

Country profile prepared for the
Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007
Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education

Mongolia

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

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MONGOLIA

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) programs

A. GENERAL INFORMATION, STATISTICS AND INDICATORS

Starting age of compulsory education (if applicable):

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) the compulsory education age range is 8-16 years.

1. ISCED 0 PROGRAMS (USUALLY, PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION)

(ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education)

1.1. National definition of ISCED 0 programs:

Pre-school education (kindergarten)

(*Note:* There are also Childcare Centers, Sanatoria for young children, Home-based services, the Early Childhood Development Program, Gher-kindergarten, and seasonal pre-school education)

1.2. Normative age group(s) covered by ISCED 0 programs:

3-7 years of age

1.3. ISCED 0 programs: statistics and indicators (*source:* UNICEF)

1.3.1. Enrolment:

	Percentage	Year
Gross enrolment ratio	44.9	2004/05
Net enrolment ratio	34.7	2004/05
Percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience	<i>Not available</i>	

1.3.2. Enrolment ratio by age group, 2004/05 (percentage, also including the first years of primary education when applicable):

Less than 3 years of age	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7
1.6	32.6	39.5	41.7	37.4	4.1 95.9(*)

(*) Enrolled in primary education.

1.3.3. Teachers, 2004/05:

Total number of teachers	Of whom female (%)	Percentage of trained teachers (all)	Percentage of trained teachers (males)	Percentage of trained teachers (females)
3,424	96.4	98

1.3.4. Funding:

	Percentage
Public current expenditure per pupil as percentage of the Gross National Product per capita	29.55 (2004)

Source: UIS.

1.3.5. Main source(s) of financing: Not available

2. OTHER ECCE PROGRAMS

(Generally preceding ISCED 0 programs)

2.1. National definition of other ECCE programs:

Home-based services, Early Childhood Development Program, *Gher*-kindergarten, summer pre-school education

2.2. Normative age group(s) covered by other ECCE programs:

Children aged 1.5–3 years.

2.3. Estimate number of children covered by other ECCE programs:

Not available

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING ECCE PROGRAMS (INCLUDING ISCED 0)

3.1. Legislation concerning ECCE:

All kindergartens are publicly subsidized and pre-school education is not compulsory. The Education Law (1991) prescribes that kindergartens may admit pre-school children who have reached the age of 3. The Educational Law prescribes pre-school education to be included in the general educational structure. In accordance with the law, the nursery school is an organization designed to provide day-care for children less than 3 years of age, and it is to be of three types, namely ordinary, caring and for orphaned children. Accordingly, nursery is viewed as a non-educational organization generally designed to provide child day-care and has been offered under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. Since the 1990s it has been conceived that it is more appropriate to bring up young children aged 0-3 within the family, under parents' care; therefore, a policy has been introduced to enable mothers take care of young children under 2-years-old, while receiving child home care allowance from a social pension fund. However, only child care centers for orphans and sanatoria are available and are financed by the state.

The National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development has been adopted and endorsed by the Joint Order of the Ministers of Health, Education and Labor and Social Welfare in April, 2005. This policy aims at improving and strengthening the inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination in early childhood development. The objectives are to creating and developing an integrated management of ECD social services as well as the availability, accessibility and quality of services.

The policy highlights the roles of everyone in the early childhood development including, specifically families, parents as well as public and private sectors. Within the framework of implementation of the policy different initiatives are coming up with grass root implementation, like early childhood outreach system with mobile teachers, family empowerment strategies, community-based action, etc.

The policy also stresses the importance of better preparedness of children for schooling and gives the directions to strengthen this component of child development.

3.2. Official body/bodies in charge of supervision or coordination:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (kindergartens, other forms of ECD program)
- Ministry of Health (nursery schools)
- Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor (other forms of ECCD for most vulnerable, disadvantaged families)

3.3. Other entities involved in the provision (e.g. municipalities, local governments) and main types of providers (e.g. public, private, mixed, community-based, etc.):

Local governments at *aimag*, *soum* and *bagh* levels (provincial, district and sub-district levels, NGOs, some governmental and private organisations)

3.4. Type of personnel involved:

Ministry officials, local leaders, local government officials, staff, kindergarten and school managers and teachers, NGO members, mass media workers, parents

3.5. Type of staff training (requirements):

Not available

(*Note: Government officials and staff as well as journalists, mass media personnel need training in overall integrated early childhood development concepts including its management and related advocacy areas. Educational staff needs training on the concept, methodologies and guiding principles.*)

3.6. Recent national policies and reforms:

By Resolution No 46, of April 1995, the Government of Mongolia established a National Program on Preschool Strengthening. It set out, in some detail, the Government's intentions for development of pre-school education. The Resolution included an ambitious implementation plan for the period 1995 to 2000. This program aimed at creating a favorable preschool education structure appropriate to both nomadic and sedentary populations; supporting nongovernmental preschool education institutions; improving curriculum, methodology, and provision of training facilities; supporting family education of preschool children; and strengthening skills of preschool educators to meet modern requirements.

At that time, the key institutions providing pre-school education were nursery schools (ages 0-2) and kindergartens (ages 3-7). The main policy was "kindergarten-centered", and the government fully financed kindergartens. With the start of transition to market economy in 1990, along with decrease of economic capacity of the country some difficulties have begun to occur in the educational sector. In the early 1990s, the number of day nursery schools for children aged 0-2 fell significantly due to local government budget deficits. The number of children in kindergartens fell substantially and about 2,000 kindergarten teachers lost their jobs.

As a result of granting mothers a right to nurse babies at home, the number of children attending day-care centers decreased. On the other hand, it has become impossible (and, besides, needless) to run kindergartens with low rate of utilization on high expenditures paid through state subsidy. Eventually, a decision was made to re-organize day care centers into independent institutions engaged in charity care-providing and recreation for children belonging to the vulnerable community of the

society, while kindergartens would take up the duty of ordinary nursery schools by opening classes for younger children (aged 0-3), where it was necessary.

The National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) was adopted on 13 April 2005 by a Government resolution. At the national level, lack of integrated policy coordination and linkage between the sectoral ministries makes it impossible to address early childhood issues in a holistic manner and to create more effective social services. Therefore, the IECD policy was adopted jointly by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor.

The IECD policy is not only about supporting child rights and ensuring their preparedness for schooling but is also about contributing to investment in support of human and socio-economic development.

The implementation of the IECD policy will promote the creation of child-friendly, multi-dimensional basic social services that aim at meeting the physical, psychosocial and cognitive development needs of 336,000 young children who constitute 14.6% of Mongolia's total population of 2.4 million."

3.7. Efforts targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged children:

Remoteness is the main issue in Mongolia. Therefore, local governments are using mobile teachers to reach those who live in the rural areas and lack access to pre-school education, based on the family empowerment strategy implementation and ECD outreach system.

Gher-kindergarten and seasonal kindergarten became regular and care centres, orphanages are in place at national and sub-national levels.

3.8. Special projects/programmes aiming at expanding or improving ECCE:

- Gher and summer (seasonal) kindergartens work regularly with support from national and sub national government support
- Family Empowerment Strategy is being implemented at 5 aimags with purpose for further expansion
- Mobile teachers are trained and working to reach unreached at remote rural areas
- Parenting Program
- School readiness program
- "Step By Step" program

3.9. Information concerning the curriculum (if applicable) or the contents of ECCE programs

3.9.1. Objectives and aims:

The main objective at the kindergarten level, as determined by the Law of Primary and Secondary Education of 1995, is to help children develop their minds, bodies and personalities by providing them with an appropriate educational environment,

conducive to the development of their talents, abilities and life skills. In kindergartens children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, music and physical education.

Pre-school education aims at encouraging children to learn and study from very early years, and it provides children with some very elementary skills, by thus building background for successful study at school. Kindergartens are defined as training and up-bringing organizations with a goal to provide children aged 3-7 years with elementary education, and practical skills that are appropriate for physical and age peculiarities of children.

3.9.2. Learning areas and teaching-learning methods:

Until 1990 pre-school education was associated with kindergarten activities only. Curriculum use at kindergartens involved two main parts called lessons and up-bring activities—that is, activities aimed at "educating and developing" children attending kindergarten. This educating and up-bringing curriculum for kindergartens used to be developed and approved by the Ministry of Education, and it was required to adopt this document nation-wide.

The curriculum consisted of such main components as speech development, counting, drawing, physical training, music, handcraft, and designing lessons, as well as health-care skill- and habit training, labour training, and playing. At that time the subjects taught at kindergartens were too many in number, namely nine different subjects. Children would have two to three lessons every day and eventually teaching would take up almost all morning time. Consequently, there was a tendency to turn kindergartens into schooling. Since 1991 the number of subjects in each kindergarten grade has been reduced to 5 along with expanding contents of such subjects as playing and labor training to cover other activities.

Teaching was teacher-centered, widely employing such methods as learning by heart and reciting simply following a pre-set curriculum. Time assigned for children' playing was considered as out-of lesson time or a break between lessons.

3.9.3. Average number of hours per week and average amount of weeks per year:

Children normally attend kindergarten six days per week, although Saturday is a part-time working day.

3.10. Any other relevant and pertinent information

Not available

C. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION REGARDING ECCE (TO BE COMPILED IN COLLABORATION WITH UNICEF OFFICES WHERE POSSIBLE)

4.1. Parenting programmes are usually addressed to parents and families of children less than 6 years of age. Please provide information about any parenting programmes in your country according to the table below:

Type of programme	Yes or No (note for each programme)	Please estimate the number of beneficiaries (if possible)
Parenting education through early learning centres and child care centres	Yes, 6,000 families and parents are involved in mobile teachers' ECD program, through family empowerment strategies and family assessment exercises.	Framework and content are currently under development
As component of health and nutrition programmes, such as information about child development included in health and nutrition visits	Yes	Newly developed and introduced "Growth and Development Monitoring Card" through mobile teachers, home visits by doctors, volunteers.
Parent groups that meet to discuss issues of their young children, including health, nutritional status, and development	Yes, In rural soums, parents gather together get trained and discuss the issues twice a year	Around 7,000 household participate.
As component of adolescent, livelihood or literacy programmes	No	

Media broadcast, such as <i>Sesame Street</i> , with media for and with children	Yes	Mass media campaign organized with clips, posters in 2005
Other (please specify)	KAP survey questionnaire has been integrated into MICS-3 questionnaire	6,000 households

Are any of these programmes targeted specifically toward the vulnerable, poor, disadvantaged or excluded? If so, which ones? (Please provide/attach any additional and relevant information if available).

Training on ECD for parents conducted by mobile teachers in rural *soums* (districts)

4.2. Is there a national-level system for monitoring children's development or school readiness prior to entering primary school?

Yes and will be updated in 2006.

4.3. Is there a policy on early childhood (ECCE, ECD, etc.) that has been accepted? If not, is there one under development?

The National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development has been endorsed jointly by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in April 2005.

[Information revised and additional data provided by UNICEF, December 2005.]