teacher uses play and games</li> <li>✓ They trust the teacher</li> <li>✓ The teacher trusts children</li> <li>✓ They are having fun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The teacher values each child</li> <li>✓ The teacher believes each child is competent</li> <li>✓ The teacher trusts children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What children learn reflects their interests</li> <li>✓ They are having fun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ There is plenty of games</li> <li>✓ They are actively engaged</li> <li>✓ They are having fun</li> </ul>

- Remember to always engage the whole group and engage their critical thinking by asking “who has a different idea? What makes you think that?”
- While participants place their post-it notes try to eliminate redundancies and group the notes around similar topics.
- Finally explain that what they have done is listing out the key components of a **pedagogical approach**. Reassure them that a pedagogical approach is just a technical word that includes two main aspects: the teaching method used by the ECEC practitioner, as well as all the ingredients he/she utilises to help children learn and grow. These ingredients encompass the practitioner’s behaviours and attitudes that he/she has towards children and families, which contribute to guiding children’s growth and development.
- Explain that Aflatot is based on a specific pedagogical approach and that some of the answer they have indicated in the flipchart are part of this approach. In particular, the “**child-centred approach**”, the “**active learning approach**” and the “**learn through play**” approach are three key building blocks of the Aflatot programme.

- In the next sessions we will explore these approaches further and we will put them in practice through mock-lessons.

#### **Facilitation Tips:**

There is no need for you to provide participants with a strict definition of **pedagogy or pedagogical approach**, but if you feel it might help you guide this session, here are two good examples. Feel free to use them or rephrase them according to your needs.

“Pedagogy (and pedagogical interactions) concerns how adults in early years settings engage with children to achieve developmental objectives, and what directs their methods. Specifically, pedagogy refers to ‘that set of instructional techniques and strategies which enable learning to take place and provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions within a particular social and material context. It refers to the interactive process between teacher and learner and to the learning environment’ (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002).” (OECD, Early Childhood Education and Care Pedagogy Review, p. 22).

“Pedagogy is not simply the ‘act of teaching’ but instead is the ‘act of teaching’ as informed by the ideas, values and beliefs which sustain and motivate it. Pedagogy is also praxical – in that it aims to produce skills, knowledge structures or ways of thinking which will enable people to participate in, and transform their current and future lives.”(UNESCO/ ARNEC, 2012, p. 6)

If you feel you want to read more about what pedagogy is, have a look at these online resources:

- OECD Early Childhood Education and Care Pedagogy Review, England, <https://www.oecd.org/education/early-childhood-education-and-care-pedagogy-review-england.pdf>
- UNESCO/ ARNEC, Innovative Pedagogical Approaches in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECEC) in the Asia Pacific Region, 2012 <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002460/246050E.pdf>

## The Active Learning Approach in Practice (60 min)

### Objective:

To help participant familiarise with the Active Learning Approach utilised in the Aflatot curriculum.

### Materials:

Copies of the Classroom Scenarios (See Below)

Flipcharts

Markers

Copies of Active learning ECEC Classroom Checklist (*optional*)

### Steps:

- Ask participants to form 4 groups.
- Give each group a flipchart paper and markers and the following two classroom scenarios:

## Printout: Classroom Scenarios

### Classroom A

It is 10 am. The children are all sitting quietly around the table while the teacher searches through the piles of books on a high shelf next to her table. Some children are yawning, and some are looking outside the windows. The teacher picks a story, sits at her chair and starts reading it. One of the child is ticking on the table and she urges him to be quiet and listen. Another one looks on the floor one is playing with a little scratch on the table. One child tried to ask a question but she silences him saying it is not the right time, she is reading the story now.

Then the teacher explains what the topic of the day is and gives children an assignment: they are supposed to draw a basket with vegetable and fruit. She gives colours and papers and let the children draw. She walks around the class and looks over the children's shoulders, pointing out when they were not respecting the assignment or when they were using the wrong colours. She often urges them to stay quiet, not talk and be focused.

It is 11 am and the children are silently drawing at their tables.

There are some toys around, but they are closed in locked cupboards.

At 12 the children are still in the classroom and we hear the teacher say:

"so, what did I say before? That the carrot is a ...? The carrot is a Vee.."

"Vegetable" we hear all the children answer together.

"and the apple is a f..."

"Fruit" repeat all the children at once.

### Classroom B

It is 10 am. The children are sitting in circle on a quiet corner of the room full of pillows and enclosed by some bookshelves. The teacher is sitting with them and asks the children whether they would like to read a story or sing a song. They chose to read a story. Michael and Joan run to the bookshelf and pick one of the books they would like her to read. Today it is their turn to pick the story. While the teacher reads the story he interrupts every now and then to ask the children some questions: "what do you think this word might mean? Who has a different idea? What makes you think that? How do you think the story will end?"

After reading the story, he brings a box with a little whole in it and asks the children to guess what is inside. The children try to weight the box in their hand, they stick their nose in the whole to smell and try to shake it. Some attempt some answers while others spend more time analysing the mysterious object.

At 12 the children are outside the room playing freely in the garden: some are playing with some toys and some are exploring a small bush that creates the perimeters of the garden. Some children are trying to grab the ants that are running in their little hole in the soil. Some play with the water and mud.

- Invite the participants to read the scenarios and identify which setting provides a stimulating, creative and engaging learning approach and which is less stimulating.
- Ask participants to create two lists based on the following questions and note the answers on their flipchart. Explain that they have 20 minutes to complete the task.

A) One of these two classroom setting is less stimulating and engaging for children. What suggestions could you make to make the classroom setting in the example more engaging and stimulating for the children?

B) Which elements make the other classroom setting engaging, stimulating and creative for the children?

- After 20 minutes, ask each group to present their poster in 5 minutes and note down their key answers on a flipchart. Try to avoid repetitions and group answers based on common topics.
- Once done, explain that some of the strategies listed constitute the essence of an **Active Learning Approach**, which is also the core of the Aflatot book.
- At this point you might already have most of the elements that constitute an active learning classroom approach in your flipchart. Nonetheless you can find below the **Active Learning ECEC Classroom Checklist** that can help you fill in the gaps. If you are working with participants who are less familiar with Active Learning approached in ECEC settings, it might be a good idea to print out the checklist and give it to them as a handout.
- Finally, invite participants to reflect on the following question:

“Which developmental domains are stimulated through active learning? How?”

- Invite participants to reflect on how active learning engages the child in a holistic way and fosters his/her social, emotional, cognitive and physical development.

## Printout: Active Learning ECEC Checklist:

### Active Learning ECEC Classroom Checklist

#### THE CHILDREN...

- ✓ Children free choice is key: for most part of the day children are free to pick from available toys , activities , materials
- ✓ The learning is meaningful to the child: it stems from their interests
- ✓ Children can talk and express themselves spontaneously and freely, using their own words
- ✓ Children are free to ask questions, solve problems and think independently
  - ✓ Children use their senses to explore materials independently
  - ✓ Children decide what to do with the materials available
- ✓ Children can freely choose from available age appropriate tools
  - ✓ Children are exposed to extensive reading and talking
  - ✓ Children are allowed to play freely

#### THE FACILITATORS:

- ✓ Facilitators provide children with a relaxed and friendly environment
- ✓ Facilitators organise the classroom environment in a way that allows children's free choices and active engagement.
  - ✓ Facilitators listen to and encourage children's thinking.
  - ✓ Facilitators encourage children to do things independently
    - ✓ Facilitators establish a daily routine
- ✓ Facilitators plan activities based on children's interests and actions
- ✓ Facilitators guide children's learning without conforming them to what he/she wants
- ✓ Facilitators establish positive relationships with children and with their extended networks (families)
- ✓ Facilitators provide a wide variety of materials for the children to freely use

## The Aflatot Book: a Child-Centred Curriculum (40 min)

Note: The original story from this activity has been developed by Heinz Körner. For the purpose of this activity it has been shortened. A longer version can be found in the manual for ECEC educators developed by the NGO Ba Futura Timor Leste, "Early Childhood Training Manual for Educators" published in June 2012. Link to the manual and the full story and activity can be found here:

<https://www.globalgiving.org/pfil/13951/projdoc.pdf>

### Objectives:

To help participants understand the usefulness of a child-centred curriculum; to familiarise with the elements of a child-centred approach.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- Read out the following story to the participants:

#### ***The story of the tree that wanted light***

*Once upon a time, there was a gardener. He took his wife outside into their garden and together they planted a tree. It didn't take long before the seed started growing. One could already see a little bit of green coming out from the ground. The tree, which was not yet a fully-developed tree, felt the sun's warmth for the first time in its life. It was happy and grateful to be on Earth and reached out to the sun. "Look!", the gardener said "Isn't our little tree wonderful?!" His wife agreed: "Yes", she said, "it's lovely!"*

*The tree grew higher and higher. Every day it came closer to the sun. It felt wind and rain and enjoyed being strongly grounded by its roots. Often the gardener and his wife came by. They watered the tree and admired its beauty. The tree felt very happy. In the gardener and his wife the tree had someone who loved and cared about it, who protected it and made sure it never felt lonely.*

*And so the tree grew and grew while feeling the sun, wind and rain, while being loved and loving in return. One day the tree realized it was especially nice if it grew more into the left direction, because the sun was stronger there. So it started growing to the left. "Look!", the gardener said to his wife, "our tree is growing lopsided! Since when are trees allowed to do that?! I, as a gardener, cannot let this happen! Never!" Thus, the wife walked away to get the loppers.*

*"Oh", the tree cried! The people who it loved, who had always protected and cared about it, which it had trusted, they took away the branches which came closest to the sun. It didn't understand how they could do this, but of course our little tree couldn't talk and couldn't ask them. Yet, they still told it they loved it, but that it couldn't grow lopsided, because a real tree wouldn't do that. And so, it didn't grow lopsided anymore and stopped reaching out to the sun.*

*"Oh, isn't it adorable?!", the gardener said to his wife and slowly the tree started to understand. When it grew the way it wanted to, that made it feel good and experience joy and satisfaction, it wasn't considered a good tree. It was only considered a good tree if it did what it was supposed to do. And because it loved the gardener and his wife, from now on it was cautious not to grow lopsided again, but to grow straight.*

*“Look at that!”, the gardener said and shook his head, “our tree is growing incredibly fast! Is a real tree allowed to do that?!” “No, of course not”, the wife replied “Trees should grow slowly and peacefully. Even our neighbor says, trees should grow slowly and moderately. Their tree is doing so, too.” The gardener agreed and so the couple got the loppers again and cut the tree’s tallest branches off.*

*This time, the tree cried for a very long time. Why did they cut off his branches? And why didn’t they like them? But the gardener only said: “Look, my wife, what a wonderful tree we have. We can be very proud!” And his wife agreed, like always. But now the tree became stubborn. “Fine”, it thought, “if I can’t grow high, I will grow wide”. All it wanted to was to grow and develop, to feel sun, wind and rain, to feel joy and to share joy. So it knew it was right to keep growing. “It’s unbelievable!”, the gardener shouted, outraged. “Look, our tree is growing wide! It even looks as if it’s enjoying it! Pah, not in my garden!” And so the wife got the loppers again and the gardener started cutting.*

*This time, the tree did not cry. It didn’t have any tears left. It just stopped growing and stopped enjoying life. However, the gardener and the wife seemed to like it again. Even though it wasn’t happy anymore, at least it was loved. That’s what the tree thought.*

*(Original story by Heinz Körner)*

- Trigger a discussion in the group using the following questions:
  - “What are the implications of this metaphor for your work as an ECEC practitioner?”
  - “How can you as an educator behave in order to help children grow and reach their full potential, being who they want to be?”
  - “How can you avoid ‘cutting’ their branches?”
- Explain that a Child-Centred Curriculum and approach are specifically designed to place the child at the centre of the learning process. The child is stimulated to take a leading role, to express his/her choices, needs, interests, to experience and enquire freely and the learning is tailored around the child.
- Now explain that you will be creating together a checklist of their role as a child-centred facilitators:
  - “What shall we do to make sure that the child is at the centre of the learning process?”
- As participants come up with suggestions, note them down on a flipchart and make sure to place the flipchart on the wall in the room. You will refer to the flipchart other times during the teaching practices of the next sessions.

## Session 5: Using Multiple Teaching Methods: The Toolbox Strategy

🕒 1h 40 min

### Content:

Now that participants are familiar with the pedagogical approach of the Aflatot programme, it is time to explore some of the methods utilised. In this sessions you will help participants have a closer look at the book and its structure and you will point out some of the active-learning methods that are utilised in the various activities. Keep in mind that you will have plenty of time to look at each method in depth during the next session, which will also involve participants in actively reproducing some of the Aflatot activities.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants are familiar with the structure of the Aflatot book. They are also aware of some of the teaching methods included in the manual and how to integrate an active learning approach in the activities.

### Activities Overview:

<i>Presenting the Aflatot curriculum</i>	10 min
<i>Exploring some of the Teaching Methods of the Aflatot curriculum</i>	30 min
<i>Group Presentations</i>	40 min
<i>Integrating an Active Learning Approach</i>	20 min

### Presenting the Aflatot Curriculum (10 min)

#### Objectives:

To familiarize the participants to the structure and main elements of the Aflatot curriculum. To help them identify useful resources present in the manual.

#### Materials:

One copy of the Aflatot Manual

#### Activity:

- This activity helps participants get a general idea of the various parts of the Aflatot manual and the additional resources it contains: **the Resource Corner and the Family Toolkit**. Use this activity to provide participants with a general overview and explain that each part will have a specific focus later on during the training.
- At this point, make sure you point them towards the **Introduction** as a key resource for the participants to refer to. It introduces the main elements of the Aflatot curriculum and explains the pedagogical background on which it is built. It also serves as a good tool to stress the role of the facilitator.
- Highlight the **4 essential activities** – the Aflatoun Boxes, the Neighbourhood/Outdoor Visits, the Rights and Responsibilities Activities; the Talent Show and/ or the Mini Market; the Aflatoun Fair

and the Activities with Parents/ Caregivers. Explain that it is recommended that at least these elements are included in a high quality Aflatoun programme for young children.

- Explain that the curriculum is a **flexible tool** and that the facilitator should feel free to **adapt** its content to his/her needs (changing the length of lessons, using songs or stories which are more appropriate to the local context etc.) but trying to include all the essential activities in the programme.
- Also introduce **the 5 sections** of the manual in order to give to the participants a wider view of its content.

## Exploring some of the teaching methods of the Aflatot Curriculum (30 min)

### Objectives:

To help participants familiarise with the structure of the Aflatot Activities and with some of the teaching methods included in the Aflatot curriculum, in particular: songs and games, storytelling, outdoor activities, arts and crafts and drawing.

### Materials:

Copies of Lesson Plan A: Aflatot Book Activity 10 “I can express myself with my body”, p. 38

Lesson Plan B: Activity 12 “Baby in a Basket”, p.49

Lesson Plan C: Activity 14 “What is my job”, p. 57

Lesson Plan D: Activity 19 “the story of lion and mouse”, p. 95

Lesson E: Activity 35 “Water is our resource”, p. 154

Flipchart paper

Markers

### Steps:

- Explain to the participants that now that we have defined the Aflatot curriculum themes and pedagogical approach, we shall design the activities using these methodological approaches in practice. Reassure them that in this session you will introduce some of the teaching methods for ECEC that are present in the Aflatot book, and identify how they can be utilised ensuring an active learning approach.
- Clarify that the methods you will explore here do not represent an exhaustive list: within the Aflatot book and in their experience as ECEC practitioners they will find many other methods.
- Also explain that in this session they will get an overview of some methods, and they look at them more in depth in the following sessions.
- Start by asking participants to split in 5 groups.
- Give each group one of the 5 Lesson Plans and explain that each group is focusing on a different method. Group A (lesson plan A) will focus on **storytelling**, group B (lesson plan B) on **group games**, group C (lesson plan C) on **arts and crafts**, group D (lesson plan D) on **music** and group E (lesson plan E) on **drawing**.
- Ask each group to take 20 minutes to read the activity they have been assigned to. Show them a flipchart with the questions below and ask them to answer the questions on their flipchart:

“How does this method help stimulate children’s higher level reflection and critical thinking? How can we implement this method using an active learning approach?”\*

“How can this method help stimulate children’s creativity?”

“How can I adapt, contextualise and integrate this method in my ECEC setting and daily practice?”

“What could be some of the challenges of the implementation of this method in my ECEC setting? How could we overcome these challenges?”

**\*Facilitation Tips:**

This question (How can we implement this method using an active learning approach) might be a bit intimidating. Guide participants by reminding them of the previous sessions, where we have learned what an active learning approach in ECEC is. It is useful here to reiterate that active learning does not only refer to a way of learning which involves all our senses and experiencing of the external world, but it also refers to a teaching practice which allows children to choose and initiate activities based on their personal choices and interests. In an active learning setting the facilitators supports the child’s learning process, but does not direct it.

For example, letting children chose the song they want to sing, or the story they want to listen to, is part of an active learning approach. Also, asking open ended question and letting children’s discussion come to a shared answer is part of it.

## Group Presentations (40 min)

### Objectives:

To provide a safe environment to practice their teaching methods

### Steps:

- Ask each group to select a representative and explain that they have 5 minutes each to present their poster.
- Ask them to start by briefly introduce the activity they have been assigned to and how the method was integrated within the activity, and follow with the presentation of the posters.
- After each presentation, ask the entire group: “Who has a different idea? Why?” try to stimulate a discussion in the group. Reiterate that each method will be further explored in practice during the following session, and that at this stage we are interested in seeing how each method can represent an active learning approach and be implemented in their classroom.
- Conclude by reminding that all methods presented above can also be implemented in a very traditional, frontal way, which limits children’s ability to participate, interact and think critically

## Integrating an Active Learning Approach (20 min)

### Objectives:

To identify practical ways of utilising an active learning approach in an ECEC setting; to identify behaviours and teaching practices that embody an active learning approach.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- Ask participants to look back at the activity they have been assigned and reflect on the following question:  
“Can you suggest some strategies or behaviours that would hamper children’s creativity, interest, higher level thinking while using the methods presented above?”
- If participants are hesitant help them by reflecting on very practical ideas:  
“How could we read a story in a way that does not allow children’s creativity? What about the way we position ourselves in the room? How about our voice and body language? What about the questions we are asking during the storytelling? And what could we do to reduce a craft activity to a teacher-lead activity that limits children’s participation?”
- If you need, have at the **Active Learning ECEC Classroom Checklist** from the previous activity.

## Session 6: Teaching Practice – using a Child-Centred Approach while introducing the Journey Box Activity

🕒 1h 40 min

### Content:

At this point participants should have an overview of the pedagogical approaches on which the Aflatot materials are built and have a grasp on how to put them in practice. It is time now to really get our hands dirty and actively implement some of the Aflatot activities to be able to identify effective strategies to embed these practices in the everyday ECEC routine. This session is the first of a series of mock-lesson based ones and it is designed to help participants learn from each other while practicing the activities. Each mock lesson will focus on two aspects: the structure and content of the Aflatot activities and one specific methodology or pedagogical approach. In this case participants will learn more about the first section of the Aflatot manual “You, Me and Aflatoun”, they will explore one of the essential activities, the “Journey Box” while at the same time focusing on how to integrate a child-centred approach.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be familiar with the essential activity “the Journey Box”, while practicing how to consistently embed a child-centred approach in their teaching practice.

### Activities Overview:

Explain how the session works	10 min
Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the mock-lesson	15 min
Groups deliver the Aflatot Activity	60 min
Final Feedbacks	15 min

### Explain how the Session Works (10 min)

#### Objectives:

To introduce participants to the mock-lesson type of session. To reiterate the key elements of a child-centred approach in ECEC.

#### Materials:

Teaching Practice Feedback Chart (see below)

#### Steps:

- Explain to the participants that they are going to form groups of four or five, that you will give each group a lesson plan and they have 15min to familiarize themselves with the contents. They will then come up and teach the larger group. You will need to stress that they are actually going to teach and NOT give a presentation.

- You may need to stress that they do not need to do any lesson planning as such. The lesson plan has already been done for them and that is what they are reading. All they need to do is ensure they can follow the instructions.
- Explain that after each group mock-lesson the plenary will provide feedbacks based on the Teaching Practice Feedback chart.
- Emphasise that the chart is designed to focus specifically on the use of a **child-centred approach**. Remind them that in ECEC settings a child-centred approach is not only part of the teaching practice, but refers to the way the classroom is arranged, the relationships between the facilitator and the children, the ability of the facilitator to observe and listen to the children.

### Teaching Practice Feedback Chart

- Who spoke more, the teacher or the children?
  - Did the teacher lecture? If so, was it necessary or helpful?
- Did he/ she use an appropriate language for the age group? What about the body language?
  - Did the teacher encourage children's critical thinking with open ended questions?
  - How did the activity (and classroom environment\*) promote interaction among the children?
- If the children were not required to attend this class, would they? Was the class engaging, stimulating, fun and creative?
- How did the facilitator ensure that the learning is relevant for the children? What would you do if some children are not following, not interested or showing clear boredom while the teacher is facilitating the activity?
  - What were some things you might do different?

### \*Facilitation Tips:

The question “*How did the activity (and classroom environment\*) promote interaction among the children?*” might sound a bit tricky. What are we talking about when we refer to the classroom environment?

The ECEC setting is a complex environment: children do not only learn from and during the delivery of the activity but they are permeable to all the stimuli around them.

For this reason a child-centred approach in ECEC setting should not only be incorporated in the delivery of the activity but embodied in every step of the ECEC daily routine planning, in the behaviour of the facilitator and in the structure of the classroom.

Clearly you will not be able to assess all these different aspects during a mock lesson, but try to encourage participants to reflect on these aspects: help them focus on:

- How they envisage the classroom setting (they might provide hint of this by the way the facilitator will deliver the activity: is he/she sitting on a chair? Is he sitting on the floor? If he asked group members to participate as children, were are the children sitting? If hints are not provided, invite them to use their imagination).

Note that you don't have to always answer all questions on the **Teaching Practice Feedback Chart**. Choose those ones that are relevant and that will encourage them or make them aware of something they could improve on or do differently.

## **Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the mock-lesson (15 min)**

### **Objectives:**

To prepare a mock lesson. To familiarise with the content and structure of the Aflatot book and to integrate the child centred approach in the activity development.

### **Materials:**

Lesson Plan A: Aflatot curriculum Section 1 Activity 3: “Sinta the Bird”, p. 23

Lesson Plan B: Activity 4: “the Journey Box”, p. 26

### **Steps:**

- Ask participants to form groups of four or five.
- Give some groups Lesson Plan A and other Lesson Plan B.
- Again, emphasize that they are going to teach the larger group. They can either choose one person from their group or else they can divide the lesson up so that each person delivers a different part.
- Help them with their questions. While they are working walk around the groups to make sure the task has been clearly understood.

## **Groups Deliver the Aflatot Activity (60 min)**

### **Objectives:**

To provide a safe environment to practice their teaching methods

### **Steps:**

- Invite one group at the time to deliver the lesson.
- While the participants are teaching try and keep notes to help you give feedback later.
- Because of time you will not be able to watch each group teach a full lesson. Make your own decisions as to how to manage. It helps sometimes to see different groups do different parts of the same lesson.
- Invite the rest of the group to observe and take notes if needed, but explain that it is not a good idea to play the children's role. They should react to the facilitators delivering the activity only when called upon explicitly.

## Final Feedbacks (15 min)

### Objectives:

To allow participants to comment on the lessons they have read and their understanding about how to facilitate a lesson using a child-centred approach.

### Steps:

- Begin by quickly asking the teachers how they felt the session went.
- Go through some or all of the questions with the big group.
- Add your own comments. Try to be positive but don't be afraid to suggest how things could be done better.
- Finally, remind participants about the importance of **Aflatot Essential Activity**. Explain that the *Journey Box* is one of the 4 main essential activities they will find in the curriculum. Ask participants:  
*"Why do you think this activity is considered essential?"*

Explain that these are activities that are strongly recommended and that should also be part of the portfolio of evidence of the children's progress in learning.

## Session 7: Teaching Practice – using Storytelling to introduce children to the concept of money, saving and spending

🕒 2h

### Content:

Storytelling is an essential teaching tool in early childhood. Reading stories helps children develop their linguistic and communication skills, while fostering their creativity and enhancing their critical thinking. Combined with body movements they can support the development of children’s fine and gross motor skills. At the same time they can be a great resource to expose and familiarise children to new concepts, such as key elements of financial education.

Nonetheless, reading a story is not inherently child-centred and does not automatically promote an active learning approach: it is how we read the story, how we choose the books and how we engage children in the choices, how we ask questions while or after reading and we observe and listen to children beyond the reading time that can make it an effective, playful, creative and stimulating teaching tool for pre-school.

For such reason in this session participants will practice reading a story as if they would be doing so in their ECEC classroom, while at the same time exploring how concepts such as money, saving and spending are introduced in the Aflatot book.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be familiar with the way the Aflatot programme introduces the concepts of money, saving and spending to young children. Also, participants will be able to utilise storytelling using an active learning and child-centred approach.

### Activities Overview:

Game: I am SO Bored	<b>20 min</b>
Explain how the session works	<b>10 min</b>
Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the storytelling Practice	<b>15 min</b>
Groups deliver the Aflatot Story	<b>60 min</b>
Final Feedbacks	<b>15 min</b>

### Game: I am SO Bored! (20 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on the various strategies to tell a story; to understand how storytelling can integrate an active learning approach.

#### Steps:

- Ask participants to get into pairs and ask each pair to tell each other a short story about a time when they were naughty as a child.
- Explain that, in turn, one person will play the “distracted one” and will pretend not to be interested and be bored by what is being told to him/her. The other person will be the storyteller and he/ she has to be creative and find ways of engaging the “bored listener”.
- Make it clear that they should use their creativity in this task and they can try to find props to help with the task, or reflect on their use of the voice or body language, or engage the other person in any way they want. There is just one key rule: at no point they should stop telling their stories.
- Let participants tell the stories for 3-4 minutes, then ask them to switch role and give them another 3-4 minutes.
- At the end, ask some volunteers to share their experiences:  
“Which strategies did you use to engage the ‘bored listener’? Do the ‘bored listeners’ think these strategies have been effective? What would they have done differently?”
- Trigger a conversation about telling and reading stories as an ECEC method:  
“How can this method be utilised in a way that stimulates, engages and sparkles children’s creativity? What if we are reading the story and the children look uninterested, restless or bored? What could be some reasons? What could we do then?”

### Explain how the Session Works (10 min)

#### Objectives:

To introduce participants to the storytelling exercise.

#### Materials:

Storytelling feedback Chart (see below)

#### Steps:

- Explain to the participants that they are going to form groups of four or five, that you will give each group a story from the Aflatot book and give them at least 15min to familiarize themselves with the contents. They will then come up and read or tell the story to the larger group, as they would be doing if they were in front of their preschool classroom.
- Explain that after each group presentation the plenary will provide feedbacks based on the Storytelling Feedback chart. Read through the chart together and explain where needed or answer any questions.
- Emphasise that this time they will focus specifically on how to read or tell a story to children in a way that stimulates their active learning, triggers their interest and emphasises their critical thinking. The chart is designed to focus specifically on the use of **the active learning and child centred approach when reading a story**. Remind them that in ECEC settings a child-centred approach is not only part of the teaching practice, but refers to the way the classroom is arranged, the relationships between the facilitator and the children, the ability of the facilitator to observe and listen to the children.

### **Storytelling Feedback Chart**

- Did he/ she use an appropriate language for the age group? What about the body language?
- Did the facilitator encourage children's critical thinking with open ended questions?
- How did the activity (and classroom environment) promote interaction among the children?
- If the children were not required to attend this class, would they? Was the class engaging, stimulating, fun and creative?
- What would you do if some children are not following, not interested or showing clear boredom while the teacher is facilitating the activity?
- What were some things you might do different?
- What was something you liked?

### **Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the storytelling practice (15 min)**

#### **Objectives:**

To get ready to read the story to the group. To familiarise with the content and structure of the Aflatot manual and to integrate the child centred and active learning approach when reading a story.

#### **Materials:**

Lesson Plan A: Aflatot curriculum Activity 34, "Story of the Ant and the Grasshopper", p. 148

Lesson Plan B: Activity 25, "The Story of Coin", p. 116

#### **Steps:**

- Ask participants to form groups of four or five.
- Give some groups Lesson Plan A and other Lesson Plan B.
- Again, emphasize that they are going to read the activity and prepare to present ONLY the story, not the entire activity. They can either choose one person from their group or else they can divide the story so that each person delivers a different part.
- Help them with their questions. While they are working walk around the groups to make sure the task has been clearly understood.

### **Groups Deliver the Aflatot Story (60 min)**

#### **Objectives:**

To provide a safe environment to practice their teaching methods; to experience how to use storytelling as an active learning method.

### Steps:

- Invite one group at the time to tell/read the story.
- While the participants are teaching try and keep notes to help you give feedback later.
- Because of time you will not be able to watch each group read the full story. Make your own decisions as to how to manage. It helps sometimes to see different groups do different parts of the same story.
- Invite the rest of the group to observe and take notes if needed, but explain that it is not a good idea to play the children's role. They should react to the facilitators delivering the activity only when called upon explicitly.

## Final Feedbacks (15 min)

### Objectives:

To allow participants to share their understanding about how to read a story using a child-centred and active learning approach.

### Materials:

Storytelling Checklist (optional – see below)

### Steps:

- Begin by quickly asking the teachers how they felt the session went.
- Go through some or all of the questions in the Feedback Chart with the big group.
- Add your own comments. Try to be positive but don't be afraid to suggest how things could be done better.
- If time allows, invite participants to draft together a **Storytelling Checklist**, by answering the following questions and noting down the suggestions on a flipchart:  
    “What are some of the strategies we should keep in mind to integrate an active learning approach while reading a story?”
- Make sure that the points in the **Storytelling Checklist** below are mentioned. If needed you can print the checklist and distribute it to the participants.

## Printout: Storytelling Checklist

### Storytelling Checklist:

Everybody can read a story, but not everyone can read it making sure that the child is at the core of the learning process and that he/she is engaged and actively stimulated.

That is why it is crucial to ensure some of the elements below are kept in mind when using storytelling in an ECEC setting.

- If possible ask children to choose the story they want to hear. Otherwise observe children's free play: you will discover a lot about their passion and interests. Use them as a base for the choice of the stories you will read.
  - When choosing a story, make sure it is suitable for the age group
- If possible, place the books in the classroom in a place which is easily accessible for the children and do not refrain them from touching the books, even if it is not 'story time'.
- Read a story to yourself before sharing to the class to focus on the themes you would like to discuss with the children during the class and make real life connections to what is happening in the story.
- Use your voice and facial expression to engage them: you don't need to be a theatre actor, but children are more engaged when the characters are brought to life in the classroom.
  - Define pauses while reading the story: creating a sense of suspense keeps the children engaged
- Identify the right moment for questions and the appropriate questions to ask: if you ask a question in the middle of a story, it should relate well with what is being told in the story, and make sure it will be easy for you to keep the focus on the story. End of the story questions are also useful to let the children think about what could happen next, reflect on what they just heard and connect what they heard with real life.
- When reading the story place yourself at the same level of the children and ideally chose a quiet corner of the room filled with pillows to allows everyone to sit on the floor in a circle
- While reading show the children the pictures in the book: ideally you will read with the book facing the children so they can follow more easily the images and your voice.
- Don't forget to engage them in a critical way and refrain from saying things like "this is not the right moment for questions" or "no, you did not understand the story" etc. Instead trigger their critical thinking and ask open ended questions such as "what do you think will happen now?" "why do you think John did this? Who has a different idea?"

## Session 8: Teaching Practice – using drawing and asking productive questions to introduce children to the concept of Rights and Responsibilities

🕒 1h 50 min minimum

### Content:

Using art practices such as drawing is very common in ECEC settings. Children start scribbling around by the age of 18 months and such activity contributes to their development in various ways: it helps them with hand-eye coordination, supporting their fine and gross motor skills development; it helps their cognitive skills as they create patterns or attempt to represent their known world; it supports their emotional development as they represent what they are thinking or feeling. Some children feel at ease while talking or answering questions, while other might find it easier to express themselves with other communication tools, such as by drawing. This is why it is important to use various teaching strategies: to make sure that each child can find his/her own best approach to learning and communicating.

For this reason we are focusing this session on drawing, and we will combine it with a deeper look at the way ECEC practitioners should ask questions to stimulate children’s critical thinking. As said, some children might enjoy telling stories or talking, but it is up to the teacher to be really able to engage children, and let them be guides of their own learning. It is through the types of questions and the way the facilitator will ask these questions that we can define whether the child is really being listened to, whether he/ she is being empowered to express him/herself, and whether the class is child-centred.

We will explore these two methodological practices while at the same time getting familiar with how Children’s Rights are introduced in the Aflatot book.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be familiar with the way the Aflatot programme introduces the concept of Children’s Rights to young children. Also, participants will be able to ensure an active learning and child-centred approach while utilising drawing and engaging children with higher order thinking questions.

### Activities Overview:

Game: Tell me about your Drawing	20 min
Explain how the session works	10 min
Divide in group, provide the lesson plan and prepare the practice	15 min
Groups deliver the Aflatot activity	60 min
Final Feedbacks	15 min

### Game: Tell me about your Drawing (20 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on how art and drawing can help children’s learning process; to introduce some active learning strategies to using drawing as a teaching technique; to introduce participants to open-ended, engaging questions.

### Materials:

If possible, provide a wide range of drawing and colouring tools (i.e., coloured pencils, chalk markers, crayons, oil pastels). Otherwise opt for one set of markers or coloured pencils.

Glue, scissors

Various old magazines.

A4 Papers

If possible add some unexpected materials, such as some stickers, or Lego figures etc.

### Steps:

- Place all materials in the middle of the room.
- Ask participants to get into pairs and explain that, in turn, one person will be drawing while the other one will focus on asking questions.
- Explain that each one will have 5 minutes, then you will ask them to swap and invert their roles.
- Explain that the person drawing will be drawing **anything that he/ she wants** but he/she should at no point stop drawing. Explain that this is not an art contest and they do not have to fear they will have to draw something perfect or beautiful. Nobody will judge.
- Explain that while one is drawing the other participant has to ask him/her questions: the questions should be related to the drawing but, following the 'artists' lead, they can move to other subjects based on the artists' answers.
- Invite them to freely use **all the materials** in the room. It might be a good idea to show them what is available, so that they feel less intimidated and more prone to pick what they like.
- After five minutes, inform them that they should invert roles, and now the artists will be asking questions.
- At the end, ask some volunteers to share their experiences. Invite the artists to answer the following questions:
  - “What did you like about the drawing experience? How did you feel as you were drawing? How was it to be questioned while drawing?”
- Then, ask about the questioning experience:
  - “What kind of questions have you asked? Which questions were easier to respond to? Which triggered a conversation? How was it to ask questions while the other one was drawing?”
- Place the emphasis on two points: the importance of free choice and leading role when drawing or doing any art and craft activity (i.e., provide various materials, focus on the process not the result, supporting and not leading their work); the use of open ended questions which do not inquire the appropriateness of the drawing (i.e., is it a dinosaur? What is it then?) But leave the child free to express what they want through the drawing (i.e. tell me about your drawing). Explain that we will look at both aspects in details in the next activities.

## Explain how the Session Works (10 min)

### Objectives:

To introduce participants to the Children's Right activity, to introduce them to the mock lesson type of activity.

### Materials:

Activity feedback Chart (see below)

**Steps:**

- Explain to the participants that they are going to form groups of four or five, that you will give each group a lesson plan from the Aflatot book and give them at least 15min to familiarize themselves with the contents. They will then come up and lead the activity in front of the larger group, as they would be doing if they were in front of their preschool classroom.
- Explain that after each group mock-lesson the plenary will provide feedbacks based on the Activity Feedback chart.
- Emphasise that this time they will focus specifically on using drawing and asking questions in a way that stimulates children's active learning, triggers their interest and emphasises their critical thinking. The chart is designed to focus specifically on the use of **the active learning and child centred approach when asking questions and using drawing as a teaching method**. Remind them that in ECEC settings a child-centred approach is not only part of the teaching practice, but refers to the way the classroom is arranged, the relationships between the facilitator and the children, the ability of the facilitator to observe and listen to the children and give them a leading role in the learning process etc. See for further reference Session 4 Aflatot Approach on Early Childhood, and the related **Active Learning in ECEC Classroom Checklist**.

**Activity Feedback Chart**

- Did the facilitator use an appropriate language for the age group? What about the body language?
- How did the activity (and classroom environment) promote interaction among the children?
- If the children were not required to attend this class, would they? Was the class engaging, stimulating, fun and creative?
- Focusing on the **ECEC Practitioner's Questions**: what kind of questions she/he used? Opened or closed?
- How did they stimulate children's critical thinking and independent reflection?
- Focusing on the **Drawing**: How can drawing help children's learning and development in this activity?
- How did the facilitator ensure a child-centred and active learning approach?
- What were some things you might do different?
- What was something you liked?

**Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plans and prepare the practice (15 min)**

**Objectives:**

To get ready to deliver the Aflatot Activity. To familiarise with the content and structure of the Aflatot book and to integrate the child centred and active learning approach when asking questions and doing an art and crafts activity.

**Materials:**

Lesson Plan A: Aflatot curriculum, Activity 17, “A world for Children”, p. 69

Lesson Plan B: Activity 18. “Our Rights Our Responsibilities”, p.93

**Steps:**

- Ask participants to form groups of four or five.
- Give some groups Lesson Plan A and other Lesson Plan B.
- Emphasise that all groups will prepare the whole mock lesson but focusing in particular on the use of **drawing** as a teaching tool (see Activity 17 Reflect; Activity 18 Reflect) and on their **questioning skills**.
- Again, emphasize that they are going to read the activity and prepare to present a mock lesson. Explain that they do not have to make a plan, the plan is already there. What they have to do is get ready to reproduce the activity as if they would be delivering it in their ECEC setting.
- Help them with their questions. While they are working walk around the groups to make sure the task has been clearly understood.

## Groups Deliver the Aflatot Activity (60 min)

**Objectives:**

To provide a safe environment to practice the teaching methods; to experience how to use art and crafts as an active learning method.

**Steps:**

- Invite one group at the time to deliver the activity.
- While the participants are teaching try and keep notes to help you give feedback later.
- Because of time you will not be able to watch each group deliver the entire activity. Make your own decisions as to how to manage. It helps sometimes to see different groups do different parts of the same activity but make sure that each group will present at least the drawing part (Reflection part of the activity).
- Invite the rest of the group to observe and take notes if needed, but explain that it is not a good idea to play the children’s role. They should react to the facilitators delivering the activity only when called upon explicitly.

## Final Feedbacks (15 min)

**Objectives:**

To allow participants to share their understanding about how to include art and crafts using a child-centred and active learning approach.

**Materials:**

Arts and Crafts Checklist (see below) *Optional*

Questioning Skills Checklist (see below) *Optional*

**Steps:**

- Begin by quickly asking the teachers how they felt the session went.

- Go through some or all of the questions in the Feedback Chart with the big group.
- Add your own comments. Try to be positive but don't be afraid to suggest how things could be done better.
- Make sure to engage participants in a discussion, asking the following question:  
     “How can we ensure that drawing is implemented using an active learning approach?  
     What kind of questions stimulate children’s engagement and participation?”
- Keep in mind the two checklists below: **Arts and Crafts Checklist and Questioning Skills Checklists**. Try to ensure that all points from the two checklists below are covered through the discussion with the group. Otherwise, you can make copies of the checklists, distribute them to the group and read them together and discuss.
- If time allows, ask participants to write down 5 open ended questions that can stimulate children’s creativity and critical thinking about the story “A world for Children” from the Aflatot book. Discuss together the characteristics of these questions and how they stimulate critical thinking.

## Printout: Art and Crafts Checklist

### Art and Crafts Activity Checklist:

There is not one single answer on how to integrate an active learning approach while inviting children to draw, but there are simple tricks that will enhance ECEC practitioner's role as a guide and support in children's creative learning and limit the impulse to be the leading one. In one word: let it go!

- ✓ Never judge the 'beauty' of the drawing. Avoid statements such as "this is ugly" or "a cat does not look like that". Keep in mind that we value the creative expression as an important building block for children's development. We value the process not the product!
- ✓ Avoid colouring books or imitative drawing: When the child is focusing on how "good" the printed picture or your own drawing is, he/ she will limit his/her own creativity
- ✓ Provide plenty of choices of drawing materials and supports and try to avoid stopping them from incorporating non-traditional drawing tools (for example, attaching leaves on the papers).
- ✓ Lack of resources is a weak excuse to limit children's possibility for art and craft activity: use the **Resource corner at** page 197 - 198 of the Aflatot English Manual to explore some natural resources available for your art and craft project. If paper is also non available, use other surfaces: outdoor sandy or muddy areas, raffia, banana leaves, trees barks, jute sacks. Look around you and be creative! Ask around, involve the families in recycling old materials, you will find plenty of possibilities to support your class art works.
- ✓ Let it go! Don't try to always control and lead the activities: let the children decide what materials to use, and *how* to represent what you suggested they should do. If their family portrait looks more like a group of trees that is fine!
- ✓ Stimulate children's critical thinking by asking open ended questions while drawing or at the end.
- ✓ Encourage them to be responsible: invite them to help you clean and re-arrange the room after the drawing session.
- ✓ While part of the art and crafts activities will have a specific learning objectives in mind and will necessarily imply a guiding role of the facilitator, make sure that art and craft is also integrated in the free play. In this way their creative skills are enhanced.

## Printout: Questioning Checklist

### Questioning Skills Checklist

Like with drawing, there is not one single list of suggestions that will help the facilitator integrate a child-centered approach in the way he/ she communicates with children. Nonetheless we often tend to ask children questions in order to get the “right” answer, or to show that they remember information, are disciplined and so on. On the contrary, asking open ended questions can help children’s higher level thinking and stimulate their creativity.

Here are few things one can keep in mind:

- ✓ When asking questions or talking get down to the children’s level
- ✓ Ask open ended question that invite children to **observe or describe what they see /do; predict what will happen; state cause and effect; give a personal opinion, formulate a judgment, and explore feelings.**
- ✓ Make sure you take long poses after each questions: give each child time to reflect
- ✓ If the child does not answer do not get stubborn: try to rephrase the question with different words, or move to a new subject: maybe he/she is not really interested in the topic right now!
- ✓ Listen! Really! And not only to children’s verbal communication: body and facial language are key!
- ✓ Ask questions that relate to the child’s world, real life experience and interests.
- ✓ Use your questions to show that you are Interested! Comment on what they are doing, state it out loud, praise them for their work.
- ✓ Be POSITIVE! Acknowledge their work, their efforts, praise their skills, do not compare between children with sentences like “look at how good Angela is! You should do like her”. Remember that EACH CHILD IS UNIQUE and has a unique set of skills, interests, ability etc.

You can find more on questioning and talking on this document from the US department of Education:

<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/early-learning/talk-read-sing/preschool-en.pdf>

## Session 9: Teaching Practice – using songs and games to introduce children to the concept of Saving, Spending and Sharing

🕒 2h

### Content:

As with drawing, songs and games (individual or group games) are key part of the child pre-school educational experience. Circle time is often structured around a song or a poem, and thematic areas are explored with single or group games.

Music intelligence is “a way of knowing [and] is as much a basic life skill as walking and talking”, indicates Professor Levinowitz (Levinowitz, Lili, 1998. *The Importance of Music in Early Childhood*, Journal of Research in Music Education, 12, 1). It is a natural and simple way of channelling a new learning and introduce new concepts or words to young children.

Similarly, games are central in children’s life: that is why they can be easily used to enrich an activity or as a further educational experience.

We will explore these two methodological practices while at the same time getting familiar with how Saving, Spending and Sharing monetary and non-monetary resources are introduced in the Aflatot book.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be familiar with the way the Aflatot programme introduces the concept of Saving, Spending and Sharing to young children. Also, participants will be able to ensure an active learning and child-centred approach while utilising songs and games as teaching tools.

### Activities Overview:

<b>Game: the Longest Jump</b>	<b>20 min</b>
Explain how the session works	10 min
Divide in group, provide the lesson plan and prepare the practice	15 min
Groups deliver the Aflatot activity	60 min
Final Feedbacks	15 min

### Game: the longest jump (20 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on how to use games as a learning methods; to introduce some active learning strategies in the use of games.

#### Materials:

Some long strings  
Scissors

#### Steps:

- Place one of the strings on the floor, in a straight line.
- Explain that each participant has to jump as far as possible along the string but not two participants can use the same way of jumping. For example, one can jump like a frog, one both feet together etc.
- Record the length of the jump by cutting that length of string after each jump and mark it the participant's name on it.
- If time allows, invite each participant to take a turn. If the group is too big, make the activity last no longer than 5 minutes.
- At the end, invite all participants to have a look at the strings and invite them to order them from the longest to the shortest.
- Once done, ask participants:  
"How did you feel while playing? What do you think a child would learn through this activity? How does it support his/her development?"
- Stress how the activity is an example of a simple way to introduce the concept of distance to young children, or the mathematical idea of more and less. Emphasize how the activity is simple and playful and that using different ways of jumping stimulates children's creativity and avoid using the game in a competitive way as each jump is unique.

## Explain how the Session Works (10 min)

### Objectives:

To introduce participants to the Save, Spend and Share activities; to introduce participants to the mock lesson type of activity.

### Materials:

Activity feedback Chart (see below)

### Steps:

- Explain to the participants that they are going to form groups of four or five, that you will give each group a lesson plan from the Aflatot book and give them at least 15min to familiarize themselves with the content. They will then come up and lead the activity in front of the larger group, as they would be doing if they were in front of their preschool classroom.
- Explain that after each group mock-lesson the plenary will provide feedbacks based on the Activity Feedback chart.
- Emphasise that this time they will focus specifically on using songs and games in a way that stimulates children's active learning, triggers their interest and emphasises their critical thinking. The chart is designed to focus specifically on the use of **the active learning and child centred approach when using songs and games**. Remind them that in ECEC settings a child-centred approach is not only part of the teaching practice, but refers to the way the classroom is arranged, the relationships between the facilitator and the children, the ability of the facilitator to observe and listen to the children.

### Activity Feedback Chart

- Did the facilitator use an appropriate language for the age group? What about the body language?
- Did the facilitator encourage children’s critical thinking with open ended questions?
- How did the activity (and classroom environment) promote interaction among the children?
- If the children were not required to attend this class, would they? Was the class engaging, stimulating, fun and creative?
- Focusing on the **games**: what kind of games were used?
- How did the games help children’s holistic development?
- How did they stimulate children’s critical thinking and independent reflection?
- Focusing on the **Songs/Poems**: How can singing help children’s learning and development in this activity?
- How did the facilitator ensure a child-centred and active learning approach?
- What were some things you might do different?
- What was something you liked?

### Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plans and prepare the practice (15 min)

#### Objectives:

To get ready to deliver the Aflatot Activity. To familiarise with the content and structure of the Aflatot book and to integrate the child centred and active learning approach when integrating songs and games in the activity.

#### Materials:

Lesson Plan A: Aflatot Curriculum Activity 32, “I can reach my Dreams”, p. 142

Lesson Plan B: Activity 39, “1...2...3... Aflatoun Coins”, p. 167

#### Steps:

- Ask participants to form groups of four or five.
- Give some groups Lesson Plan A and other Lesson Plan B.
- Emphasise that groups with lesson plan A will prepare the whole mock lesson but focusing in particular on the use of **songs (Activity 32 – Learn)**, while groups with lesson plan B will focus on the use of **games (Activity 39 Start)**.
- Again, emphasize that they are going to read the activity and prepare to present a mock lesson. Explain that they do not have to make a plan, the plan is already there. What they have to do is get ready to reproduce the activity as if they would be delivering it in their ECEC setting.
- Help them with their questions. While they are working walk around the groups to make sure the task has been clearly understood.

### Groups Deliver the Aflatot Activity (60 min)

#### Objectives:

To provide a safe environment to practice their teaching methods, to experience how to utilise songs and games as an active learning method.

### Steps:

- Invite one group at the time to deliver the activity to the whole group.
- While the participants are teaching try and keep notes to help you give feedback later.
- Because of time you will not be able to watch each group deliver the entire activity. Make your own decisions as to how to manage. It helps sometimes to see different groups do different parts of the same activity but make sure that each group will present at least the **song** and **game** part.
- Invite the rest of the group to observe and take notes if needed, but explain that it is not a good idea to play the children's role. They should react to the facilitators delivering the activity only when called upon explicitly.

## Final Feedbacks (15 min)

### Objectives:

To allow participants to share their understanding about how implement songs and games using a child-centred and active learning approach.

### Materials:

Songs and Poems Checklist (see below) *optional*

Games Checklist (see below) *optional*

### Steps:

- Begin by quickly asking the teachers how they felt the session went.
- Go through some or all of the questions in the Feedback Chart with the big group.
- Add your own comments. Try to be positive but don't be afraid to suggest how things could be done better.
- Make sure to engage participants in a discussion, asking the following question:  
"How can we ensure that songs and games are implemented using an active learning and child centred approach?"
- Keep in mind the two checklists below: **Songs and Poems Checklist** and **Games Checklists**. Try to ensure that all points from the two checklists below are covered through the discussion with the group. Otherwise, you can make copies of the checklists, distribute them to the group and read them together.

## Printout: Songs and Poem /Games Checklist

### Songs and Poems Checklist:

- ✓ Do not assume what children might like: provide a variety of music (local, international, children's songs, classical, pop etc.), observe what each child likes
- ✓ Accompany music or poetry with body movements: create a rhythm, or mime some of the lyrics. It helps engage children and stimulate gross motor skills.
- ✓ Follow children's lead: let them pick the music, let them define the body movements
- ✓ Chose the music based on the time of the day: use relaxing music to help them get ready for nap time, or energetic and fun music to introduce a new topic.
- ✓ Do not worry about your voice and your singing ability! It is not a singing contest.
- ✓ Again, restrain yourself from praising some children and scolding others for their singing abilities. It is not about the result, it is about the process!
- ✓ Don't be afraid to let children invent songs and poems!

### Games Checklist:

Games, play and learn are strongly connected: from infancy till adulthood, human beings *play* as learning experience. Including games in the learning practice is therefore of paramount importance. Remember that:

- ✓ Games are essential in introducing children to new concepts, BUT we should also include free play and purposeless games in the children's daily routines (more on this will be explored in the session on free play).
- ✓ Be aware of children's abilities and diversities: use appropriate games for each child.
- ✓ Observe children! Through observation you can identify their interests and build on the games based on what they are passionate about.

## Session 10: The Central Role of Free Play

🕒 1h 20 min

### Content:

The more children are allowed to play freely, the more their play becomes complex, cognitively and socially demanding; while children play all of the developmental domains are engaged and they learn in a simple, self-directed and self-initiated way.

Despite the abundant evidence of the positive impacts of giving children free time to play on their own, children at a younger and younger age are being required to reach specific educational targets and the time for free play is being eroded.

We do not aim at supporting an ECEC setting which focuses exclusively on free play, but we do think that free play should be encouraged as it fosters children's development in a fun and unstructured way while at the same time creating an environment of trust, independence and respect.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants recognise the importance of free play and they will identify the adult's role during, before and after children's free play.

### Activities Overview:

Game: Let's Play	15 min
Why Free Play?	30 min
Brainstorming: The roles of the adults in Free Play	20 min
Free Play and Play-Based Learning	15 min

### Game: Let's Play (15 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on what free play is.

#### Materials:

If possible, bring some typical children playing materials: building blocks, dolls, toy cars, miniatures, drawing materials.

Otherwise you can simply invite participants to use their creativity and re-purpose objects of the room.

#### Steps:

- If available, place the playing objects in various corners of the room.
- Explain that, since the day/workshop has been long and hard, they deserve a break.

- Invite them to play freely in the room. Explain that there is no rule: they can take the next 5 minutes to use the room and its components to do whatever they want, individually, in groups or in pairs, as they prefer.
- While the participants play observe them and take note of the various activities they engage with. It might be very likely that they will feel shy or insecure and they will simply do nothing. Do not worry, it is part of the activity.
- After five minutes ask them to go back at their places and encourage them to discuss about what just happened. Ask the following questions:  
 “What kind of instructions have I given? What did I do while you were playing? How did you feel? What kind of activities did you engage with? What did you like about these 5 minutes of free play? What did you dislike?”
- Explain that what they just did was playing freely and that letting children play on their own with little interference from the ECEC practitioner should be a key component of the ECEC daily routine.

## Why Free Play? (30 min)

### Objectives:

To help participants identify the benefits of free play in early childhood.

### Materials:

Copies of the Free Play Scenarios (see below)

Flipchart

Markers

Copies of Free Play Checklist (see below) *Optional*

### Steps:

- Ask participants to work in pairs.
- Provide each pair with the following **free play scenarios** and explain that they are in a preschool class and each scenario represents what they are seeing:

**Printout: Free Play Scenarios**

<b>A child cuddling a doll</b>
<b>A group of children pretending to bake and sell cakes made of sand. Another child is the buyer.</b>
<b>A toddler taking a banana and putting it next to his ear, saying "Hello!"</b>
<b>A group of children building a tower with blocks</b>
<b>Two toddlers placing all blocks in a corner, grouped per colour</b>
<b>Two children comparing the height of their towers of blocks</b>
<b>Two children exploring an ant nest in the outdoor area</b>
<b>A group of children jumping to grab the leaves of a tree in the outdoor area</b>
<b>A group of children creating a mini-market together</b>

- Explain that they have 15 minutes to read the scenarios. Invite them to discuss together how each scenario contributes to the development of certain **abilities and skills** of the children. Invite them to take notes of their answers.
- Once done, invite each pair to indicate their answers. Make sure that the answers are not repeated, but engage the whole group by asking: “Who has a different idea?”
- Note down the answers on a flipchart. Beneath you can see an example of how the flipchart might look like.

<b>Skills and Abilities developed through Free Play</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use creativity and imagination to represent objects, people or activities</li> <li>✓ Language and Speech development</li> <li>✓ Social Skills such as interacting with others, conflict resolution etc.</li> <li>✓ Develops narrative capacity or storytelling abilities</li> <li>✓ Stimulates their gross or fine motor skills (climbing, jumping, holding a pen etc.)</li> <li>✓ Explore the natural environment</li> <li>✓ Stimulates pre-mathematic skills such as concept of more or less, ordering objects etc.</li> <li>✓ Allows for the expression of emotions in a free way</li> <li>✓ Explore materials and discover their properties</li> </ul>



- Emphasise how free play contributes to school readiness and child development as much as structured activity do. At the same time, with free play, children’s learning and development is strongly in their hands.
- If you feel you need more support, below you can find a table that gives some further explanations on the **Free play Checklist** below. Use it to support the facilitation or print it for the participants if needed.

## Printout: Free Play Checklist

### Free play Checklist:

Through free play children:

- ✓ explore materials and discover their properties
- ✓ use their knowledge of materials to play imaginatively
- ✓ express their emotions and reveal their inner feelings
- ✓ come to terms with traumatic experiences
- ✓ maintain emotional balance, physical and mental health, and well-being
- ✓ struggle with issues such as birth and death, good and evil, and power and powerlessness
- ✓ develop a sense of who they are, their value and that of others
- ✓ learn social skills of sharing, turn-taking and negotiation
- ✓ deal with conflict and learn to negotiate
- ✓ solve problems, moving from support to independence
- ✓ develop communication and language skills
- ✓ repeat patterns that reflect their prevailing interests and concerns

*Source: Free Play in Early Childhood - A literature review,  
Play England, Making Space for Play*

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/120426/free-play-in-early-childhood.pdf>

## Brainstorming: The Role of the Adults in Free Play (20 min)

### Objectives:

Identify the role of the ECEC practitioners during and after children's free play.

### Materials:

Post-it notes

Flipchart

Markers

### Steps:

- Reiterate that here we are focusing in particular on children's free play, that means self-initiated and self-lead play. Nonetheless adults have a crucial role.
- Engage participants in a brainstorming activity. Give each participant a couple of post-it notes and invite them to note on each post-it one role they think adults should have in relation to children free play.
- After a few minutes invite participants to give their answers and note them down on a flipchart.
- Make sure that the following points are covered in the discussion:
  - ✓ Adults' role is to provide time to free play in the daily ECEC routine
  - ✓ Adults' role is to create an emotionally and psychologically suitable environment in which children feel secure and valued, trusted and able to act independently (we will explore this aspect more in detail in Session 17: the Emotional Space)
  - ✓ Adults' role is to create a physically safe environment (we will explore this further in Session 16: the space around us: the physical space )
  - ✓ Adults' role is to observe children as they play: observation is crucial in identifying children interests and tailor make the activities based on these interests; it is also necessary to better understand each child, his/her skills and dispositions.
  - ✓ Adults' role is to interact, based on the circumstances. Learning when and how to interact during free play is a difficult and delicate skill: adults should give children the opportunity to play independently, make free choices, make mistakes, to get into arguments and learn to solve them independently. At the same time, the adults should be role models and should always point out when discriminating behaviours are happening, challenging stereotypes and anti-social attitudes. The interaction can also serve to **extend the play** and use it for the purposes of the learning practice. For example, if during free play some children are discussing who won more marbles in a certain game, the teacher can start the lesson after free play by inviting the children to show the various amounts of marbles each child won and invite them to discuss which amount they think is more or less, introducing some pre-mathematical concept.

## Free Play and Play-Based Learning (15 min)

### Objectives:

To introduce participants to the play based learning approach of the Aflatot curriculum and understand how free play is part of play based learning.

**Materials:**

None

**Steps:**

- Read out loud the following sentence to the whole group:  
“Enforced learning will not stay in the mind. So avoid compulsion and let your children’s lessons take the form of play.” (Plato, *the Republic*)
- Invite them to reflect on the meaning of the sentence by asking:  
“What does it mean to ‘let the lessons take the form of play’? How can we do that?”
- Explain that the Aflatot curriculum introduces children to new concepts and skills through play: children are encouraged to use drama, drawing, singing, games while learning new things.
- Explain that while free play is an integral and central part of a play based curriculum, it is not the same thing: free play is independent and child-led play, while play based learning uses play to best implement the curriculum.
- Both free play and play based learning are crucial in the Aflatot programme.

**Facilitation Tips:**

Want to read more about Free Play and Play Based Learning? Have a look at these resources.

Play in the Early Years: [https://web.sonoma.edu/tcs/play\\_key\\_to\\_success.pdf](https://web.sonoma.edu/tcs/play_key_to_success.pdf)

Free Play in Early Childhood: a Literature review: <http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/120426/free-play-in-early-childhood.pdf>

Free Play in Early Childhood Education: A phenomenological Study  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03004430.2015.1083558?needAccess=true>

## Session 11: Being Creative with Your Resources: Organising the Aflatot Fair

🕒 2h 40 min

### Content:

The Aflatoun Fair is one of the essential activities of the Aflatot programme: when this activity is implemented using a child-centred approach, children are encouraged to use all the concepts and skills that they have learnt and developed throughout the curriculum to set up a basic enterprise. In the Aflatot book you will find two example of activities to help ECEC practitioners guide children in the setup of the enterprise. Nonetheless, these are just two examples: the Aflatot programme encourages teachers to be creative and let children be creative and come up with other ideas.

This session is designed to help participants brainstorm critically on the main steps they will need to take to implement such an activity with the children and on how to do that while keeping the children at the centre of the learning process.

Finally, trying to implement such a plan can be challenging when we work in an ECEC setting with limited resources: nonetheless, this should not be a reason not to do it. This session is also designed to help participants reflect on the creative use of local, free and available resources that can help us during the teaching practice.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session the participants will have learned why the Aflatoun Fair is one of Aflatot essential activities and how to plan and organise one with the children. They will also learn to make use of local resources in a creative way.

### Activities Overview:

Our available resources	30 min
Explain how the session works	10 min
Divide in groups, Provide the lesson plans and design an Aflatoun Fair	60 min
Group Presentation	60 min

### Our Available Resources (30 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on what kind of free resources they can find in their setting which can help the teaching practice and support children's active learning.

#### Materials:

If the training participants are all from the same country/region, bring some resources that are abundantly available, easy to find and free in that area. The resources should be natural and low cost; for example: leaves, stones, beans, sand, water jar, but also a "junk bag" with old empty and clean plastic bottles, cardboards, empty toilet rolls etc. Make sure that all the materials are clean and safe to use.

Make sure to bring enough resources (for example, bring a big handful of stones, not just one or two) and differentiate the resources (do not only bring stones, but also beans, old paper etc.).

**Steps:**

- Invite participants to split in small groups.
- Give each group one specific resource: for example, one group will receive some stones, another one the beans, one the “junk bag”, another one the sand, one the water jar.
- Invite each group to reflect on how they could use the material received to construct simple activities for pre-school children with the materials available.
- Explain that they have 10 minutes to reflect and to get ready to show the entire group how they are planning to use the materials. They should not only explain what they will do, but do that directly.
- After 10 minutes, invite each group to show their activities in front of the bigger group. Explain that each group has 5 minute to present their activities.
- At the end of each presentation invite each group to build on what they saw. Invite them to discuss using the following questions:  
“Is there any other activity that could be invented using these resources? How could the materials utilised stimulate children’s pre-mathematical knowledge? How could we use it to foster pre-literacy skills? How could we use it to support children’s creative /social/ emotional development?”

**Facilitation Tips:**

If you need support to stimulate them in their creative thinking, you can have a look at these resources here:

*Using Locally Resourced Low Cost Materials to Extend Young Children’s Learning*, UNESCO, 2008: This short document has a very useful list of simple activities that you can do using various types of resources. Have a look here: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001592/159247e.pdf>

Also, do not forget to keep an eye at the **Aflatot Resource Corner**, at page 197-198 of the **Aflatot Book, English Version**.

## Explain how the session works (10 min)

### Objectives:

To introduce participants to the Aflatoun Fair activity.

### Materials:

Aflatot Activities 44, 44a and 44b (page 189 – 194)

Aflatoun Fair Feedback Chart (see below)

Additional resources from the previous activity

Flipchart

Markers

### Steps:

- Explain to the participants that they are going to form groups of four or five, that you will give each group a lesson plan from the Aflatot book focusing on the Aflatoun Fair, the final and essential activity of the Aflatot programme.
- Explain to the participants that the objective of this exercise is to help participants engage in some rigorous and realistic thinking of all the stages they will need to go through to work with children to develop and implement an Aflatoun Fair.
- Explain that they will have at least 15min to familiarize themselves with the contents.
- Afterwards they will have to create a small Aflatoun Fair with their team-mates. Explain that they can follow what they will read in the Aflatot activity and prepare an exhibition or a market day, but they can also be creative and plan another type of activity.
- Show them the **Aflatoun Fair Feedback Chart** on the wall and explain that:
  - The activity and the plan they will develop should be as realistic as possible
  - It should ensure children's active learning and the child centred approach
  - The plan should include a realistic budget
  - They should use the questions from the Aflatoun Fair Feedback Chart to help with the planning
- Explain that they have 50 minutes to read the activity and prepare their own plan. Afterwards they will present to the larger group.
- Afterwards they will then come up and present their plan in front of the larger group.
- Explain that after each group plan, the plenary will provide feedbacks based on the Aflatoun Fair Feedback chart.

### **Aflatoun Fair Feedback Chart**

#### *Children's active participation and learning:*

- Is the planned activity appropriate for the age group? Why? Why not?
- Were children involved during the planning and/or implementation of the activity? How?
- Does the plan and activity includes and ensure active participation of children with special needs?
- If the children were not required to participate to this activity, would they? Was the planned activity engaging, stimulating, fun and creative?
- How did the activity (and environment) promote interaction among the children?
- How did the group ensure a child-centred and active learning approach in the panning of the activity and in the activity itself?

#### *Plan Feasibility:*

- What kind of monetary and/or non-monetary resources will you need to implement the project?
- Where will you get the needed resources?
- Is the plan and activity safe for the children?

#### *Community Involvement:*

- Is the headmaster on-board? What about the families?
- How will you ensure family participation?
  
- What were some things you might do different?
- What was something you liked?

### **Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plans and design an Aflatoun Fair (60 min)**

#### **Objectives:**

To encourage participants to plan an Aflatoun Fair so that they can anticipate all the steps, opportunities and challenges that practitioners and children will encounter when they come to do the same thing in real life. To integrate the child-centred and active learning approach when planning an Aflatoun Fair.

#### **Materials:**

Copies of Lesson Plan 1 (Aflatot Activity 44, 44a) and Lesson Plan 2 (Aflatot Activity 44 and 44b)

#### **Steps:**

- Ask participants to form groups of four or five.

- Give some groups Lesson Plan 1 and other Lesson Plan 2.
- Help them with their questions. While they are working walk around the groups to make sure the task has been clearly understood.

## **Groups Presentations (60 min)**

### **Objectives:**

To assess the viability of the activity suggested. To assess the implementation of the child-centred and active learning approach in the planning of the activity.

### **Steps:**

- Invite one group at the time to come up and present.
- While the participants are presenting try and keep notes to help you give feedback later.
- After the presentation you might want to run through the Aflatoun Fair Feedback Checklist questions and invite the audience to provide their inputs.

## Session 12: Family Involvement – Why is it important? Why is it challenging?

🕒 1h 35 min

### Content:

Parental and Family Involvement is essential in Early Childhood Education. Through family involvement, the learning achieved in the pre-school setting is sustained and enhanced. Also, families can be a valuable ally in our work: they can help us listen and understand the children better. They can also support activities in various ways (being chaperons during outdoor visits, contributing to the learning by sharing their experiences and skills etc.).

While family participation and involvement in the growing and learning process is essential, receiving it is not always easy. Each facilitator might face various types of challenges when trying to establish regular communication and interaction with families. The next session has been designed to understand why family involvement is crucial, especially for this age group, and to identify the challenges facilitators face in communicating with and involving families.

### Objectives:

Participants understand the importance of family involvement and reflect on why it can be challenging.

### Activities:

<b><i>Brainstorming: why Family Involvement?</i></b>	<b>15 min</b>
<b><i>What do I think about when I think about “Parents”?</i></b>	10 min
<b><i>In the shoes of...: Involvement Challenges and Solutions</i></b>	40 min
<b><i>Group Presentations</i></b>	30 min

## Brainstorming: Why Family Involvement? (15 min)

### Objectives:

To identify the main reasons why family involvement is crucial in an ECEC settings.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- Ask participants to think about family involvement in a pre-school:  
“What does *family involvement* in Early Childhood Education mean for you? Can you give some examples? Why is family involvement important? What happens when parents and families are not involved?”
- Reflect on the various reasons why involving parents is useful. Invite participants to list how and when parental presence in the classroom and regular contacts with parents could represent an added value and a useful resource.

- In particular, point out how parents and families could also represent a resource to conduct certain activities and at the same time broaden the discussion reflecting on how parental involvement goes beyond being just an extra pair of helping hands in the classroom or during an outing.
- To help you guide the discussion, have a look at the table "Positive Aspects of Family involvement" below and try to make sure most of the points on the table are covered.

#### ***Positive Aspects of Family Involvement***

Reinforce the Educational Approach  
 Extend Children's Learning and development outside the classroom  
 Embed the Early Childhood Education and Care within community  
 Provides facilitators with further understanding of each child's life  
 Helps create trust between facilitators and parents  
 Parents and Families can be a practical resource for classroom activity and outing  
 Support children's well-being by fostering the creation of a harmonious environment around them  
 Helps children's educational success well into their future as learners<sup>1</sup>

### **What Do I Think About When I Think About "Parents"? (10 min)**

#### **Objectives:**

To identify positive and negative stereotypes that might be attributed to parents. Point out different ways of looking at and interpreting the roles of parents.

#### **Materials:**

Post-it notes or small pieces of paper;  
 Pens  
 Flipchart

#### **Steps:**

- Give each participant one piece of paper or post-it note and make sure everyone has a pen.
- Explain that you will say a word, and they have to write down the first thing that comes to their mind when they hear that word.
- Start with an example and say the word "child".
- Give participants a few seconds to write something down. Then ask a few of them to read what they wrote.
- Now repeat the process, this time using the word "parents".
- Let the participants write down their words, and ask them to read what they associated with the word "parents".
- Note down a few answers on the flipchart and point out how we all have different ideas associated with "parents": it can be related to the home environment, to a sense of security, to their work as ECEC facilitators.

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<sup>1</sup> During the last 20 years extensive research has been dedicated to the analysis of the impact of family involvement in children's life and education. For an extensive review of the latest research on the topic have a look at Kernan, Margaret (2012), *Parental Involvement in Early Learning: a Review of Research, Policy and Good Practices*, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI) Leiden on behalf of Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague, also available online : <https://icdi.nl/media/uploads/publications/parental-involvement-in-early-learning.pdf>

- Ask participants to reflect on how they think about “the parents” in their everyday work as facilitators: look at the flipchart for suggestions if they had previously mentioned anything about that, or simply ask participants to give you some ideas.
- Reflect together on some of the positive or negative stereotypical views of parents. Ask them: “What do you think are the typical positive or negative stereotypes facilitators in pre-school settings have towards parents?”

## In the shoes of...: Involvement Challenges and Solutions (40 min)

### Objectives:

To identify together challenges that teachers face when trying to involve parents and challenges parents face when trying to participate in pre-school activities. To look for solutions together.

### Materials:

4 - 6 Posters, depending on the number of groups: Half of the posters should have the heading “*Why is it difficult for PARENTS to be involved in children’s education?*”; the other half should have the heading “*Why is it difficult for TEACHERS to involve parents in children education?*”

Markers.

### Steps:

- Ask participants to split in an even number of groups (4 or 6), each group with three to five participants. Make sure to have at hand one poster with heading per group (see materials).
- Give each group a name, for example, group A, B, C and D.
- Explain that half of the groups will represent the **parents** and the other half the **facilitators**. For example, groups A and B will represent the **parents**. Groups C and D will represent the **facilitators**.
- Give each **parents’ group** the poster which states “Why is it difficult for PARENTS to be involved in children’s education?” Give each **facilitator’s group** the poster which states: “Why is it difficult for TEACHERS to involve parents in children’s education?” Distribute a marker per group.
- Make it clear that during this activity they really have to put themselves in the shoes of the category (teachers or parents) they have been assigned to and try to answer the questions from the perspective of that specific category. If they are parents they should think like parents would and forget their role as facilitators and vice versa.
- Give participants 20 minutes to reflect on the questions and note down their answers on the poster. Take this time to walk around the groups and make sure the tasks are clear.
- After 20 minutes, invite one person from each group to be the representative.
- Ask each group representative to remain at his/her place with the poster.
- At the same time, ask all other group members of the **parents’ group** to swap place with the **facilitators’ groups** and go sit where the facilitators’ poster is, together with the representative of the facilitator’s group.
- Ask the **facilitators’ group** to do the same, and take the place and poster that was previously developed by the **parents’ group**, sitting together with one representative of the parents’ group. These last two steps can be a bit confusing: reiterate the instructions if needed, and move from group to group to help them rearrange the groups.

- Explain that now the **parents' groups** will be working on the poster that has been drafted by the **facilitators**, while the **facilitators** will work on the poster drafted by the **parents**. The group representative will be there to explain to the new-comers what is written on the poster and clarify it when necessary. The group will have to reflect on the explanation and answers presented on the poster they have in front of them and try to propose solutions to overcome the challenges previously identified by the previous group. The representative should not engage in the debate, but only explain what has been discussed before, by the previous group. Encourage the groups to note their comments and solutions down on the poster.
- Give the groups 10 minutes to discuss and note down their solutions on the posters. During this time, walk around the groups to make sure the task was clearly understood.

## Group Presentations (30 min)

### Objectives:

To summarise the challenges of parental involvement and solutions identified. To point out the unexpected stereotypes that could prevent a positive interaction between the ECEC setting and the home setting.

### Materials:

Participants Posters of previous activity "In the shoes of..."

### Steps:

- Ask each group to present the last poster they were working on. Invite each group to identify the issues and challenges pointed out in their poster by the previous group, which they did not expect or did not anticipate.
- Give each group 5 minutes to present.

## Session 13: Family Involvement – Which Strategy?

🕒 1h 15 min

### Content:

Now that we have recognised the importance of family involvement and identified some challenges, it is necessary to draft strategies to overcome these issues. The next session will first recognise the various settings and contexts teachers are working in, and the different possibilities available in terms of interaction with parents and families. We will then analyse the diverse strategies for interaction suggested in the Aflatot programme to identify which ones would work best for each individual case. It will also emphasise that not all strategies need to be used, but each facilitator can adopt the ones that are most suitable for his or her needs. Furthermore, this session will also help facilitators reflect on the needs of the families and how different strategies could help address specific expectations, cultural environments, and contexts.

### Objectives:

Participants are familiar with the Family Involvement strategies included in the Aflatot manual and are able to use and adapt the different tools proposed to the facilitators' and families' specific context and needs.

### Activities:

<b><i>Brainstorming: our moments of interaction</i></b>	<b>15 min</b>
<b><i>The Aflatot strategies for Family Involvement</i></b>	30 min
<b><i>Group Presentations</i></b>	30 min

### Brainstorming: our moments of interaction (15 min)

#### Objectives:

Recognise that each facilitator might have different opportunities to interact with families and realise that each context and family environment might require different interaction strategies.

#### Materials:

None

#### Steps:

- Ask the participants to think about the moments of interaction they have with the children's families. Ask them to reflect on the form of the interaction using the following questions:  
"What are the reasons for these interactions? Are they daily or do they happen only on special occasion? What is the setting? Are these moments planned or unplanned and accidental?"
- Point out the various possibilities for interaction, the different motivations and reactions on the side of the teachers and families. Explain how interaction opportunities are valuable moments to establish a positive bridge between the ECEC setting and the family environment. For example, if parents appear to be impatient and in a hurry during some of the spontaneous interactions, maybe this is not the best moment to involve them in lengthy discussions, such as family

participation in the next Aflatot activity. Nonetheless, these short interactions are still a crucial resource to establish a positive relationship with parents. Using these moments to greet parents by their name, handing over a nice drawing done by their child, shaking hands, etc. are simple tricks to create positive basic contact. As much as these gestures might seem simple and insignificant, they help build a relationship with the family which is useful in creating trust and fostering further involvement. It is important to help participants reflect on these various opportunities and help them identify how to use them strategically.

- Now reflect together on the types of questions and the motivation of the interaction:  
“Do the families ask questions? What kind of questions? What do you think is the motivation and need for parents to seek interaction?”
- Point out how teachers might have specific needs to interact with families, and that families at the same time have their interests and motivations to interact with teachers. Reflect together on the importance of acknowledging these needs of the family to foster a beneficial cooperation between school and home setting.

## **The Aflatot strategies for Family Involvement (30 min)**

### **Objectives:**

To familiarise and explore the content of the Aflatot Family Toolkit, the tip boxes and the family handouts included in the Aflatot curriculum. As well as identifying whether these strategies for communication with families are suitable for the participants, and how they can be adapted to our needs and the needs of the families.

### **Materials:**

Lesson Plan A – Family Toolkit Introduction and Activity 1, “Making Choices Together”, p. 1

Lesson Plan B – Aflatot Curriculum Activity 1, “Aflatoun’s Journey”, p.15

Lesson Plan C – Aflatot Curriculum Activity 4, “Aflatoun Journey box”, p.26

Lesson Plan D – Aflatot Curriculum Activity 14, “What is My Job?”, p.57

Flipchart and markers

Flipchart with Activity Feedback Chart (see below)

### Steps:

- Briefly explain that the Aflatot programme entails different tools to help teachers and facilitators communicate with families and try to involve them in the Aflatot activities. Explain that there are 4 main strategies (see box **The Aflatot Family Involvement Strategies**, below).
- Explain that each tool is flexible, and they can be adapted to the needs of the facilitator.
- Ask participants to form 4 groups (A, B, C, and D). Give each group a flipchart, markers and copies of the corresponding handouts as described in the Materials box (group A-Lesson plan A etc.).
- Explain that each handout represents one of the different strategies for family involvement.
- Show participants the **Activity Feedback Chart** (see below) on the wall and encourage participants to read the document and reflect on the questions on the flipchart.
- Give participants 20 minutes to discuss and note their answers down on the flipchart.

### Activity Feedback Chart:

- Is this strategy feasible/applicable in your context? Why? How would you adapt it?
- What could be some of the families' reactions?
- What are challenges to parental involvement in your context? How could you present this activity to overcome these challenges?
- Do you think this activity could help families familiarize with Aflatot?
- Would it help them understand the importance of parental support in ECEC? Why? How? What could be done better? How would you change it?
- How could you involve both fathers and mothers?

## Group Presentations (30 min)

### Objectives:

To discuss how the different Aflatot family involvement strategies could be implemented and which ones are more suitable for each individual need. Identify how they could be contextualised and improved.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- Ask each group to present the poster they have been working on.
- Invite each group to identify how each activity could be adapted to best suit each specific need.
- Give each group 5 minutes to present

## Facilitator Summing-Up (5 min)

### Objectives:

To summarise the main outcomes of the previous activity

**Materials:**

None

**Steps:**

- Summarise the main outcome of the previous activity
- Point out again how each context needs specific strategies to ensure parental involvement. Reiterate that all the activities presented are suggestions to support teachers and facilitators. All of them can be adapted and contextualised according to each specific need and the diversity of the tools has been developed to help teachers and facilitators make use of different possible approaches, based on their needs, context, cultural settings, and on the needs and motivations of families.

**Facilitation Tips: The Aflatot family Involvement Strategies**

*Do you need to refresh your memory about The Aflatot Family Involvement Strategies? Here is a short summary, you can also have a look at the Aflatot Book, Family Toolkit, right at the end of the Aflatot Manual, English version.*

Aflatot Programme includes 4 strategies to help teachers and facilitators communicate with families and involve them in the pre-school activities.

1. **Handout notes to Families:** These notes are included at the end of some of the Aflatot curriculum activities (see activities 4 and 14): they are short letters that the facilitators can photocopy and give to families. They aim at: informing families about activities which are happening, suggest simple follow –up home activities to be conducted by families and children together; invite families to participate during some of the pre-school activity.
2. **Tip Boxes:** Are also included in the Aflatot curriculum (see activity 4). Some of these tip boxes provide simple suggestions for everyday communication or interaction with families. They are particularly suitable when any form of planned and structured interaction is not possible.
3. **Family Toolkit activities:** The Family toolkit is at the very end of the Aflatot curriculum. It is a series of activities designed to structure gathering moments with families in which the families can become familiar with the content of the Aflatot programme, learn how to use a simple strategy to support further learning at home. These suggested activities are suitable for more formal and structured pre - school – family gathering. The toolkit proposes a total of 14 activities, but it is up to the teachers and facilitator to choose how many to conduct, which one and for how long.
4. **The Aflatot training:** These training sessions specifically targeting parental involvement are another one of the strategies embedded in the Aflatot programme to help teachers define their own approach towards parental involvement.

## Session 14: The Outdoor Space – Contextualising the Aflatot Activities

⌵ 2h 10 min

### Content:

The outdoor space plays a central role in children’s development. Being outdoor stimulates their fine and gross motor skills as they explore the environment, it enhances their cognitive development as they make sense of the natural phenomena around them, etc. There is plenty of research that shows that guided or free play outdoor is essential for pre-school aged children. For this reason the Aflatot programme incentivizes ECEC practitioners to conduct some of the activities outdoor. Nonetheless it is essential to consider that each setting is different and going outdoor might present a challenge in certain context. For this reason it is a good idea to help participant learn how to plan a safe and effective outdoor activity and how to contextualise it to fit their environment and their cultural constraints. It is important to use this session to stress the need for activity adaptation not only of this activity but of all Aflatot materials.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will learn how to use the outdoor space as a resource and organise effective and safe outdoor visits. Participants will also experience the flexibility of the Aflatot materials and work on contextualisation together.

### Activities Overview:

Brainstorming: Outdoor Activities as Active Learning Teaching Practices	15 min
Groups plan and Outdoor Activity	<b>50 min</b>
Groups present the plan	<b>40 min</b>
Contextualisation: the Aflatot book as a flexible guide	<b>20 min</b>

### Brainstorming: Outdoor Activities as Active Learning Teaching Practices (15 min)

#### Objectives:

To identify how the outdoor space supports children’s holistic development

#### Materials:

None

#### Steps:

- Explain that Outdoor Activities are one of the Aflatot essential activities (refer back to Session 2 if needed, and to the **Aflatot book introduction**). Encourage participants to think of why outdoor activities are so important.
- Trigger a discussion with the whole group asking:

“How do you think free outdoor play can stimulate children’s development? How can it contribute to their physical/ emotional/ cognitive/ social development?”

- Encourage participants to reflect on the opportunities they have in their community to conduct the children outside the ECEC settings and what kind of outdoor spaces they can use:  
“Are there plants? Trees? Are there public playgrounds? Are there squares? How can we use these different spaces? What kind of activities could we conduct? Would children enjoy being outside? Why?”
- Reinforce the idea that there are many different ways of being outside and many different possibilities of using the outdoor space as a resource. Remind participants to be creative in the way they integrate the Aflatot activities within their setting and to adapt them to their context.

## Participants plan an outdoor activity (50 min)

### Objectives:

To show participants how the Aflatot book integrates the outdoor space as a useful teaching resource and to encourage participants to imagine how such outdoor activity might be contextualised in their setting. Also, to reflect on how to effectively plan a safe outdoor activity with children.

### Materials:

Aflatot curriculum Activity 29, “Nature around us”, p. 130

Post-it notes or small pieces of paper

Flipcharts

Markers

Outdoor Activity feedback Chart (see below)

### Steps:

- Start by encouraging participants to discuss safety issues and give each participant a post-it note.
- Ask each participant to work in pairs and define 3 safety rules for outdoor activities.
- Ask the participants to share what they wrote while you note down their answers on a flipchart. Try to cluster the answers together when they are similar.
- Point out that you just developed together a **safe outdoor activities checklist**. This should guide them as they plan their outdoor activities in the future.
- Now that the safety rules are stated, ask participants to form small groups of 4 to 5 people.
- Give each group copies of Activity 29, “Nature around us” from the Aflatot curriculum and invite each group to start by reading the activity.
- Once they are done, ask each group to plan an outdoor activity for their preschool class. Invite them to be as realistic as possible.

- Show them the **Outdoor Activity feedback Chart** on the wall and invite them to follow the questions as they plan the activity.

### **Outdoor Activity feedback Chart**

- ✓ Has the group considered all relevant safety measures to conduct the outdoor activity?
- ✓ Would the planned activity be stimulating of children's active learning? How?
- ✓ Did the group involve children in the planning and development of the activity? How?
- ✓ What did you like about this plan?
- ✓ How old are the children involved?
- ✓ How many children are joining?
- ✓ Who else is coming?
- ✓ Where are you going?
- ✓ What could be possible challenges to the implementation of the activity?
- ✓ Could we involve parents? How?
- ✓ Could we involve children in the planning? How?
- ✓ Could we involve other community members? How?
- ✓ What will you do with the children? Is it going to be a free play moment or will you do some activities?

Explain that they do not need to answer the questions one by one, but their presentation will be assessed based on these questions.

- Explain that they have 40 minutes to define their plan for an outdoor activity.
- Remind them to make sure they will use a **child-centred, active learning approach**. If needed invite them to give you some examples.

#### **Facilitation Tips:**

This could be a good moment to **integrate intergenerational learning**. Discuss about the possibility and importance of involving grandparents or elderly people to the activity and how this exchange could promote communication and contribute to forging relationships between generations.

## Groups Presentations (40 min)

### Objectives:

To share some examples of outdoor activities and identify how to plan one effectively and safely. To identify how to ensure a child-centred and active learning approach while planning and conducting an outdoor activity.

### Materials:

Groups Posters from previous activity

### Steps:

- Invite each group to present their plan. They will have 10 minutes for their presentation. You can choose to conduct a group discussion and feedback moment after each group or do that at the end, after all groups have presented.
- Each subgroup spends 5 minutes presenting their plan.
- Use the **Outdoor Activity feedback Chart** to guide the discussion after each presentation and evaluate the plan for the outdoor visit.

## Contextualisation: the Aflatot book as a flexible guide (20 min)

### Objectives:

To guide participants in the contextualisation of the Aflatot activities; to understand that the Aflatot activities needs to reflect the local context.

### Materials:

Aflatoun lesson plans from previous activity – Nature around us

### Steps:

- Start by telling participants the following scenario:

*“The Dove Kindergarten is in the hearth of a big city (use specific city/country if appropriate). There are no trees, no parks, and no gardens around. The winters are long and cold and we don’t have a way to be outside for longer time.”*

- Ask participants to suggest ways of helping the ECEC practitioners of the Dove Kindergarten adapt the Aflatot activity “Nature around us”.
- Now ask participants to work in pairs and look again at the Aflatot lesson plan - Nature around us and reflect on their own ECEC setting and city.
- Invite them to take a few minutes to identify the potential challenges they would have in implementing the Aflatot activity in their context. Ask the following questions:  
“What are possible challenges for the implementation of the activity in your context? What are some of the things you could change to make the activity better fit your context?”
- After a few minutes invite each pair to present their reflections and invite the whole group to help find alternatives ways to contextualise the activity to the specific setting each participant is describing.

- Reiterate that the Aflatot materials are all developed as flexible tools that should serve as a guideline to design each practitioner’s own activity, based on their specific setting.

**Facilitation Tips:**

Contextualisation is an ongoing process that ECEC practitioners should learn to integrate in the way they use the Aflatot materials. Conducting the previous activities should help them get a first hint of the process but it is only through constant practice that they will effectively learn to consistently put it in practice.

For this reason try to remind participants of the need for contextualisation and reiterate the following questions every time participants will be working on the Aflatot materials:

- “What are possible challenges for the implementation of the activity in your context? “
- “What are some of the things you could change so that it could better fit your context?”

Remind them that they are the specialists: no one knows their setting, culture, ECEC context better than them!

## Session 15: Inclusion in Early Childhood Education

🕒 1h 45 min

### Content:

No matter how good a curriculum, activity, lesson plan is, its learning objectives will be of no value if it is not really implemented ensuring the equal participation of each and every child.

Inclusion means that every child has full access to, and participates meaningfully in the early childhood education and care programme. It implies that the programme emphasis each child's uniqueness, his/her strengths and interests, supporting each one's role as active member of the community.

An inclusive curriculum and teaching practice does not only promote inclusion but also fights exclusion and discrimination, and the perpetration of exclusionary stereotypes. In certain contexts children from particular ethnic or religious groups, or children with special needs are more likely to experience exclusion. That is why it is crucial to explore our unnoticed exclusionary behaviours and work hard to ensure an inclusive approach at every point of our daily practice.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants will be aware of the challenges towards children inclusion and their own attitudes towards it. They will also gain a first idea on how to fight these exclusionary practices in their workplace.

### Activities Overview:

Game: We Are All Different	10 min
Brainstorming: What kind of differences	15 min
Exclusionary Practices	40 min
Inclusive Practitioner's Checklist	40 min

### Game: We are All Different (10 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on how each participant has some things in common with the rest of the group, while at the same time being different from anyone else.

#### Materials:

None

#### Steps:

- Invite participants to stand up in the middle of the room
- Explain that you will call out some characteristics. All the participants that have that characteristic should move to the right side of the room, the others should go to the left.

- Start calling out the following characteristics and wait a few minutes for the groups to form. After each characteristic invite the whole group to come back to the middle before calling out another characteristics. Here are some examples, but feel free to use your creativity.
  - People with Brown Hair
  - People with Short Hair
  - Male
  - Facilitators
  - Mothers
  - People with children
  - Grandparents
  - People who speak more than one language
  - People with moustache
- Invite participants to go back to their places and ask them:
 

“What do you think this game teaches us?”
- Emphasise how each individual is unique, while at the same time having similar characteristics to other people. Emphasise that **stereotypes** stem from our inability to look at each individual’s uniqueness. Stereotypes are ways of grouping people together (based on ethnicity, gender, ability etc.) and make generalised judgment about them without knowing them.

## Brainstorming: What kind of differences (15 min)

### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on stereotypes and exclusionary practices.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- Invite participants to form small groups of 3-4 people.
- Read the story below:

“A trucker was involved in a serious traffic accident and was rushed to the emergency ward of the hospital. The trucker’s family come immediately. “

- Give each group 3-4 minutes to define what happens next.
- After each group has outlined its scenario, invite some volunteers to present what they agreed upon. Identify if anyone has understood that the truck driver might have been a woman.
- Invite participants to reflect on other types of discrimination. Ask participants: “Besides gender, which other categories of people do we tend to discriminate and exclude in our culture?” *Note that the answer to this question might vary per context. Examples can be ethnic minorities, religious minorities, children with disabilities.*
- Reflect on the concept of **stereotype** defined before and Invite participants to brainstorm on some of the common stereotypes associated with the *people belonging to a specific ethnic or religious group, etc. (use locally appropriate examples).*

## Exclusionary practices (40 min)

### Objectives:

To identify how ECEC practitioners' behaviours or practices could lead to exclusion or to reinforcement of stereotypes.

### Materials:

Copies of the ECEC daily routine plan (see below).

Flipcharts

Markers

### Steps:

- Invite participants to form 4 groups.
- Provide each group with **the ECEC daily routine plan** below (note that *Session 17 the space around us: the use of time in our classroom* will specifically focus on understanding the role of the classroom routine and schedule and on building some examples together. Do not focus too much attention right now on the structure of this daily routine and reassure participants that you will work on that later).

## Printout: ECEC Daily Routine Plan

ECEC Daily Routine		Examples of Potential Exclusionary Practices
8.00 – 9.00	<p><b>Children arrival and Morning Activities:</b> Each child arrives, accompanied by a family member. At the same time the teacher is starting the day with a short chit-chat with the parents and the children who are just arriving. Other children are reading some books. Some of them are playing in a corner of the room.</p>	
9.00 – 9.40	<p><b>Aflatot Activity Time</b> The teacher invites all children to join her in the reading corner. Everyone sits on the floor. She starts by reading a story.</p>	
9.40 – 10.00	<p><b>Snack and recess</b></p>	
10.00 – 11.00	<p><b>Aflatot Activity Time</b> The teacher continues the Aflatot programme with a follow up activity.</p>	
11.00 – 12.00	<p><b>Free play Outdoor</b> The children can use the outdoor space where they have a swing, slide, and a small house. They play freely, with no directions from the teacher.</p>	
12.00 – 14.00	<p><b>Lunch/ Quiet time</b></p>	

- Invite each group to choose one of the discriminated categories we referred to in the previous activity (gender, ethnic minority, religious minority, children with disabilities, etc.). Invite them to imagine that their group will represent a specific child who is part of that category they have chosen. Invite them to be specific in imagining and creating the portrait of this child. Here are some guiding questions to help you create the child's profile:

“What is his/her name? How old is she/he? Where is she/he from? What language does she/he speak? What does she/he like?”

Try to make sure that all categories drafted in the previous activity are utilised.

- Now, ask the participants to look at the **ECEC daily routine plan** and imagine what happens at each single step of the plan. Invite each group to reflect on all the possible practices, the ECEC practitioner's attitudes, the other children's behaviours that could cause exclusion, discrimination or could perpetrate negative stereotypes.
- Explain that they have 20 minutes to discuss their answers in group and note them down on the right column of the ECEC Daily Routine Table and that afterwards they will present their comments in front of the entire group.
- Below you have an example of how the flipchart could look like (Examples of Exclusionary Practices). If needed, you can read some of the examples below to the participants. Nonetheless, these types of practices are strongly related to the specific local and cultural context, therefore the table below only serves to help you as a facilitator to provide some tips to participants if you feel that they need some extra inputs. These examples do not represent an exhaustive list of exclusionary practices.
- After each presentation invite the rest of the group to suggest other possible situations that could cause the exclusion of the child.
- Point out how at each moment there are simple behaviours that could cause children exclusion. Emphasise that inclusion is not something we teach children in a lesson, but it should be embedded in our daily behaviours.
- Make sure to collect all posters/ECEC Daily Routine printouts and place them on the wall of the room. We will use it in the next activity.

### Example of Exclusionary practices

ECEC Daily Routine		Examples of Potential Exclusionary Practices
8.00 – 9.00	<p><b>Children arrival and Morning Activities:</b> Each child arrives, accompanied by a family member. At the same time the teacher is starting the day with a short chit-chat with the parents and the children who are just arriving. Other children are reading some books. Some of them are playing in a corner of the room.</p>	<p><b>Ethnicity/religion</b> while the teacher is friendly with all other children he/she avoids greeting or talking to the parents from a specific cultural, ethnic or religious minority.</p> <p><b>Ability:</b> the preschool has some stairs/accessibility barriers;</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> there is a clear division of toys in the room – what the teacher calls <i>girls’ toys and boys’ toys</i>. The girls are encouraged to play or pretend play to be mothers or nurses, simulating their activities with dolls or with small kitchen items. Boys have their own toys areas, with tracks, autos, bricks etc. The presence of both boys and girls in these play areas is discouraged by the teacher.</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> A child from a different ethnic group might be speaking another language at home, thus not being really able to communicate in the ECEC practitioner’s language. This could mean that it is harder for him to independently join one or the other group of children who are reading or playing in one corner. He could be isolated and play on his own.</p>
9.00 – 9.40	<p><b>Aflatot Activity Time</b> The teacher invites all children to join her in the reading corner. Everyone sits on the floor. She starts by reading a story.</p>	<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> one of the child might have a harder time understanding the story because of language issues.</p> <p><b>Ability:</b> one of the children might have a hard time following the story because of hearing impediments</p> <p><b>Ability:</b> one of the children might have difficulties following because he/she suffers from visual impairment</p>
9.40 – 10.00	<p><b>Snack and recess</b></p>	<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> one of the children looks into the snack box of the other child and gives a distasteful comment regarding his/her food e.g. “Looks different and smells bad!”</p> <p><b>Socioeconomic:</b> one of the children does never bring snacks. . The parents cannot afford it.</p>
10.00 – 11.00	<p><b>Aflatot Activity Time</b> The teacher continues the Aflatot programme with a follow up activity.</p>	<p><b>Ability:</b> the activity involves some jumping/running/catching, excluding a child in a wheelchair.</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> during the activity time, the teacher praises the girls for being so quiet and respectful and scolds the boys by saying “why don’t you learn to behave like the girls?”</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> during the follow up activity the teacher forms the ‘boys’ team and the ‘girls’ team.</p>
11.00 – 12.00	<p><b>Free play Outdoor</b> The children can use the outdoor space</p>	<p><b>Gender:</b> On the way to the outside area, the teacher puts the children in line, divided per gender.</p>

	<p>where they have a swing, slide, and a small house. They play freely, with no directions from the teacher.</p>	<p><b>Gender:</b> the girls are playing the 'family', while the boys play catch. When one boy try to join the girls, the girls scream: no, you don't play with us, you are a boy!</p> <p><b>Ability:</b> the child on a wheelchair has no possibility of joining the children, who are playing catch.</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> the children explicitly exclude the child from an ethnic minority saying 'you are different, you play on your own'.</p>
12.00 – 14.00	<b>Lunch/ Quiet time</b>	<b>Socioeconomic:</b> one of the children does not have his/her lunch. The parents cannot afford it.

## Inclusive Practitioner's Checklist (40 min)

### Objectives:

To reflect on how to model our classroom behaviour to contribute to enforce children's inclusion. To develop a checklist for inclusion.

### Materials:

*Ideally the participants' posters from the previous activity provided a richer and more culturally relevant picture of the possible exclusionary practices in an ECEC setting compared to the sample provided above. If this is the case, for the next activity refer directly to their posters developed in the activity before. Hang all posters on the walls.*

*If through the activity insufficient examples of exclusionary practices came out, provide participants with copies of the Examples of Exclusionary practices Table above.*

Inclusive Practices Checklist (see below) *optional*

### Steps:

- Ask participants to go back into the groups from the previous activity. Distribute each group the Examples of Exclusionary practices table from the activity before, or refer them to their posters from the previous activity.
- Give participants 20 minutes to define all the positive behaviours that the ECEC Practitioner should use to prevent exclusionary practices and ensure that the child from the activity before is included at all points. Explain that they will present their poster to the rest of the group.
- After 20 minutes invite each group to present. During each presentation make notes of the significant points on a flipchart and avoid redundancies.
- At the end, point to the flipchart you just drafted. Explain that each practitioner should have a checklist to guide his/her behaviours and to help in organising the daily routine and the classroom environment to ensure inclusionary practices.
- Ask if they agree with this checklist and invite them to keep them as basic guiding principle in their everyday ECEC routine.
- Make sure that the elements from the checklist below - **Inclusive Practices Checklist** – are included. If needed, you can print the checklist and distribute it to participants.

## Printout: Inclusive Practices Checklist

### Inclusive Practices Checklist

#### **Gender**

- ✓ Arrange children by something other than gender (e.g. height, colour of clothes they wear).
- ✓ Address children as a group; avoid addressing boys and girls separately
- ✓ Avoid giving assignments on classroom jobs, activities, or free play based on gender –for example, housekeeping for the girls. Instead, assign the tasks on a rotational basis
- ✓ Encourage children to use all different type of toys and encourage them to play together with blocks or with cooking toys.
- ✓ Don't distinguish between boys and girls in showing your affection.
- ✓ Avoid using sexist terms like doll, honey, sweetie for girls etc.

#### ○ **Ethnicity/ Religion**

- ✓ Provide examples of cultural verity in the book choices, activity options, songs etc.
- ✓ If there is a language minority, ensure you have a supporting person and learn a few key words from that language (simple greetings etc.)
- ✓ Prize diversity!
- ✓ Invite the children from the ethnic minority to present their cultural heritage to the class. Use it as an opportunity to value the cultural diversity.

#### ○ **Ability:**

- ✓ Every child can access all areas and materials independently in the indoor and outdoor learning setting.
- ✓ Provide a predictable daily routine but be flexible to modify it to adapt to each specific needs.
- ✓ Modify activities to make sure everyone can participate

#### ○ **All**

- ✓ Stop any form of racist or discriminatory behaviour perpetrated by the children or by other adults. Explain why the behaviour is negative and how it affects all the children in the classroom.
- ✓ Connect with the families as often an possible; parents might be anxious about their child's participation in class
- ✓ Also, invite parents to share their worries with you and make sure you know what they expect from the ECEC setting.
- ✓ Use stories, songs, games which provide examples of diversity.
- ✓ Create a welcoming, trustful, positive environment: be positive, be emphatic.
- ✓ Do not be afraid to discover your own stereotypes and fight them.
- ✓ Use a variety of instructional and teaching methods.
- ✓ Observes the children to learn their skills, interests and challenges.
- ✓ Model appropriate language and alternative forms of communication as needed.

## Session 16: The Space around Us: The Emotional Space

🕒 1h 50 min

### Content:

Till this point participants have extensively explored what should be the content of their ECEC activities, how to deliver them in a way that challenges and engages children. But how about the emotional environment in your classroom? No matter how good and well prepared the activities are, the ECEC practitioner's role is that of providing a reassuring, welcoming, trustful and supporting emotional environment in which children can feel really empowered, responsible and free to act independently, where they feel safe to express emotions and confident to take risks and feel challenged. The role of the ECEC practitioners is that of creating this safe emotional environment through his/her practices and behaviours.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants know how to ensure a safe emotional environment in their classroom and how it contributes to children's healthy development. They can also identify their attitudes and behaviours that contribute to the creation of a safe emotional environment.

### Activities Overview:

Game: The "Empathy Builder" Game	20 min
Our Actions Matter: the Elements of a Safe Emotional Environment	30 min
Let's act it out!	40 min
What we should keep in mind	20 min

### Game: The "Empathy Builder" Game (20 min)

*Note: The original idea of this game has been created by Jackson Westenskow, who developed the "Empathy Builder" Game to help students learn about empathy. Have a look at this video to learn more about his idea: <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/watch-jackson-westenskows-proposal-empathy-builders>.*

### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on what empathy means; participants understand the importance of relating to other people's perspectives and feelings to achieve goals together.

### Materials:

Some post-it of various colours.

A set of role cards (see below). *Make sure you edit the note according to the colours of the post it you have.*

### Steps:

- Ask participants to form groups of 5 -6 people.

- Give each group a set of post-it of various colours.
- Explain that the objective of the game is for each group to build the longest line possible of post-it.
- Explain that within each group they should work cooperatively to build the post-it line.
- Explain that within each group one participant at the time should take the turn to place a new post it-on the line.
- Explain that post-it can be added to the line, but also taken out of the line.
- Let participants start and walk around the tables.
- After a few minutes stop the game. Now explain that they should continue to work cooperatively to build the line of post-it, but this time they must remain silent. In addition, provide each player with a **role card** and explain that each participant must meet the requirement of their role card to win the game, while continuing to build the line. Explain that they should not show their role cards to their team mates.
- After a few minutes stop the game and invite participants to pass their role card to the player at their left. Invite them to continue building their post-it line following the same instructing as before – they should keep quiet, not show their role cards and continue building a line of post-it.
- After a few minutes repeat the last point and invite participants to pass their role cards to the player to their left. Invite them to continue playing.
- After a few minutes stop the game. Now ask them:
 

“When was it easier to create the post-it line, during the first, the second or the third round of the game? Why?”
- Invite participants to reflect on how after the first round participants started to know the reasons behind other people’s actions, which helped work together in a constructive way. Ask participants:
 

“How did you feel when you were trying to meet the requirements of your card but the others were not understanding you and were working against you? How did you feel when people finally understood your behaviours?”
- Explain that so far, we focused on the activities of our ECEC settings. But what if children feel that we don’t understand them?
 

“What do you think might happen if the ECEC practitioner prepares a great lesson , but fails to listen to and acknowledge children’s emotions and feelings?”

Explain that in this session we will focus on how practitioners can build a safe emotional environment in which children feel understood, listened to and free to express themselves.

Printout: Role Cards

<p>The pink post-it must be next to the green post-it</p>	<p>You must have two pink post-its after each other</p>	<p>The green post-it must be before the yellow post it</p>
<p>There must be three yellow post-its after each other</p>	<p>The red post-it must be next to the yellow one</p>	<p>There must be only one red post-it in the line</p>

## Our Actions Matter: the Elements of a Safe Emotional Environment (30 min)

### Objectives:

To identify the elements that contribute to the creation of a safe emotional environment in the ECEC setting.

### Materials:

Post-it

Flipchart

Flipchart with behavioural headings (see below)

### Start:

- Provide participants with some post-it notes.
- Read the following scenario:

*“Rashid is 4. He is trying to put the set of cards back into the box but is struggling and getting nervous because they don’t fit very well. Mr. Ahmed comes closer, gets down to meet Rashid’s eyes which are already getting full of tears and says “oh that’s so nice of you to put all the materials back at their place but I know why these cards make you feel so annoyed, their sizes are all different, it is so hard to put them back! Look let’s put these in the other direction” he says as he guides the child hand to rearrange the cards so that they fit in the box. Afterwards Rashid takes other cards and this time he manages to place them in a way that they fit the box “Oh that’s great! Good job!” Says Mr. Ahmed.*
- Now, invite participants to reflect on how Mr. Ahmed’s behaviours create a safe emotional environment. Ask them the following question:

**“How could Mr. Ahmed contribute to create a **safe emotional environment** in which Rashid could **feel understood, reassured, comfortable and competent?**”**
- Invite them to note their answers on the post it.
- Now indicate the flipchart with the three behavioural headings:

Physical behaviours	Language and Communication	Emotional behaviours (all that has to do with feelings)

- Invite participants one by one to place their answers under the heading they feel is correct. Here is an example of how the table could look like.

Physical behaviours	Language and Communication	Emotional behaviours
<i>He guides the child with his hand            He is close to the child            He gets down to his eye level            He makes eye contact</i>	<i>He indicates how Rashid could manage to put the cards in the box            He uses positive and reassuring language</i>	<i>Mr. Ahmed states and recognises Rashid's feeling of anger or frustration            Mr. Ahmed does not diminish the importance of that feeling            He gives positive feedbacks            He helps Rashid even before Rashid seeks for help</i>

- After participants have all had a chance to place their post it on the flipchart, reiterate how creating a positive and safe emotional environment in an ECEC setting has to do with how we understand, empathise and voice children's emotions, but it is also related to our body language, physical behaviours and communication strategy. Ask participants:
  - “What would happen in the same situation if, instead of kneeling down and helping Rashid by guiding his hand, Mr. Ahmed would have been sitting at his chair, looked at the child and shouted “no! Not like that! You should first place the bigger cards the other way around otherwise they will never fit in the box!” What is different in this scenario? How do you think Rashid feels? What will happen next?”
- Finally invite participants to reflect on the following question:
  - “Why a safe emotional environment is so important?”

### Let's Act it out! (40 min)

#### Objectives:

To practice modelling our behaviours to build a safe emotional environment in the classroom.

#### Materials:

Copy of the 5 Scenarios (*optional*, you can also read the 5 scenario out loud and invite each group to take notes).

#### Steps:

- Ask participants to form 5 groups. Provide each group one of the scenarios below:

## Printout: Let's act it out! Scenarios

Scenario 1: Vinicio is playing with Marcel in the sand pit. All of a sudden Vinicio jumps up and starts crying and kicking Marcel.

Scenario 2: Maria is colouring on the table using some brushes but she is getting annoyed as she does not manage to keep her brushes clean and keep colours separate: the whole drawing is turning brown.

Scenario 3: The children are playing in the playground outside the kindergarten when suddenly Alberto wanders off on his own and heads towards the street.

Scenario 4: During the drawing session, Ivan started using the markers on the walls of the classroom.

Scenario 5: All the children are playing outside, shouting and running happily. Fierté is sitting on the grass in a corner on her own, and looks down at the grass, holding her cheeks in her palms.

- Explain that each group should imagine what would happen next in the scenario given and how the teacher would react. They have 10 minutes to prepare to act out the scenario and what will happen afterwards. Some participants will play the children in the scene and some will play the ECEC practitioner. Make sure each scene does not last more than 3-4 minutes.
- After 10 minutes invite each group to present their scene in front of the other.
- After each presentation, invite the whole group to discuss about the scene by asking these questions:  
 “How do you think the child feels before the intervention of the ECEC practitioner? How do you think she/he feels after? Why? “

## What we should keep in mind (20 min)

### Objectives:

To define a series of guidelines to help practitioners implement a positive and safe emotional environment in their ECEC setting

### Materials:

Flipchart

Markers

Safe Emotional Environment Checklist (see below) *optional*

### Steps:

- Now that we have explored what is the emotional environment and how we can model our behaviours to establish a safe emotional environment in our class it is a good moment to invite participants to draft together a **Safe Emotional Environment Checklist**.
- Invite participants to list all the **physical, communication and verbal and affective behaviours** they should keep in mind during their practice to ensure a safe emotional environment in their class.
- Have a look at the **Safe Emotional Environment Checklist** table provided below and make sure all points are covered. If needed you can print it out and distribute it to the participants.

## Printout: Safe Emotional Environment Checklist

Physical behaviours	Verbal behaviours and communication	Affective behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make sure that the physical space includes all children, no matter their physical abilities</li> <li>✓ Help children by physically demonstrating the desired behaviours (model the movements together)</li> <li>✓ When talking, get to the child's level</li> <li>✓ Make eye contact with children</li> <li>✓ Use a positive, welcoming and warm body language and facial expressions</li> <li>✓ Lead by the hand: it makes children feel safe and guided</li> <li>✓ Stop negative behaviour; e.g. if someone is hitting or kicking another child, he/she should be stopped, taken aside for a moment and given time to relax and helped reflect on what happened.</li> <li>✓ <b>At no point and in no circumstance use punishment that is meant to hurt the child physically or emotionally or humiliate him/her.</b></li> <li>✓ Keep calm!</li> <li>✓ Be a role model!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Give clear explanation for YOUR behaviours and decisions: For example, a child is hitting another child and you say "<i>no hitting!</i>" <i>That just means that a stronger and more powerful authority says so. It teaches that you must not hit, but does not say WHY. Try instead "I don't want you to hit other children as it hurts them. Instead just tell me why you feel angry and we can find a solution"</i></li> <li>✓ Listen first, talk second</li> <li>✓ Listen attentively when children communicate to you</li> <li>✓ Use positive directions, avoid negative statements : <i>instead of stop shouting, you can say 'be quieter', instead of `stop running around` you can say `please sit down`</i></li> <li>✓ Define and state rules clearly</li> <li>✓ Avoid competition or keep it to a minimum</li> <li>✓ Encourage cooperation</li> <li>✓ Use a warm and welcoming tone of voice, avoid shouting</li> <li>✓ Be a role model!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be calm, positive and warm.</li> <li>✓ Praise children's behaviours, not only when they follow your instructions</li> <li>✓ Give attention and support before the child seeks it</li> <li>✓ Verbalise and recognise children's feelings and emotions</li> <li>✓ Don't ignore or minimise children's emotions: <i>if a child is crying because he has lost his doll, it might seem nothing to you but for him it is a big thing!</i></li> <li>✓ Express YOUR feelings</li> <li>✓ Know your children well: observe them, talk and listen to them, speak with the families, get to know their world.</li> <li>✓ Be a role model!</li> </ul>

## Session 17: The Space around Us: The Use of Time

🕒 1h 15 min

### Content:

In the previous activity we have seen how important it is to create a safe emotional environment. Supporting children with an inclusive, welcoming and encouraging behaviours is not the only way to create such a safe environment. Establishing clearly recognisable and predictable routines and schedules in our daily practice is another key ingredient for the creation of this safe place for children.

Routines and schedules help children feel secure and confident, they know what to expect, what will happen and when. They will predict the rules and responsibilities associated with every segment of the day, they will be able to be more independent in what they do as they know what they are expected to do in that segment of time . Predictable routines and daily schedule help children be more responsible, independent and confident, be more relaxed and cooperative.

Also, having a predictable routine helps the task of the ECEC practitioner: your day won't look like an overwhelming amount of time in which you have at any point to come up with something else to do to keep the children under control. It helps you structure your work as well.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants can identify some of the reasons why routines and schedules are essential in ECEC settings. Participants will also be able to define a daily schedule and specific activity routines for their kindergarten.

### Activities Overview:

Brainstorming: the workshop routines	15 min
Our ECEC Daily Schedule	40 min
Identifying Activity Routines	20 min

### Brainstorming: The Workshop Routines (15 min)

#### Objectives:

To understand what are routines. To identify some of the reasons why routines are important for children and in adult life.

#### Materials

None

#### Steps:

- Invite participants to have a look at the workshop agenda and compare each day:  
“What are some of the things you notice?”
- Point out how the structure of each day is similar. Ask the following questions:

“What are the components of the daily structure of the workshop? What are the similarities between each day?” (i.e., each day is structured around 2 morning sessions and 2 afternoon session, there is always a mid-morning break, a lunch break etc.)

- Ask participants:  
“Why do you think each workshop day is structured in a similar way? Is it useful? Why? How do you think it influences your participation and engagement? How does it influence the way you feel about the workshop?”
- Explain that the similarities in the structure of the days of the workshop help establish a **schedule** and a **routine: a way of doing things in a similar, predictable way**. Invite participants to reflect whether they can think of any special routine they have in their life: for getting started at work, for getting ready to go to sleep etc.
- Ask participants:  
“Why do we establish routines and have fixed and clear schedules in our life? What are the benefits of having clear schedules and routines?”
- Ask participants:  
“From your experience with young children what kind of schedules and routines work well with them? Why? Why do you think classroom routines are especially important for young children?”

#### Facilitation Tips:

**Routines and Schedules:** Technically there is a difference between these two words. Routines are activities and procedures that occur regularly, that we always do in the same way. They are the single steps to get us through the activity (brushing out teeth, getting started at work etc.).

Schedules represent the bigger picture: the series of activities we fill our day with. It is a list of planned activities or things that we have to do.

In this session we focus on both routines and schedules. Both are crucial in the ECEC setting and both need to be carefully established and maintained regular.

### Facilitation Tips:

#### What is all this fuss about? Why are schedules and routines so important for pre-schoolers?

Predictable Schedules and Routines help children feel safe and secure: children are very busy learning and exploring. For them, every small piece of the world is a new experience: discovering a new word, learning how beans turn into plants etc. Their world is constantly changing as they learn new things. Embedding all these new experiences within fixed and predictable structures helps them feel less anxious and stressed about what's about to come. Children are afraid of the unknown (who isn't?). Imagine you just moved to a new land, where you hardly know the language and the local customs, and you are getting used to all that and you are fascinated and excited but it is also a little bit scary. How would it make you feel to know what the plan of the day is? Where you will be in the morning and what will you do in the afternoon?

Also, having a fixed routine helps children feel empowered and be more independent: if they know that after story time there is snack time for example, they know that at the end of story time they should help you put the books and pillows back at their place, they know they should head to their bags and get their snacks, they know where to go and what to do. Doesn't it sound like your life as an ECEC practitioner could be a bit easier with routines?

## Our ECEC daily schedule (40 min)

### Objectives:

To identify the characteristics of a daily schedule which embeds a child-centred and active learning approach. To know how to develop a daily schedule for the ECEC setting and which elements to include in the schedule.

### Materials:

Flipcharts

Markers

Classroom Schedule Checklist (see below) *Optional*

### Steps:

- Start by asking participant to help you remember the characteristics of the Aflatot child and his/her needs as defined in the previous sessions (see in particular sessions 3-4-5, session 16: the space around us – the Physical space, also look at the introduction to the Aflatot manual, page 7 English version).
  - Children are capable and competent
  - Children have various and diverse needs and rights and responsibilities
  - Children have knowledge, experiences and interests around which the leaning should be focused.
  - Children learn by independent exploration
  - Children are naturally curious
  - Children learn through play
  - Children learn from social interactions
- Explain that our ECEC daily schedule should reflect the way we think and view this child, and how we interpret learning. Ask participants:

“How can our classroom schedule reflect the Aflatot approach and beliefs around childhood and children?”

- Invite participants to brainstorm and list their answers on a flipchart. Make sure the answers include the **Classroom Schedule Checklist** indicated below. If needed, you can print copies of the classroom schedule checklist and distribute it among participants.

### Classroom Schedule Checklist:

- ✓ Our daily schedule should follow a predictable sequence of activities so that children can feel secure and confident
- ✓ Our daily schedule should be flexible to adapt to children's different needs, mood, weather condition etc.
- ✓ Our daily schedule should include the possibility for children to help plan their day, to ensure their involvement in their own learning
- ✓ Our daily schedule should include various types of activities (songs, arts and craft, Storytime, nap time, free play etc.) to provide diversity (the Toolbox Approach)
- ✓ Our daily schedule should ensure that some activities happen at the same time, so that children can choose what they want to do
- ✓ Our daily schedule should include plenty of transition time

- Now, invite participants to form 4 groups. Provide each group with a flipchart and marker.
- Invite each group to take 20 minutes to draft a realistic daily schedule for their ECEC setting. Explain that group A and B will be drafting a plan for a class of 3-4 years old, while groups C and D will work around the schedule of a class of 5-6 years old. Explain that they should clearly indicate the time and duration for each activity and include the Aflatot activities in the planning.
- Explain that after 20 minutes they should be ready to present their daily plan in front of the bigger group and that each group will be assessed based on whether their plan respects and enhances the characteristics and skills of the Aflatot child, following the Classroom Schedule Checklist above.
- After 20 minutes invite each group to present. Give each group 5 minutes and after each presentation invite the rest of the participants to provide feedbacks and suggestions, inviting them to see if the schedule respects the **Classroom Schedule Checklist**.
- At the end, trigger a conversation asking participants:  
“What are the main differences between a daily schedules planned for the 3-4 years old and one for the 5-6 years old?”
- Finally, make it clear that there is no such thing as a perfect daily schedule: each schedule should be tested in class and adapted to each classroom environment. Not two class will be the same and consequently you will have to change the schedule every time.

### Identifying Activity Routines (20 min)

*Note: There is not a right or wrong answer to the type of routine one could establish for a storytelling moment, free play etc. The routine will strongly depend on the time, the preferences of the ECEC practitioners, the children etc. This exercise is only aimed at stimulating people to understand that planning and setting up routines is essential and helps them get some practical examples of possible routines. Nonetheless, if you also need some example of routine, below you will find some for arrival time and lunch/snack time.*

#### Objective:

To identify the role of routines in the ECEC setting and their benefit for the construction of a safe emotional environment. To name some examples of routines related to different types of activities.

#### Materials:

None

#### Steps:

- Remind participants that routines are small actions we regularly do to get through an activity or a task. To give a clear example, invite participants to do the following brainstorming exercise.
- Give each participant a piece of paper and explain that in 1 minute they should note down as many routine actions they do before going to sleep. Invite them to be as specific as possible (taking shower, brushing teeth, getting pyjama, prayer etc.).
- After one minute invite some volunteers to share what they wrote.
- Now, invite participants to work in pairs. Explain that each pair has 2-3 minutes to write down as many possible routine strategies as possible around **arrival time in the ECEC setting**. Ask:

*“What are all the single small steps you would guide children to do to help them predict what happens and what they should do as they enter the classroom in the morning?”*

- After 3 minutes, invite some pairs to share what they indicated.
- Now, repeat the exercise inviting the pairs this time to reflect on the possible routines around **lunch/snack time**.

#### **Routines Examples:**

##### **Arrival time:**

- ✓ *ECEC practitioner /children greeting*
- ✓ *Hang jacket*
- ✓ *Place backpack on the right shelf*
- ✓ *Take lunchbox out and place it in the food-shelf/fridge*
- ✓ *Sit in the circle to get ready for activity/ get to one of the possible playing area allowed during waiting time*

##### **Lunch/snack time:**

- ✓ *Practitioner always invites the children to get ready for lunch by saying “it’s time for...” and the children answer “Lunch!” together*
- ✓ *Children form a line to reach eating area*
- ✓ *Children walk to eating area while singing the eating song*
- ✓ *Children know where to get their food*
- ✓ *Children know where to sit: every child is always assigned the same place.*
- ✓ *After eating , children know where the garbage bin is*
- ✓ *Once everyone is done, we all sing the clean-up song together*

## Session 18: The Space around Us: The Physical Space

⌵ 1h 30 min

### Content:

So far we have seen that the way we arrange the space in an ECEC setting is not neutral: it determines whether an environment is inclusive (see session 15: Inclusion in Early Childhood Education), whether the environment is welcoming, whether the children are at the centre of the learning process and they are actively engaged (see sessions 3-4-5).

How you arrange the space inside and outside the ECEC setting reflects what your beliefs are about children and how they learn.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session the participants will be able to identify how to arrange a classroom environment to ensure children independent learning and free exploration, active involvement in learning, inclusion and safety.

### Activities Overview:

Game: A New Environment	20 min
A Space for an Active and Engaged Child	20 min
<b>Plan Your Room Arrangement</b>	<b>50 min</b>

### Game: A New Environment (20 min)

#### Objectives:

To help participants reflect on how the classroom environment impacts on our expectations on the activities and group dynamics.

#### Materials:

*None*

#### Steps:

- Before participants arrive, rearrange the room setting a bit: instead of having the participants' chair in circles, place them in rows. If there are desks or tables, place the chairs behind a table with a piece of paper and a pen neatly in front of each sit. Place your chair behind a desk or a table.
- Invite participants to take their place again, and sit behind the desk.
- Ask participants:  
"Do you find something different in the room arrangement? What do you think is different? How does it change the way you feel about this workshop? How do you think the workshop activities will be like if we will leave the room arranged like this?"

- Invite participants to reflect on how a simple change in the arrangement can change the atmosphere of a classroom:  
 “How does it change the interaction among participants? How about the relationship towards the facilitator?”  
 Emphasize that from an interactive workshop, a gathering of equal, it is now a more traditional frontal lecturing type of setting. Emphasize also how you sitting behind a separate desk in front of them establishes a different hierarchy and power dynamic.
- Explain that similarly a classroom arrangement can strongly influence the learning process and that the way we use and arrange the space reflects our beliefs about children and childhood.

## A Space for an Active and Engaged Child (20 min)

### Objectives:

Participants know the basic principles for a classroom arrangement that reflects an active learning and child centred approach.

### Materials:

Flipchart with characteristics of the Aflatot Child (see below)

Post-it notes

### Steps:

- Show participants the flipchart with the characteristics of the child as defined in the Aflatot manual (see below).

#### Flipchart: Characteristics of the Aflatot Child

- Children are capable and competent
- Children have needs and rights and responsibilities
- Children have knowledge, experiences and interests around which the leaning should be focused.
- Children learn by independent exploration
- Children are naturally curious
- Children learn through play
- Children learn from Social Interactions

All the elements of this list should already be familiar to facilitators as they have been explored in the previous session of the training (see in particular sessions 3-4-5, in particular p.26, and also look at the introduction to the Aflatot manual, page 7 English version).

- Now, give each participants a few post-it notes. Invite them to imagine that a child with all the characteristics listed above enters the ECEC setting. Ask participants:  
 “How should the indoor and outdoor space look like to reflect our beliefs about this child?”
- Invite them to take 2-3 minutes and write down practical tips for the use and arrangement of the space.

- Now invite them to work in pairs and compare their lists and explain that if their partner has an answer that they don't have they should write it down.
- Now invite each pair to tell you their answers: if the whole group agrees, note it down on a flipchart. Invite each pair not to repeat answers that have already been given.
- At the end, point to the flipchart and explain how this could represent a guideline for the room arrangement to ensure an active participation of the child, and a child-centred approach to learning.
- Before moving to the next activity ask participants:
 

“Is there any extra concern we should keep in mind if the child we are referring to has some **special needs**? Is there anything else we should keep in mind to ensure that all the spaces are **safe and accessible**?”

### Plan Your Room Arrangement (50 min)

*Note: This activity has been inspired by the book “Revised Manual for Day Care Workers” from the Department of Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines, page 162 – 163. The Original activity was designed by Sydelle Hatoff and Claudia Byram and Marion Hyson (1981) in the book ‘Teacher’s Practical Guide for Educating Young Children : a Growing Program’ Ally and Bacon. Inc. Massachussetts pp. 185 – 186.*

#### Objectives:

Participants are able to structure the room to ensure safety, inclusion and active engagement of the children in the learning process.

#### Materials:

Classroom Arrangement Feedback Chart Flipchart (see below)  
 Flipchart  
 Markers

#### Steps:

- Ask participants to form 4 groups and provide each group with a flipchart and markers.
- Provide each group with one of the following scenarios (Note that you can come up with other scenarios which are more representative of the real conditions of ECEC settings in your country).

- **Scenario 1: Your day ECEC setting is small and overcrowded: you are working with 25 children alone and have little space indoor.**
- **Scenario 2: You have a very modern, well-furnished and well equipped space, plenty of room indoor and outdoor. You can have all the resources you want.**

- Now explain that they have 20 minutes to imagine and draw how they would arrange the space:
 

“How would you arrange the furniture and equipment in a way that ensures **children’s participation and free exploration, inclusion and safety**?”
- Emphasise that they have to be ready to present the plan to the whole group and explain what happens were (i.e., where the free play are is, where toys are stored etc.). Point out the

**Classroom Arrangement Feedback Chart** (see below) and explain that that after they have presented you will invite the rest of the participants to assess their plan based on these criteria.

### **Classroom Arrangement Feedback Chart:**

#### **Safety:**

- ✓ Is the environment safe? Are there any hazards? Blind Spots? Could you see the children at all time from all points of the room?

#### **Daily Structure and Routine:**

- ✓ Have you assigned a specific area for each part of the daily routine? In particular, is there a free play, snack/lunch, nap/quiet time area? \*
- ✓ Are the boundaries of the various areas clearly defined? \*\*
- ✓ Does each area reflects the demands of each type of activity that will happen there?
- ✓ Have you thought about which areas are noisier? Have you kept the noisy areas and the quiet ones separate?

#### **Children Active Participation:**

- ✓ Is it clear what happens were? How would I know?
- ✓ Where are materials stored? Can children access them and put them away easily?
- ✓ Is there any “don’t touch”? Is it necessary? How can we avoid it?
- ✓ Is furniture arranged in a way that encourage groups work, cooperation and freedom of movement?
- ✓ Is there an outdoor space? Is it easily accessible? Is it safe for children to use it independent?

#### **Fun!**

- ✓ What are the elements that make your classroom fun, beautiful, cozy and appealing? \*\*\*
- ✓ If you would be entering your class, what would you like about it? What would you change?

- After 20 minutes give each group 5 minutes to present their plan. Use the Facilitation Tips notes below to help you guide the discussion. Ensure that the points mentioned below are covered.
- Finally emphasize how all the points of the Feedback Question flipchart apply to any kind of setting: both for a classroom full of all resources we could dream of, and one with limited resources and space. The difference is mainly that in the latter case the practitioner will have to be creative in the use of the furniture, equipment and resources available.
- Invite participants to answer the following question:  
“What kind of strategies should be put in place when we are working in a small and overcrowded environment?”
- Reflect on the possibility of using multi-purpose units (a sand table on wheels that can be covered and turns into a table game area; expand your classroom using the outdoor area a fix component of the classroom – every day you will use the mango tree shade as a place for storytelling etc.).

### Facilitation Tips:

The following notes can help you facilitate some specific questions from the Classroom Arrangement feedback Chart.

**\*Assigning Specific Areas in the Room:** Note that this applies also to a small and overcrowded place. One solution could be that some areas are used for various purposes, such as the reading area that can also be the sleeping /napping area. What else can you think of?

**\*\* Defining Areas in the Room: why it matters?** Defining clearly the different areas helps children learn to use the various spaces independently, it makes them feel secure and confident – they predicts what happens where, they know which play toys go in which area, and know the rules around each area (for e.g. if I want to read a book, I know where to do that and I know that I should not take the book to the lunch area). Also, defining boundaries does not mean creating barriers: using a paint of different colour on the wall or floor, or a rag and pillows in a corner can create separation of the spaces. Also, not only physical spaces should be clear but also storage boxes should be clearly labelled: children should exactly know what goes where, so they can access things but also help clean up afterwards!

**\*\*\*A Fun Space:** no one wants to be in a boring-looking room. Think about how a grey wall can make you feel gloomy compared to a light blue or pink one! Children need a stimulating and fun environment around them. Help participants reflect on how they could make the space fun and appealing. Encourage them to be creative! Think about the colours in the room, the types of furniture, think about how to use natural resources or recycled materials to enrich your environment.

## Session 19: The Facilitator's Role

2h

### Content:

The first three activities of this session are designed for Master Trainings where trainers are trained: they focus on the role of the facilitator and help participants who will be training other ECEC practitioners to understand and identify their role as trainers and gain the necessary skills and competences for the task.

Use this session to help them discover the skills of a good trainer and also to reassure them and take the time to listen to their last worries and answer their questions.

In the case in which there will be no Master Training of Trainers, you can directly jump to the last activity of this session: **What comes Next**, and use this last moment to address the follow up steps for the implementation of the Aflatot programme.

### Objectives:

By the end of this session participants can identify some of the skills that make a good facilitator. Also, they will be able to use simple strategies to integrate these skills in their practice. They will be aware of the next steps for the implementation of the Aflatot programme, once the workshop is over.

### Activities Overview:

Who are We? Identifying the facilitator's Role	15 min
The Art of Questioning	30 min
Learning to Observe, Learning to Listen	60 min
What comes Next	15 min

### Who are we? Identifying the Facilitator's Role (15 min)

#### Objectives:

To list some of the roles of the facilitator in an Aflatot training

#### Materials

None

#### Steps:

- Start by asking participants to reflect on the past days you have been working together. Ask them:  
"What has been my role as a facilitator during these days? Have I been lecturing often? Who spoke most of the time, me or you?"
- Invite them to reflect on your role as a *guide*, as someone that is there to help participants move through various processes and learn together.
- Now invite them to reflect on the things one should be good at to be a good facilitator.

- Explain that we will focus the next session on **some** facilitation skills that they can utilise during the following practice with the teachers. In particular we will focus on **questioning, process observation and active listening**. Emphasise that it is through frequent practice that one learns to incorporate these skills in a smooth and automatic way.

## The Art of Questioning (30 min)

### Objectives:

Participants will be able to define the importance of questioning skills when facilitating sessions for adults as well as young people. Participants identify appropriate questioning to foster a safe and stimulating learning environment.

### Materials.

Masking tape

Post-its

Copies of Questioning Checklist (see below) *Optional*

### Steps:

- Invite participants to play a guessing game. Give each participant a post-it and invite them to form pairs.
- Ask each participant to write a name of a famous person on it, making sure that the other participant does not see what they are writing.
- Afterwards, invite each participant to stick the post-it on the back or forehead of their partner. Help them by providing some masking tape if needed.
- Now, explain that they have 3 minutes each to guess the person on the post-it. Explain that they are only allowed to use 'yes and no questions' (closed questions).
- After both participants have had the chance to play the game, explain that you are going to do another questioning game. Always in pairs, explain that one person will be asking the partner about his/her weekend. The person asking the question should try to get as many information as possible, while the person being asked should answer as minimally as possible. Give each participant 3 minutes for the task.
- At this point, invite participant to reflect by asking participants to share their experience, using the following question:  
 "What did you observe from the experience / activities? Was it easy to ask questions? Was it easy to answer the questions? What were some questions that you particularly liked or reacted positively to? What were some questions that made you feel uncomfortable? How can you apply these insights in your work as a facilitator? "
- To complete the exercise invite participants to reflect on the following two questions :  
 "Why is questioning a critical skill for facilitation? Is it a useful skill only when working with adults or also with children?"
- Have a look at the **Questioning Checklist** below. Make sure that all points in the checklist are highlighted in the discussion. If needed, you can make copies of the checklist and distribute them among participants.

## **Questioning Checklist**

### **Purposes of questioning**

- ✓ To interest, engage and challenge children/adults
- ✓ To check on prior knowledge
- ✓ To stimulate recall and use of existing knowledge and experience
- ✓ To focus thinking on key concepts and issues
- ✓ To extend children/adults thinking from the factual to the analytical
- ✓ To promote reasoning, problem solving, evaluation and the formulation of hypotheses
- ✓ To promote children/adults' thinking about the way they have learned

### **Questioning is a critical skill for facilitation because it is:**

- ✓ the most common form of interaction between facilitator / teacher and learner;
- ✓ an element of virtually every type and model of lesson;
- ✓ a key method of providing appropriate challenge for all learners;
- ✓ an important influence on the extent of progress made;
- ✓ the most immediate and accessible way for a teacher to assess learning

## Learning to observing, learning to listen (60 min)

### Objectives:

To identify the importance of observation and listening while facilitating with adults as well as children.  
To identify appropriate observation and listening practices to foster a safe and stimulating learning environment.

### Materials:

None

Observation and Listening Checklist (see below) *Optional*

### Steps:

- Invite participants to form groups of 3 people.
- Assign the 3 different people with A, B and C.
- Explain that in each round, one person will be the talker, one will be the listener, and another will be the observer so that at the end of the activity everyone has a change to play each role.
- The talker will share a moment when she/he experienced something challenging in his/her work for about 5 minutes. Listeners need to be actively listening and questioning. Observers will take note and provide feedback to the Listener.
- Proceed with Round 1: explain that A will be the talker; B the listener; C the observer.
- After 5 minutes ask them to switch role. Now A is the observer; B the talker; C the listener.
- After 5 minutes ask them to switch role again. Now A is the listener; B the observer; and C the talker.
- Once everyone has had a chance to practice each role, invite participants to brainstorm around the importance of **listening and observing**. Ask the following questions:  
“What was the activity about? (invite them to reflect both on the content and process)  
What did you observe from the experience / activities? As a talker, how would you describe the experience? For the process observer, what were some of your observations on how the pair talked? What was done well? What could be improved? How can you apply these insights in your work as a facilitator? Why is it important to have active listening skills as a facilitator? Why is it important to have observing skills as a facilitator?”
- Now invite participants to form 4 groups. Invite two groups to compile an **active listening checklist**, and two groups to work on an **observation checklist**, by answering the question: “What should I do to make sure I am a good active listener/observer?” Give the groups 10 minutes to reflect on the questions.
- After 10 minutes, invite each group to present their answers in 5 minutes. Capture the answers on a flipchart. Ensure that the answers contained in the **Observation and Listening Checklist** below are integrated. Otherwise, provide participants with handouts of the table.

## Observation and Listening Checklist

Active Listening	Observation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Active listeners intentionally give their undivided attention to speaker</li><li>✓ Active listeners give cues that they are paying attention</li><li>✓ Active listeners listen to a full message without bias before responding</li><li>✓ Active listeners use the information they gather from listening to gain deeper meaning and make connections.</li><li>✓ Active listeners make eye contact</li><li>✓ Active listeners avoid distracting the speakers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Observers know the difference between observing and looking</li><li>✓ Observers notice body language</li><li>✓ Observers keep an eye on group dynamics and engagement</li><li>✓ Observers are mindful of the surroundings (room arrangement, dress style etc.)</li><li>✓ Observers pay attention to details</li><li>✓ Observers restrain from judging</li></ul>

## What comes Next (15 Min)

### Objectives:

Participants are aware of the next steps in the Training of Trainers or in the implementation of the Aflatot programme.

### Materials:

None

### Steps:

- In this last activity of the training it is important to prepare participants to what will come next in their work as facilitators and trainers of other ECEC Practitioners (Scenario 1). It might also be that this is the last activity of your training and the teachers will not be conducting a Training of Trainers. They will simply leave the training and be invited to put in practice the learnings in their ECEC setting (Scenario 2). It is therefore necessary to prepare them for the future and reassure them. Now, try to convey the following messages, based on Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.

#### **Scenario 1**

- Explain that during the coming 3 days they will be invited to reproduce the training and they should be ready to train other ECEC practitioners. Their task in these cases is to follow the instructions in this manual and reproduce the training as they just experienced it.
- Ideally at this point you should invite them to split in 3-5 groups depending on the number of ECEC practitioners they will be training. Explain that each participant should have the opportunity to deliver at least one training session from the manual. They should organise who delivers which training session within their group.
- Explain that in the next pages they can find a sample of a possible 3 days Training of Trainers they can use as a guide. It would be ideal to have an extra day or half day for preparation. If this is possible, invite each group to read the sessions indicated for the coming 3 days training and rehearse them in their group. If this is not possible, invite them to use half an hour after each training day to get ready for the upcoming training.

#### **Scenario 1 and 2**

- Both in the case in which the trainers will be delivering a practice-training or the case in which this is the last session of the training it is important to invite the participant to get ready for the subsequent implementation of the Aflatot programme in their ECEC setting.
- At this point, depending on the role of the participants in the ECEC setting, it would be advisable to take 30 min to work in groups on defining an implementation strategy at a local, regional or national level, depending on the roles of participants. We explicitly decided not to include any activity to help you facilitate such type of session, as such activity is highly dependent on the local context and participants profiles.
- Also, it is advisable at this point to indicate once again all the support platforms and materials that can help implement the Aflatot programme. In particular:
  - **The Aflatot Manual**, with its **Introduction, Resource Corner and Family Toolkit Sessions** at the end of the book. Remind participant what great support-tools these sections of the book represent for the implementation.

- The Aflatoun Academy website: <http://www.aflatounacademy.org/> . Aflatoun Academy is a virtual community of all teachers and teacher educators from the Aflatoun Network. On the website you can find useful links to materials in various languages and connect to other teachers and trainers all around the world.
- Finally don't forget to mention the importance of **Monitoring and Evaluation**: explain that the [M&E manual](#) contains various tools that can support teachers in the steps of the assessment of the Aflatot programme. Make sure to emphasise what M&E is for. M&E is not meant to judge the way we work, it is designed to evaluate whether and how the programme we are implementing has a positive impact on children.
- Talking about M&E, do not forget to distribute the post-training surveys at this point! (see next page)
- Thank everyone for their participation and give space for some final questions.

## Afterword: Next Steps

Well Done! You successfully guided participants through the Aflatot 5 days' workshop. Now, the next steps will be in their hands, whether they will go back to their ECEC classes and implement the Aflatot programme with preschool children, or they will gather to prepare the next 3 days training of teachers.

In both cases, before closing the workshop and thanking participants for their engagement and participation, make sure to give them the **Post-Training Survey** (see p.136 in this manual). Remind them that it will help us assess the effectiveness of the workshop.

Once gathered all the filled in forms, please submit them to [research@aflatoun.org](mailto:research@aflatoun.org).

THANKS!

### For the Master Training...

In the next page you will find an example of a possible 3 days agenda to help participants facilitate the next practice sessions with the teachers. Feel free to print out the overview and the relative sessions instructions to make sure each participant can get ready for the practice (in case participants do not have this entire manual available for them).

Your role in the next days will be to:

- Guide participants as they prepare for each session, answer any question, sort out any doubt they have. Reassure them whenever possible
- During each session, take notes of good practices and of things you would do differently: you will discuss about that at the end of each day
- Support participants and guide the discussions during the preparation sessions in the morning, and the feedback sessions in the evening.

The role of the participants in the next days will be to:

- Divide in groups and within each group assign one or more facilitator for each session
- Read thoroughly the sessions in this training manual: all they have to do is reproduce what is written in this book!
- Remember what *you* have done as a facilitator: your questioning skills, your observation skills, your listening skills. Implement that in their work.
- Observe the other members of their group as they facilitate and reflect on their own facilitation. Take notes of what they think might have worked and what they would have done differently. This will be the base for discussion in the feedback sessions at the end of each day.

## Three Days Training of Teachers: Agenda and Tips

The next Three Days agenda is intended for Master Trainers' practice workshop. During these three days participants will form group and deliver part of the training they have just attended with a new group of teachers or facilitators.

The purpose of the three day training is for the participants to practice their training skills and familiarise with the content of the Aflatot training.

For this reasons, it is advisable to structure each day in the following way:

	<b>What Happens</b>	<b>What is the role of participants</b>	<b>What is the role of the Master Trainer</b>
<b>Facilitation Preparation</b>	It is advisable to take 30 minutes (ideally in the morning before the "attendees" arrive) to get ready before the start of the workshop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather in groups</li> <li>• Each group finds an appropriate area for the following facilitation</li> <li>• Each group has a list of attendees that will take part to their facilitation</li> <li>• Make sure all materials required for each session are ready</li> <li>• Make sure each facilitator and support facilitator knows exactly which session he/she has been assigned to</li> <li>• If time allows , rehearse part of the sessions with the group</li> <li>• Ask questions to the Master Trainers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help participants split into groups</li> <li>• Provide each group with a specific list of attendees (e.g. if there will be 4 groups and 24 attendees, make sure that each group has a clear list with the names of the 6 attendees assigned to their group. Make sure that in each group there is a variety of age ranges and gender).</li> <li>• Indicate the space where each group will be facilitating during the next days</li> <li>• Go from group to group to help with any questions or reassurance</li> <li>• Make sure that the task for the day is clear</li> </ul>
<b>Arrival of the Attendees</b>	The attendees of the workshop start arriving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each group welcomes the attendees included in their list</li> <li>• From this moment onwards, they will be the leaders of the session!</li> <li>• Follow instruction on this manual for each session indicated in the table below</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support if needed</li> </ul>
<b>Training sessions (see below for an indicative agenda)</b>	The training starts! Each day will have 2 morning and 2 afternoon session, with possibly one lunch break (30 min to 1h), one morning break and one afternoon break (15 min each)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow instruction on this manual for each session indicated in the table below</li> <li>• Take notes: what works and what you would do differently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support if needed</li> <li>• Take notes</li> <li>• Move around from group to group, but try not to disturb or intervene unless necessary</li> </ul>

<b>Feedback Session</b>	<p>It is a good practice to end each training day with a feedback session, once all attendees have left. It is better to invite participants to stay in their groups and discuss internally about the day. In particular each group should focus on each session of the day and trigger a discussion using these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What are some of the things that went well?</li> <li>✓ What would you do differently? Why?</li> <li>✓ Were the sessions engaging and active?</li> <li>✓ Who spoke more, the facilitators or the attendees?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a look at the notes they recorded</li> <li>• Looking at each session from the agenda, try to answer the feedback question together</li> <li>• Each member should be critical and provide feedbacks to all other members but never be offensive or disrespectful!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move around from group to group, to help facilitate the discussion if needed</li> <li>• Try to observe what happens in each group and only intervene when needed: participants should be able to provide feedback to each other</li> <li>• Use your notes if you think some important feedback needs to be pointed out</li> <li>• BE AWARE: conflict may arise, so make sure you supervise what happens in each group</li> <li>• Remind people to be positive and encouraging</li> <li>• THANK PEOPLE and Praise them for their work</li> </ul>
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*Note that in the table above the word 'Master Trainer' refers to the person or people who have conducted the previous 5 days training, while the words 'participant' or 'facilitator' refer to the ECEC practitioners that have attended the previous 5 days of training. The word 'attendees' here refers to the new group of teachers or trainers that will **only** attend the last 3 days, and will therefore be trained solely by the participants/facilitators.*

## Three days Training Agenda:

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Morning</b>	S1: Overview and Introduction to the Training
		S2: Aflatoun Programme Orientation
	<b>Afternoon</b>	S3: Early Childhood: how young children grow, learn and see the world
		S4: The Aflatot approach on Early Childhood Education
<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Morning</b>	S5: Using Multiple Teaching Methods: The Toolbox Strategy
		S6: You, Me and Aflatoun - The Child-centred Approach in the Aflatot curriculum
	<b>Afternoon</b>	S7: Me and Money - Story telling Techniques
		S8: Children's Rights - brainstorming technique
<b>Day 3</b>	<b>Morning</b>	S9: Save, Spend and Share - the use of songs and games
		S11: The Aflatot Fair - working with limited resources
	<b>Afternoon</b>	S12: Family Involvement: Why is it important? Why is it Challenging?
		S14: The Outdoor Space - Contextualising the Aflatot activities

## Energisers and Warming Up Activities

It is a good idea, especially at the beginning of the training or when the energy is low, to use a short energiser to stimulate participants' active involvement and to have fun.

We did not incorporate energisers in the planning of the sessions but you can feel free to use some of the ones proposed here or to look for additional ideas online using the links below.

Keep in mind that:

- Energisers should not be longer than 5 minutes and you should stop them while people are still having fun and not when they have been overused.
- Remember to be sensitive to differences, be that cultural differences or differences of physical abilities. Exclude or adapt these energisers to the group of participants you are working with.
- Energisers should be short, active and fun.
- If a session already starts with a small game which is related to the content of the activity, there is no need to use an energiser. The game will also serve the purpose of refocusing the attention while at the same time introducing the topic.
- Consider cultural appropriateness of energisers. Energisers requiring physical proximity, for example requiring participants to dance together in pair, might work perfectly in certain contexts and less in others.

Here are some very simple ideas for energisers. Have a look below for some other tips.

1. *Dancing energiser: Place some papers on the floor, one fewer than the number of pairs of participants. When the music stops participants find a partner and both find a paper to stand on.*
2. *The sinking Island: Place some papers on the floor, one per participant. Play some music and each participant should dance on their "island" (the paper). When the music stops, each participant cuts the paper they are on in half, and takes the place again on their half-island, and so on, until each participant is left tiptoeing on a tiny piece of "island". Wins the last one that "falls in the sea" (the one that can keep dancing on the tiny piece of paper).*
3. *Tapes and Pens: Participants form two rows, each participant holds a pen or a stick in his/her mouth. The first in the line tries and hold a tape roll with the stick in the mouth and tries to pass it on the stick of the person next to him/her without touching it and letting the tape roll fall. Wins the group that brings the tape roll to the person in the front first.*
4. *Circle game: Participants form two circles, an inner and an outer one, moving in circle as the music play. When the music stops, each participant asks the partner a question and responds.*
5. *Secret Object: One participant thinks of an item. The rest of the participants get 20 questions to try to guess what that item is.*
6. *Thunderstorm: Say "rain" while simultaneously drumming on a table or chair imitating the sound of rain. Participants do the same, slowly increasing the speed of the drumming/raining. Suddenly, when it's pouring rain, training slaps their hands together*

*and shouts "lightning!" multiple times for each hand clap. Participants follow trainer' movements.*

**Facilitation tips: ENERGISERS TIME!**

The ones above are only a few simple examples of energisers. There are plenty of available resources online to help you energise your group. One great resources is the "100 ways to energise groups: Games to use in workshops, meetings and the community" developed by International HIV/AIDS Alliance. Here is the link:

[https://www.aidsalliance.org/assets/000/001/052/ene0502\\_Energiser\\_guide\\_eng\\_original.pdf?1413808298](https://www.aidsalliance.org/assets/000/001/052/ene0502_Energiser_guide_eng_original.pdf?1413808298)

The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention has also developed a manual on games and energisers that can be useful. It is called "Technical Manual: Games, Ice-Breakers and Energizers" and can be downloaded here:

[http://www.cjcp.org.za/uploads/2/7/8/4/27845461/technical\\_manual\\_-\\_games\\_icebreakers\\_and\\_energizers.pdf](http://www.cjcp.org.za/uploads/2/7/8/4/27845461/technical_manual_-_games_icebreakers_and_energizers.pdf)

## Recap /Wrap up activities

It is always a good idea to end and/or start each training day with a wrap up or recap activity. The simplest way to do this is for the facilitator to look at his/her notes from the day and point out the main learnings. While such approach is technically correct, it is also boring. The end of the day and the beginning of each day should also be a moment for the whole group to gather together again, catch the breath at the end of a long day or get energised to start a new series of sessions. It is important to invite participant to have a laugh and feel at ease, while at the same time invite them to provide feedbacks and indicate the learnings of the day.

Below you have a list of simple games or activities that can help you facilitate a recap or wrap up activity: use more methods so that there is a variation each day, and if needed use some of these also if you think it is useful to reiterate the main learning after a specifically challenging and important activity.

Crucial: do not drag the wrap up and recap activity too long. 5 to 10 minutes should be enough time to get a sense of what happened during the previous sessions and what is important to take home.

1. *A 45 seconds review: This can be done in teams and in the form of a game. Participants form two teams, each team has a flipchart and marker. Each team should write down key concepts /words that were discussed during the day. The team that after 45 seconds has built the longest list wins. If needed, you can support after the teams have completed the lists by pointing to the main takeaways from the day on each flipchart.*
2. *Secret questions: best done at the beginning of the day. Facilitator places one post it with a question under each participant's chair before they arrive. The questions are a mix of recap questions (include for example "What was something you learn from yesterday's session? What was something you liked? What was something you didn't understand? What was something you knew already about? Etc.") and fun questions (e.g. "What have you had for dinner yesterday? What is the name of the participant to your left? What is the name of my cat? Etc.) At the beginning invite them, to start a treasure hunt to find the questions. Once participants have found the post-its they take their place and each answers their question.*
3. *Question bucket: at the end of a day give participants post it and ask them to write down one question about the training day. Collect all questions and add a few questions yourself, related and not related to the training day (e.g. what was the best trip you ever had? What is your favourite dish?). The morning after each participant picks a random post it question and answers it.*
4. *Snowball fight: Each participants writes one thing they liked about the training day, one thing that was unclear and one thing they were already familiar with. Participants wrap their papers into balls and start throwing the balls around, fast enough to ensure randomisation. After few minutes of "snowball fight", each participants takes one ball and read the content.*
5. *Smiley faces: Place/draw three Smiley faces: one happy, one sad, one neutral. Each participant has a post it and draws one of the faces on the post it according to how they feel at the end of the training and stick the post it below the same face, while explaining why they feel like that.*
6. *The Network: bring a ball of yarn. Each participant shares something they found particularly useful today and something that they found unclear, then through the yarn to someone else in the*

*circle. Same thing can be done with a ball, making it more fun by making sure that participants don't hold the ball for more than 5 seconds.*

- 7. What I Got: Draw a large quadrant on a chart with the following words: Know, Challenge, Change, feel. Participants have four post it and have to answers the following questions:*

*KNOW: What was something introduced today that you already knew?*

*CHALLENGE: What challenged you today?*

*CHANGE: What is one was you plan to change your work, based on today's learning?*

*FEEL: How do you feel about what today's workshop?*

*Each participant places the post it on the flipchart and shares what he/she wrote.*

## List of Printouts

*Note:*

- The page number refer to the **Second Edition of the English Version of the Aflatot Manual**.
- The number of copies is indicative as it depends on the number of participants.

Session Number	Printout Needed	# copies
Session 2 Why CSFE for early childhood	CSFE Activity Scenarios <i>Optional</i>	1 copy
Session 3 The developmental domains in practices	Lesson Plan A: The Aflatot Book Activity 2 "Aflatoun Song", p.21 Lesson Plan B: Activity 17 ""A world for children", p.69 Lesson Plan C: Activity 23 "Talent show", p.110 Lesson Plan D: Activity 32 "I can reach my dreams", p.142	4-5 copies of each activity: <i>the group of participants is divided in 4 groups, each group gets a different lesson plan and each participant in each group gets a copy of the lesson plan of his/her group</i>
Session 4 the active learning approach in practice	Classroom Scenarios	10 copies of each scenario
Session 4 the active learning approach in practice	Active learning ECEC Classroom Checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 5 The teaching methods of the Aflatot Curriculum	Lesson Plan A: Aflatot Book Activity 10 "I can express myself with my body", p. 38 Lesson Plan B: Activity 12 "Baby in a Basket", p.49 Lesson Plan C: Activity 14 "What is my job", p. 57 Lesson Plan D: Activity 19 "the story of lion and mouse", p. 95 Lesson E: Activity 35 "Water is our resource", p. 154	4-5 copies of each lesson plan: <i>the group of participants is divided in 5 groups, each group gets a different lesson plan and each participant in each group gets a copy of the lesson plan of his/her group</i>
Session 6 Divide in group provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the mock lesson.	Lesson Plan A: Aflatot curriculum Section 1 Activity 3: "Sinta the Bird", p. 23 Lesson Plan B: Activity 4: " the Journey Box", p. 26	10 copies each activity: <i>half of the participants get lesson plan A, the other half lesson plan B</i>

Session 7 Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the storytelling practice.	Lesson Plan A: Aflatot curriculum Activity 34, "Story of the Ant and the Grasshopper", p. 148  Lesson Plan B: Activity 25, "The Story of Coin", p. 116	10 copies of each activity: <i>half of the participants get lesson plan A, the other half lesson plan B</i>
Session 7 Final feedbacks	Storytelling checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 8 Divide in group, provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the mock lesson	Lesson Plan A: Aflatot curriculum, Activity 17, "A world for Children", p. 69  Lesson Plan B: Activity 18. "Our Rights Our Responsibilities", p.93	10 copies of each activity: <i>half of the participants get lesson plan A, the other half lesson plan B</i>
Session 8 Final Feedbacks	Questioning skills checklist ( <i>optional</i> )  Arts and crafts checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 9 Divide in group provide the Aflatot lesson plan and prepare the mock lesson	Lesson Plan A: Aflatot Curriculum Activity 32, "I can reach my Dreams", p. 142  Lesson Plan B: Activity 39, "1...2...3... Aflatoun Coins", p. 167	10-12 copies of each activity: <i>half of the participants get lesson plan A, the other half lesson plan B</i>
Session 9 Final feedbacks	Songs and poems checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 9 Final feedbacks	Games checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 10 Why free play	Free Play scenarios	1 per participant
Session 10 why free play	Free Play Checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 11 Explain how the session works	Aflatot Activities 44, 44a and 44b (page 189 – 194)	10 copies activities 44 and 44a, 10 copies activities 44 and 44b
Session 13 the Aflatot strategy for family involvement	Lesson Plan A – Family Toolkit Introduction and Activity 1, "Making Choices Together", p. 1 Lesson Plan B – Aflatot Curriculum Activity 1, "Aflatoun's Journey", p.15 Lesson Plan C – Aflatot Curriculum Activity 4, "Aflatoun Journey box", p.26 Lesson Plan D – Aflatot Curriculum Activity 14, "What is My Job?", p.57	5-6 copies of each lesson plan : <i>the group of participants is divided in 4 groups, each group gets a different lesson plan and each participant in each group gets a copy of the lesson plan of his/her group</i>

Session 14 Participants plan an outdoor visit	Aflatot curriculum Activity 29, "Nature around us", p. 130	1 per participant
Session 15 Exclusionary practices	ECEC daily routine plan	1 per participant
Session 15 Inclusive practices Checklist	Examples of Exclusionary Practices ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 15 Inclusive Practices Checklist	Inclusive Practices Checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 16 The empathy builder game	Role cards	4 – 5 : <i>One set per group (each person should have one card)</i>
Session 16 Let's act it out	Let's act it out! scenarios ( <i>optional</i> )	1 copy per participant
Session 16 what we should keep in mind	Safe emotional environment checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 copy per participant
Session 17 Our ECEC daily schedule	Classroom Schedule Checklist ( <i>optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 19 the art of questioning	Questioning Checklist ( <i>Optional</i> )	1 per participant
Session 19 learning to observe, learning to listen	Observation and Listening Checklist ( <i>Optional</i> )	1 per participant

## Pre and Post-Training Survey

### Aflatot Training Evaluation Form: Pre-survey (before the training)

1	Name:				
2	Job Role:	Trainer	Teacher	Staff	Program Exec

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1	I feel acquainted with the Aflatoun character and understand his/her role.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I understand Aflatoun approach to participation and its role in how the program operates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I understand that the pedagogical background of the Aflatot Curriculum is active learning and child centered	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	Children should be encouraged and permitted to participate in Aflatoun programs as full and equal partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I am familiar with the Aflatoun five core elements.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I understand how personal understanding and exploration are stressed by the Aflatot program and how the concept is taught through the workbooks.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I understand what child rights are and how it is taught in the Aflatot curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I feel ready to teach children about their rights in schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	I understand the Aflatoun approach to saving and spending and how it is taught through the curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2	Saving is about money but also about other resources that children have access to.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2	I know the savings process as taught in the Aflatot curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2	I feel ready to involve parents in classroom activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2	I understand child social and financial Education and how the concepts are taught in the Aflatot curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

2 4	I think that the facilitator has a supportive role and he/ she should encourage children independent thinking and decision making.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
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## Aflatot Training Evaluation Form: Post-survey (After the training)

1	Name:				
2	Job Role:	Trainer	Teacher	Staff	Program Exec

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
3	The introduction provided me with an overview of the workshop objectives and an understanding of the Aflatoun approach.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4	The introduction provided with sufficient understanding on early childhood methodologies.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5	I feel ready to train other trainers/teachers in the Aflatot program.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6	I feel ready to implement the Aflatot program within my organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7	The facilitator made the material interesting and exciting.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8	The materials provided were clear, useful and easy to understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9	Compared to other training that you have received, the Aflatot training has been more informative.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

10: Which area covered in the training did you least understand:

Aflatoun Introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduction to Early Childhood	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduction to Aflatoun	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concept, Program Network	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character and Book	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active Learning Techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>

Children's Rights	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social and Financial Enterprise: Aflatot Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child Centered Methodology	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saving, Spending and Sharing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs, Wants and Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Aflatoun Principles and Practices:

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
11	I feel acquainted with the Aflatoun character and understand his/her role.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12	I understand Aflatoun approach to participation and its role in how the program operates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13	I understand that the pedagogical background of the Aflatot curriculum is active learning and child centered	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
14	Children should be encouraged and permitted to participate in Aflatoun programs as full and equal partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15	I am familiar with the Aflatoun five core elements.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
16	I understand how personal understanding and exploration are stressed by Aflatot program and how the concept is taught through the workbooks.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
17	I understand what child rights are and how it is taught in the Aflatot curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
18	I feel ready to teach children about their rights in schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
19	I understand the Aflatoun approach to Saving and Spending and how it is taught through the curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
20	Saving is about money but also about other resources that children have access to.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21	I know the savings process as taught in the Aflatot curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
22	I feel ready to involve parents in classroom activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
23	I understand child social and financial education and how the concepts are taught in the Aflatot curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24	I think that the facilitator has a supportive role and he/ she should encourage children independent thinking and decision making.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
25. Please give your definition of active learning:						
26. What part of the training did you most enjoy?						

27. What part of the training did you least enjoy?
28. What could Aflatoun do to improve on its training?
29. Additional Comments:

**Thank you!**