



India Country Profile

Early Childhood Care and Education



Challenges

- Lack of universal ECCE access for children between conception and 6 years of age.
- Difficulty in integrating quality ECCE services targeting the two age segments: (i) under-three and (ii) pre-primary children between 3 and 6 years of age.
- Limited policy regulations and financing on ECCE provisions by the Government.

Priorities

- Provide comprehensive ECCE services between conception to age 6 for children's holistic development.
- Universal inclusive ECCE access to include vulnerable children.
- Capacity building of human resources to improve quality.
- Develop and enforce quality standards and curriculum framework.
- Increase awareness on the importance of ECCE by partnering with communities and families.
- Promote diversity and culturally-appropriate strategies within a decentralized framework.

Noteworthy practices

Sajag caregiver program to support under-three children (Implemented by UNICEF)

- Partnerships to integrate services across sectors of health, nutrition, and psychosocial development. Materials developed are contextualized and culturally-sensitive. Organic and evolutionary approach in refining implementation to cater to the needs of families and communities.
- Achievements: Scale-up of program to the state level, including dissemination of advocacy messages to enable caregivers/parents to support young children's holistic development. Also, capacity developed for 70,000 health workers via training on psychosocial stimulation.

Childcare services for migrant children in informal settings (Implemented by Mobile Crèches or MC)

- Three models to ensure delivery of integrated services on health, nutrition, early learning, and care for children living in construction sites and slums, through: i) daycare provisions; ii) advocacy to build demand for childcare; and iii) caregiver trainings for parents and childcare providers.
- Achievements: A cost-effective scalable childcare model for children in marginalized communities with 100 network partners, 200 builders partnered, 6,500 women trained, 650 daycare centers, and 7,50,000 children reached.

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Asia-Pacific Regional Network
for Early Childhood



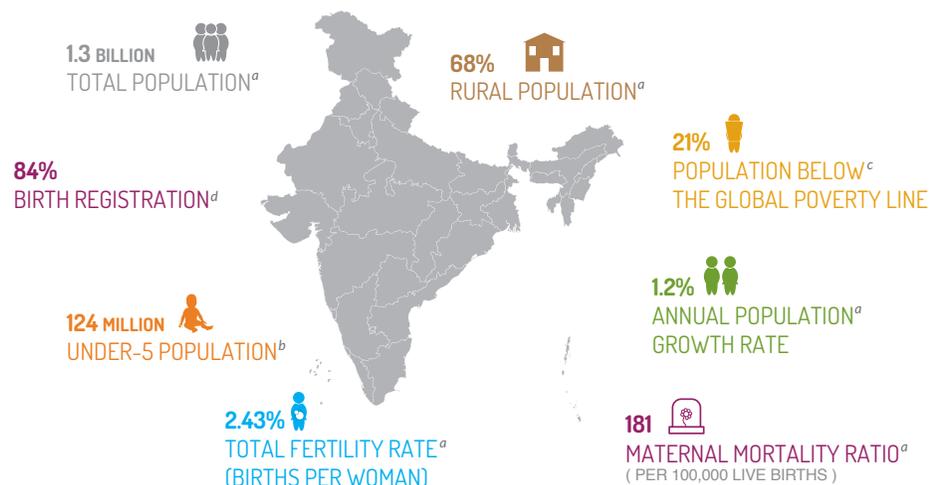
General information about ECCE in India^{1,2}

In India, the term ECCE is generally used to reference coverage of care and education services for children between 0-6 years. There is a wide ranging of service providers, including public, private, NGOs, crèches for working mothers, and pre-primary schools (3-6 years).

ECCE was initially recognized in India within the 1986 National Education Policy. In 2013, the approved National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy reinforces the Government's commitment to integrated ECCE for the holistic development of children with a focus on care and learning. The nationally-sponsored and state-implemented Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program strives to enhance children's school readiness and holistic development.

Despite national attention placed on ECCE, many children still lack access to preschools. Issues such as stunting, high under-5 mortality rates, and low birth weight continue to persist in India even though progress has been made through the ICDS program on maternal and child health.³

DEMOGRAPHICS^d AND PRENATAL



BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

100% FULL IMMUNIZATION COVERAGE



48% UNDER-5 STUNTING PREVALENCE (MODERATE AND SEVERE)



46% EXCLUSIVE BREAST FEEDING (UNDER-6 MONTHS)



38 INFANT MORTALITY RATE (DEATHS PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)

48 UNDER-5 MORTALITY RATE (DEATHS PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)

Sources (year)

^a World Bank (2014)
^d SWOC (2005-2013)
^g SWOC (2012)

^b UN Population Division (2015⁵)
^e UN IGME (2015⁶)
^h UIS (2011⁷)

^c World bank (2011)
^f SWOC (2009-2013)
ⁱ UIS (2010)

Disclaimer: Numbers have been rounded except for fertility and population growth rate. Data is as of May 2016.

SCHOOL READINESS

56% GROSS ENROLLMENT RATIO^h OR GER IN PRE-PRIMARY



8.4% GRADE 1 REPETITION RATEⁱ

1.06 GENDER PARITY INDEX OF^h GROSS ENROLLMENT RATIO; FEMALE/MALE (%)

Key policies

National ECCE Policy approved in 2013. Policy includes National Curriculum Framework and Quality Standards for ECCE.

- National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013
- National Policy on Education 1986
- State Plan of Action for Children (2014-18): Part I
- State Plan of Action for Children (2014-18): Part II
- National Policy for Children 2013

Ministries in charge

Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Human Resource Development, and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

References

- ¹ National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development. (2006). *Select issues concerning ECCE in India (pp.24)* (Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007, *Strong foundations: early childhood care and education*).
 - ² UNICEF India. *What we do: Early childhood education* (Accessed April 26, 2016).
 - ³ Rao and Sun. (2010). *Early childhood care and education in the Asia Pacific region: Moving towards goal 1 (pp. 33)*. (Paper commissioned for the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific's World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (WCECCE) in Moscow 2010).
 - ⁴ World Bank. (2015). *World Bank Open Data* (Accessed May 3, 2016).
 - ⁵ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2015). *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, DVD Edition* (Accessed May 3, 2016).
 - ⁶ United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME). (2015). *Level & trends in child mortality: Report 2015 (pp. 23)*. New York: UNICEF.
 - ⁷ mortality: Report 2015 (pp. 23). New York: UNICEF.
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). (2016). *Education dataset* (Accessed May 3, 2016).