This is my recipe for ECCE resources: lots of imagination, community participation, local materials and minimum expenditure. These ingredients are all illustrated in the photographs on the next few pages.

Some of the finished items (see the photograph opposite) have been painted. The paints, too, are homemade; local flowers and leaves are squeezed with water to produce these bright colours. For example, purple paint is made with red krepトン leaves, yellow paint from the leaves of the morinda plant, and orange paint is made from grated curry ginger or marigold flowers.

Bamboo cups can be cut to different sizes and painted in different colours. They can be used for cup-nesting, which illustrates sequencing from smallest to biggest. They can also have numbers painted on them so that number games can be played. For example, one cup can be hidden and the children can work out which one is missing.
Above: A group of ECCE teachers prepares toys and teaching aids to take to their schools and, below, the complete set.
Early childhood care and education in the Pacific

Blong wan wan swing yusum wan pis rop we hemi longfala telebit.
Opposite page and this page:

From drawing board to reality: a rope ladder and swings, monkey bars and a climbing frame. A roof over the top prolongs the life of these playground structures.
Resources for creative play are everywhere:
Children make pictures in the sand with shells
and they make shapes and figures with clay of
different colours and textures.
Blackboards belong to the children, so make them the right height.

Bubbles are lots of fun, and pawpaw stalks make lovely straws.
This little girl enjoys playing with trucks. They are made from cut-offs that are sandpapered and then painted and fitted with seeds for wheels.

These girls are enjoying doing the things their mothers do. Brushes, cloths, pegs and line are all provided.
Water play at a cut-out canoe provides a fun way of learning about floating and sinking, pouring and filling. Behind the canoe are two sand pits, one wet and one dry.

*Kindy blong yufala*, shown in the picture on the left, is the title of a delightful booklet written specially for pre-schools and communities. It has information and plenty of illustrations and photographs showing what a good pre-school should be like, what activities can take place, and what skills children learn when using the toys that the teachers have made. It tells the parents and communities that children should use their vernacular, and it also has information on how communities can help. The booklet was compiled for the Pri Skul Asosiesen Blong Vanuatu (PSABV) by a volunteer, Judy Craddock.
The next pages show a ‘how to’ booklet which was compiled by Janet Bunyan, a former President of the Pri Skul Asosiesen Blong Vanuatu, and Judy Craddock and Dianne Thorne George, who were both volunteers working with the PSABV.

Vanuatu Pre School Locally Made Games/Toys

1. Matching Games:
   Use cartons – draw around shapes. Let children sort which objects go into which shapes.

2. Number Caterpillar:
   Use a large carton – 60cm x 30cm
   Cut out 10 circles and on one side put numbers 1 – 10, on the other side put dots.
   Draw 11 circles on the cardboard 10 with numbers and one with a caterpillar face as on the picture below.
   • Children match the numbers.
   • Children count dots and place in appropriate circles
   • Children close eyes, teacher move the numbers around and children have to put in correct order.
   • Remove one number, children tell you what number is missing.

3. Bamboo and Coconut Number games:
   A. Clean 10 coconut shells with sand paper and varnish. Write numbers 1 – 10 in the shells.
      Children then put the correct number of objects (shells, seeds, cards with numbers, sticks etc) in the correct coconut shell.
   B. Varnish 10 bamboo cups. Write numbers 1 – 10 on the outside of the bamboo, draw dots below the numbers.
      Children put the correct number of sticks in the cup with the right numbers.
4. Bamboo Grading:
Cut a piece of timber. Make a hole on one end of the timber and glue a piece of wood (dowel) in the hole.
Cut 10 different size flat bamboos, sandpaper and varnish the bamboo. Make a hole on one end and children put the bamboo in sizes.

5. Counting Games:
Using timber as the base – drill 5 x 14mm holes on the base. Make sure the holes are 6cm apart
Glue 5 dowell in the holes. In one you can use small bamboos that can fit in the dowell. In another, we use natangura seed (from the roof thatching tree)

6. Shell Sizing:
Collect different sizes of sea shells and children are asked to place them in sizes of big to small.

7. Stick Sizing:
Cut different sizes of sticks and children place them in lengths from longest to shortest.
8. Number Matching:
Use cardboard — cut them into 8cm x 8cm square. On one set write 0 – 10. On another set draw the correct number of object 1 – 10. On another set draw dots. See the picture below.

![Diagram showing number matching activity with pictures and dots for numbers 0 to 10.](image)
9. Domino
Use cartons or plywood, markers and templates to make dominoes.

10. Domino Shapes:
Use cartons or plywood cut up, sandpapered and varnished.
11. Pairing of objects:
In a basket collect 2 of the same objects (about 40 – 50) eg 2 shells, 2 seeds, 2 buttons, 2 smooth pebbles etc
Children can:-
- Sort objects into pairs
- Sort objects into families or place of origin
- Sort according to a theme eg soft/hard light/heavy smooth/rough colors etc
- Use the objects to play memory games – line about 7-10 objects, children observe for a few minutes, close their eyes and teacher or a child removes one object, children work out what object is missing.
- Line about 6 objects in a line; children close eyes, move one object around, children guess which object have been shifted.

12. Shaped Box
Cut shapes in a cardboard box, cut different colored shapes and children put the right shapes into the right windows. Call out colored shapes to make it more challenging. You can differ the sizes and ask the child to put the “smallest blue circle in the circle window.”

13. What’s in the Bag?
Collect several objects and place in a pillowcase or a woven basket and ask the child to put his hand into the bag and feel and describe the object and name it.

14. Colored Snake:
Make 11 squared cards 8cm x 8cm – color each card a different color – blue, green, red, yellow, white, black, pink, brown, purple, orange, grey.
Make a wheel and color it using the 11 colors.
Spin the wheel and children place the correct colored card on the squares till complete.
14. Shapes:
Out of cardboards, make 4 x big circles, 4 x big squares, 4 x big rectangle and 4 x big triangle. Do the same for the smaller shapes x 4 each. From each of the shapes eg big circle – color one blue, one red, one green and one yellow. Do the same for the other shapes.
You can play many different games using the shapes – to teach color, size, number, memory game etc.

15. Threading:
Using coconut fronds as needle, provide flowers, leaves, shells, seeds and allow children to thread.

16. Scales:
Using sticks or wood and coconut shells for scales.
One of the commonest complaints from ECCE teachers is the lack of resources for teaching. Such a complaint need not be heard again; this chapter is full of ideas that can be used or adapted to suit a variety of situations. In the Pacific, where our surroundings are full of natural resources and our communities are caring, we can count ourselves very fortunate. Where children are in need, and teachers and communities have the skills and imagination to invent, there can be no truer saying than **necessity is the mother of invention**.