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Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education

Pakistan

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

Compiled by:
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PAKISTAN

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 5-9 years.

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

(ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education)

1.1. National definition of ISCED 0 programs:

Early Childhood Education (ECE), termed *katchi* or pre-primary, is defined as both formal and informal as well as public or private education services for children aged 3-5 years

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

ECE covers children of 3 and 4 years of age, i.e. above 3 years and below 5 years.

1.3. ISCED 0 programs: statistics and indicators

1.3.1. Enrolment:

	Percentage	Year
Gross enrolment ratio	46.5	2003/04
Net enrolment ratio	37.2	2003/04
Percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience	56.8	2003/04

Source: Government of Pakistan (including *katchi* and unadmitted students, age group 3-4 years).

Note: In 2003/04, there were a total of 3,531,907 children (487,598 in urban and 3,044,309 in rural areas), with 44.1% girls and 55.9% boys, enrolled in *katchi* or pre-primary classes in

government schools in Pakistan. In urban areas, 52% were girls and 48% were boys. In rural areas, 43% were girls and 57% were boys.

Area	Participation rate (%) of “katchi” + unadmitted* students	Participation rate (%) of “katchi” students only
PAKISTAN	70	52
Punjab	65	51
Sindh	42	24
NWFP	85	57
Balochistan	81	70
FATA	94	51
Islamabad	33	33

(*) Unadmitted are students who are not formally enrolled in class but simply “sit in” usually with an older sibling.

Source: Saleem, Muhammad, *Resource Paper on Early Childhood and Development in Pakistan*, Ministry of Education, November 2005.

1.3.2. *Enrolment ratio by age group (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
	19.3	60.0	13.9		

Sources: *Population Distribution by age groups and Residence, Pakistan 1998-2005*. Institute of Population Studies (NIPS), Government of Pakistan. *Pakistan School Education Statistics 2003-04*. AEPAM, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

1.3.3. *Teachers, 2003/04:*

Total number of teachers	Of whom female (%)	Percentage of trained teachers (all)	Percentage of trained teachers (males)	Percentage of trained teachers (females)
89,444	45.2

Source: UIS.

1.3.4. *Funding: Not available*

	Percentage
Public current expenditure per pupil as percentage of the Gross National Product per capita	...

1.3.5. *Main source(s) of financing:*

For the first time in Pakistan, specific funds were allocated under the Education Sector Reforms (ESR 2001–05). A total amount of Rs56.94 million was released for Early Childhood Education by the Federal Government to the provinces and areas in 2001/02 as follows:

	TOTAL	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baloch.	ICT	AJ&K	FATA	FANA
Releases (in Rs. M)	55.94	6.6	2.6	2.17	1.23	3.73	0.14	0.42	0.28
Utilization (Rs m)	22.88	6.6	2.6	1.296	1.23	3.73	0.14	0.42	0.28
Utilization rate (%)	40	100	100	60	100	100	100	100	100

In subsequent years, there was no allocation made to ECE by the provincial governments.

In the public sector, there are two kinds of public services: (a) traditional style, where the child sits in a multi-grade classroom, sharing the space, material and teacher time with students of Class I and II; and (b) improved style, where recently, specific classroom, trained teacher and proper material and facilities have been provided by the government.

In the *traditional style*, there are no special funds for ECE and the regular primary teacher allocates a portion of his/her time in teaching “Katchi” students.

However, under the *improved style*, ECE is being provided, at nominal fees, in a limited number (less than 1% of all public primary) schools – in almost 100 rural public schools by the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), and in another 65 schools with technical and financial assistance from Children’s Resources International (CRI), an international NGO and UNICEF under the Child-Friendly Schools Programme. In Sindh, the Aga Khan Education Service Pakistan is implementing the Improving Pre-Primary and Primary in Sindh (IPPS) in community-based rural schools since 1995; and the Teachers’ Resource Centre (TRC) is implementing the Early Childhood Education Programme (ECEP) in Karachi government and district municipal schools since 1998. In Punjab, Plan International began an ECCD programme in 7 centers in Chakwal district in 2002, while in the same year, the Department of Literacy and Non-formal Education established rural ECE centers in rural government schools in several districts of Punjab.

2. OTHER ECCE PROGRAMS

(Generally preceding ISCED 0 programs)

2.1. National definition of other ECCE programs:

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is defined as both formal and informal as well as public or private day care, health, nutrition, or education services for children.

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

0–7 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:

Under consideration (to be recognized as one of the stages of the education system)

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

As various ministries/departments are responsible for a variety of services addressed to various age groups, there seems no clear-cut division in the ministerial responsibility of providing early childhood services on the basis of age.

For example, children between the ages 0-3 years are not only served by health care services (post-natal care, immunization, etc.) in public units such as basic health units (BHUs) and rural health centres (RHCs) and public hospitals run by the Ministry of Health but also by the government's Lady Health Workers (LHWs) who visit homes in rural areas and the frequent polio drives organized all over the country. In addition, there are the day-care facilities provided for working mothers by the Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education. Child care also extends beyond 3 years of age, when early childhood education, implemented by the Ministry of Education, begins for pre-school learners.

Ages	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	-----Ministry of Women's Dev and Social Welfare-----								
	-----Ministry of Health-----								
	-----Ministry of Education-----								

Although there is the National Commission on Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD), an organization set up to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC) by the Ministry of Women's Development, Social Welfare and Special Education but there is no effective coordination between this organization and various other ministries and provincial departments (of health, education, etc.) and NGOs implementing ECCE activities.

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.):

Besides the *katchi* classes in government schools, several private schools also conduct pre-primary classes. Nursery, kindergarten or Montessori style education are offered in profit-making private schools, usually operating in urban localities; and enrolling children aged 2-5 years taught in proper classrooms by well-trained teachers using proper ECE materials. [Note: The terms, "nursery" and "kindergarten" are used interchangeably by schools in Pakistan, with no practical difference in their curriculum or teaching styles. On the other hand, while technically, the term, "Montessori", refers to a specialized style of ECE teaching, requiring specific kind of teacher training, special materials and classroom environment (especially children furniture), and few private schools are aware of, or adopt, its requirements.]

3.4. Type of personnel involved:

In private schools, the ECE teachers are usually qualified and well-trained in relevant methods. Other staff include non-teaching staff such as the *ayas* (maids), hired for assistance with young children.

3.5. Type of staff training (requirements):

In public schools, the qualification required for teaching in *katchi* class is the same as that for primary school i.e., higher secondary education certificate plus one-year teaching certificate. The provinces usually adopt the same criteria except where suitable staff is not available and relaxation of criteria is exercised.

3.6. Recent national policies and reforms:

Early childhood education had been well organized till the 1970s. *Katchi* pre-primary classes were organized in formal primary schools. However, officially, this practice was discontinued during the 1980s.

After the commitment to early childhood care and development activities as one of the six goals of EFA at the World Education Conference (1990), this dimension began to regain prominence among policy-makers in Pakistan. The present initiative to support early childhood learning followed from the National Education Policy (1998-2010), which called for an introduction of *katchi*/pre-primary class as a

formal class in primary schools, extending primary education from a five-year to a six-year programme:

“Katchi class at primary level shall be introduced as a part of the effort to improve achievements of pupils” and “Katchi class shall be institutionalized in the primary cycle gradually and progressively.”

Subsequently, the Education Sector Reforms (ESR: 2001-05) supported ECE through financial allocations to the federal capital as well as to the provinces and other areas.

At present, the Medium-Term Development Framework (MDTF 2005-2010), a five-year plan, is also supporting ECE.

3.7. Efforts targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged children:

Recently, after the earthquake of October 8, several NGOs including Children’s Resources International (CRI) assisted the Social Welfare Department in setting up a playgroup in a rehabilitation centre for earthquake victims in H-11, Islamabad.

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

Not available

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

Several NGOs have developed teaching-learning materials for ECE. These include Children’s Resource International (CRI); the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF); the Teachers’ Resource Centre (TRC) and the College of Home Economics, Lahore.

Various kinds of teaching and learning aids such as blocks, charts, posters, handbooks, flashcards, teachers’ guides; planners; teachers’ kits; etc. have been developed by several organizations.

3.9.1. Objectives and aims:

- i. To help the child develop his or her potential to learn and grow.
- ii. To provide an appropriate environment to ensure his or her safety and holistic development.
- iii. To use play way method and concrete experience in teaching and learning.
- iv. To prepare a child for formal schooling.
- v. To develop awareness of basic cultural values and norms.

3.9.2. Learning areas and teaching-learning methods:

- Social
- Emotional

- Cognitive
- Physical

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

Five and half days per week, i.e. almost 28 hours per week of attendance in schools

3.10. Any other relevant and pertinent information

Religious ECE

In Pakistan, Islamic or Quranic education is emphasized from an early age. This education is imparted through three modes i.e., formal, non-formal; and informal either in mosques, madrassahs or at home. Even in the remotest areas, Quranic education is considered to be “compulsory” by tradition and an effective way by which to inculcate moral values and teach life skills at an early age. It is estimated that more than 80 percent of children in the age group 4-10 years receive Islamic education in this way. Parents, especially mothers, play an important role in religious education, as they begin to teach moral values from a very young age of their children.

A recent Consultative Meeting on ECE, organized by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with UNICEF, concluded with the following ECE issues which need to be addressed to ensure effective progress in ECE:

Political Commitment: There was a need for a strong renewed political commitment for ECE in all policies and plans of the Government of Pakistan, including the Medium Term Development Framework (MDTF).

Budget Allocations: Specific budget is needed for improving the existing traditional katchi classes in all public primary school.

Age Group for Early Childhood Education: The relevant age group for katchi enrolment should be 3-5 years; and a child above 5 years could be admitted to Class I.

Merger of the formal primary katchi and the ECD centers: There are several ECE centers operated by the Departments of Literacy in Punjab and Sindh within the premises of the formal primary schools. There is a need for a gradual transition of the traditional katchi class to improved ECE class.

Quality Improvement: Teachers’ training; material development and participation of parents/community in monitoring activities were required to for improvement in ECE quality.

Data Collection, Compilation and Dissemination: Collection, compilation and dissemination of more detailed information on ECE enrolments; number of institutions offering ECE and ECE teachers across provinces by age and gender was required for better planning of ECE programmes and activities.

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- the CRI's programme on ECE in government schools includes the involvement of parents in ECE activities.	
As component of health and nutrition programmes, such as information about child development included in health and nutrition visits	Yes- through the Lady Health Workers (LHWs) programme on basic health, offered at doorstep in rural areas. Information on child development is also imparted in basic health units and rural health centers.	Most of the rural population in the country.
Parent groups that meet to discuss issues of their young children, including health, nutritional status, and development	Yes- the CRI's programme on ECE includes family involvement in which parents also meet and share their views.	
As component of adolescent, livelihood or		

literacy programmes		
Media broadcast, such as <i>Sesame Street</i> , with media for and with children	Several programmes on child nutrition and health are regularly broadcast on radio. Public service announcements on immunization and use of oral dehydration therapy are also telecast on TV.	Most of the country's population.
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).

See above

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

No- there is any national level system for monitoring children's development *per se*.

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

Yes (see point 3.6)

[Information revised and additional data provided by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, December 2005–January 2006.]