

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

Jordan

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

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JORDAN

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) programs

A. GENERAL INFORMATION, STATISTICS AND INDICATORS

Starting age of compulsory education (if applicable):

The compulsory education age ranges from age 5 and eight months till age 16 years (which covers the basic education cycle that runs from grade one till grade ten).

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

(ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education)

1.1. National definition of ISCED 0 programs:

Kindergarten (pre-school education)

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

3 years and eight months – 5 years and eight months.

1.3. ISCED 0 programs: statistics and indicators (*source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics–UIS*)

1.3.1. Enrolment:

	Percentage	Year
Gross enrolment ratio (GER)	30.5	2003/04
Net enrolment ratio	27.4	2003/04
Percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience	48.9	2003/04

Note: In 2003/04, the GER was 36% in KG1 and 51% in KG2.

1.3.2. Enrolment ratio by age group, 2002/03 (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
0.0	4.8	23.1	32.9 29.9(*)	0.0 98.3(**)	0.0 98.1(**)

UIS estimation. (*) Enrolled in primary education. (**) Primary education enrolment ratio.

1.3.3. Teachers, 2002/03:

Total number of teachers	Of whom female (%)	Percentage of trained teachers (all)	Percentage of trained teachers (males)	Percentage of trained teachers (females)
4,245	98.2

1.3.4. Funding:

	Percentage
Public current expenditure per pupil as percentage of the Gross National Product per capita	0.39 (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:

Jordan has developed its ECD strategy Document where it maps the early childhood phase from birth till eight years of age. It divides this age span into five stages:

- Pregnancy period.
- From birth to under one year.
- From one year to under four years (Nursery Stage).
- From four years to under six years (Preschool stage).
- From six years to under nine years (Early Elementary Stage).

Thus, the phase before pre-school age is considered under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Social Development, where it implements parenting education programmes for

families and centre-based child care programmes. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health is a strong partner in empowering families in caring for their children during these early stages.

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

See point 2.1 above.

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

The estimated percentage of children benefiting from centre-based child care services is 1.7 percent of all children.

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

3.1. Legislation concerning ECCE:

The Education Act No. 3 of 1994 regulates kindergarten, basic and secondary education. It enunciates the philosophy and objectives of education, the educational policy, the functions of the Ministry of Education, and the tasks of the Boards of Education.

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

The Ministry of Education (MOE) supervises all pre-school institutions and also provides kindergarten education within its capacity. The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) supervises all nurseries and day-care centres and provides residential care for children deprived of parental care.

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.):

Currently, the private sector (private and non-governmental organizations) is the major provider of kindergarten (KG) education in Jordan. About 77% of all children attending KG are enrolled in private KGs, 5% are enrolled in public KGs, and 18% in the NGO sector.

Jordan also witnessed a significant increase in nurseries (children for birth to below four years), supervised by the Ministry of Social Development, as their total number reached 730 by the end of 2002. It is worth noting that 57% of these nurseries are governmental, 38% are private, and 4.6% are affiliates of the NGO sector.

3.4. Type of personnel involved:

The number of KG teachers is around 5,417 teachers; 17.5% are bachelor's degree holders, 80% have a diploma degree, 3% have finished high school certificate. Teachers employed by MoE are bachelor's degree and diploma degrees holders and many of the KG supervisors have master's degrees.

The educational level of caregivers working in nurseries and day-care centres varies a lot: 44.7% of caregivers hold a university or college degrees, 32.3% have only a high school certificate and 23% have lower qualifications.

3.5. Type of staff training (requirements):

The requirements of the Ministry of Education are that teachers must have a university degree in ECE or related field. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education builds the capacity of the existing staff by providing two types of training: the Wisconsin University training programme (160 hours); and the National Curriculum training programme (160 hours).

3.6. Recent national policies and reforms:

In order to further develop the early childhood sector in Jordan, a national team representing public, private organizations and experts developed the National Strategy for Early Childhood Development. The Strategy calls for implementing programmes to support the holistic development of the child and the expansion of the KG sector. A Plan of Action to implement the ECD strategy has been developed. Furthermore, the Jordanian Second Plan of Action for Children have been developed and endorsed in 2004, where ECD section builds on the ECD strategy and plan of action.

The Government pledged to allocate sufficient human and financial resource to achieve its objectives and seek extra funds wherever needed. The NPA calls for increasing the percentage of children enrolled in preschool (KG1) from 28% to 35% by the year 2008, and to 50% by the year 2013, and to increase enrolment in KG2 from 47% to 52% by the year 2008, and to 70% by the year 2013

The *Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy Project* (ERfKE I) sets out in detail the intentions for reform of early, basic and secondary schooling within an extensive and inclusive framework. Four major interdependent components of the reform have been determined, to be developed over the next five years, commencing on July 2003. These components are:

- building institutional capacities,
- professional development of KG teachers,
- expansion of KG for disadvantaged and remote areas,
- raising public awareness.

The ERfKE project is designed to help the Government—through the Ministry of Education—to build capacities and enhance the scope and quality of early childhood

services, in partnership with a wide range of international and local funding organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

3.7. Efforts targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged children:

The Ministry of Education policy for the expansion in KGs focuses on opening KGs in remote and disadvantaged areas. The Ministry plans to open 50 new KGs classes annually. Several other initiatives exist for these groups such as providing a daily meal and once a year warm clothes for children.

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

The NPA is focusing on expanding the ECCE programmes, and the MoE plans to open 50 classes annually. Moreover, ERfKE dedicated a whole component for the promotion and expansion of the ECCE programmes whereby 140 new KG units will be built and furnished.

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

The objective of the ECD component in the NPA is to ensure that children have the best start to life through providing a stimulating and a safe environment at home and childhood centres, and to receive quality education that is developmentally appropriate, and encompasses opportunities for self-learning and life-long learning.

Furthermore, this component aims to increase the children's knowledge of their cultural heritage, and improve their abilities to make informed decisions, and enhance their inter-personal communication skills, develop their creativity and capabilities and enable them to exercise their right to express their views and to participation. Jordan has developed a national KG curriculum in 2003 with these objectives in mind.

3.9.1. Objectives and aims:

Kindergarten (pre-school education) aims at providing an adequate educational environment and care for well-balanced growth in order to help children to:

- acquire sound health habits;
- develop positive social relationships;
- consolidate positive attitudes towards school;
- Be prepared for a smooth transition from home to school.

Activities and methods at this stage aim to promote the development of the personality of the child.

3.9.2. Learning areas and teaching-learning methods:

The recently developed kindergarten curriculum mentions as basic learning units issues the following:

- Who am I?
- My family
- National and religious events
- Water
- Animals
- Transportation
- Our country, Homeland
- Seasons
- Plants
- Occupations

In addition, children are taught songs and anthems in a simple and clear language.

Performance of pupils at this level is evaluated through the follow-up of their participation in the diversified activities and of their growth in the cognitive, social, spiritual, artistic and emotional dimensions. Parents are continuously informed on the progress of their children.

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

Kindergartens run for 23 hours per week. The school year at the preschool level consists of 28 weeks.

3.10. Any other relevant and pertinent information

Jordan is one of the six pioneering countries in the world to develop the ECD Standards, indicators and benchmarks. The ECD standards measure a country's level of knowledge and skills of young children at various stages of their development. They formulate the benchmark upon which Jordan can evaluate the impact of the programmes on young children and would inform the process of reviewing the curriculum and teacher training for professionals dealing with young children. Standards are also needed to set the level of expectations that parents have for their children and would help develop parenting programmes. All this concurs with Jordan's plan of action for establishing comprehensive data on Early Childhood Development and will enable the country to institute the standards and outcomes that it aims for its children.

Jordan developed and adopted an ECD/Parenting programme that aims at providing parents and caregivers with skills and information to support the psychosocial, cognitive and physical development of children aged 0-8 in the country. The programme was designed based on a national Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey on Jordanian population, which revealed gaps in proper child rearing knowledge among parents. The programme takes a holistic approach to children's growth and development within the context of the family, the community and at the national level. The programme has thus far been implemented in more than 200

centres and reached over 70,000 families throughout the country. It involves a network of 13 national partners and three local area networks who aim to provide comprehensive care for the young child.

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	<u>Yes</u>	9,000 service provider & caregiver
As component of health and nutrition programmes, such as information about child development included in health and nutrition visits	<u>Yes</u>	6,000 caregivers
Parent groups that meet to discuss issues of their young children, including health, nutritional status, and development	<u>Yes</u>	55,000 caregivers
As component of adolescent, livelihood or literacy programmes		
Media broadcast, such as <i>Sesame Street</i> , with media for and with children	On <i>ad-hoc</i> basis	
Other (please specify)		

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).

The parenting programme targets all families with a focus on poor and disadvantaged communities. A specific component on the cognitive training is currently targeting single-headed mother households.

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

Jordan has implemented the Early Years Evaluation (EYE) instrument to measure children school readiness. Moreover, the country has already developed its ECD Standards and Indicators to measure the level of knowledge and skills of young children at various stages of their development.

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

The ECD strategy has been approved and later has been translated into the Jordanian National Plan of Action for Children (2004-2013) which has been endorsed by the Government.

[Information revised by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, January 2006.]