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Education for
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GLOBAL ACTION WEEK
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Policy Brief No. 01
Broadening the Base of Education: Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Annual Status of Education Report
ASER Pakistan 2010
Facilitated by SAFED

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Early Childhood Education (ECE)- National and Pro vincial Profiles 
emerging from ASER Survey - Rural – 32 Districts - 54062 Children

- Sindh: Out of School 67%, Schooling 33%
- Punjab: Out of School 52%, Schooling 48%
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Out of School 52%, Schooling 48%
- Gilgit: Out of School 64%, Schooling 36%
- Balochistan: Out of School 69%, Schooling 31%
- National: Out of School 55%, Schooling 45%

Early Childhood Education (ECE)- National and Pro vincial Profiles

- Male: Schooling 57%, Out of School 43%
- Female: Schooling 51%, Out of School 49%
According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2009 the Government of Pakistan has declared “katchi” or pre-primary class to be integrated in the primary sections of all schools to make Early Childhood Education (ECE) an important first pillar or Goal No. 1 of Education For All targets. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Pakistan 2010 surveyed children aged 3-5 across 32 districts of Pakistan (Rural areas).

Of the total 10,246 children falling in 3-5 age group, 44.7% or 45% were enrolled in some kind of school. Girls’ enrollment was 43.4%. Balochistan (69%) and Sindh (67%) have the highest percentage of out of school children in ECE.

Of the total enrolled, 61.7% children were enrolled in Government schools, 38.3% children were attending non-state educational facilities.

The enrollment share of non-state schools was: a) 36.3% children typical private schools; b) 0.8% enrolled in Madrasah schools and c) 1.4% in other type of schools.

Out of School- More Boys than Girls: Over 55.3% of children are not enrolled in any type of schools. The ratio of girls amongst out of school children is 48.8%.

Balochistan: Out of 150 randomly selected villages in 5 districts of Balochistan, 69.3% of the total 2002 children were not enrolled in any type of schools. Almost 49% of out of school children were girls.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Out of 120 randomly selected villages in 4 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 51.4% of the total 1289 children falling in 3-5 age group were not enrolled in any type of school. Almost 47% of the out of school children were girls.

Punjab: Out of 390 randomly selected villages in 13 districts of Punjab, 47.5% of the total 3471 children were not enrolled in any type of schools. Almost 49% of the out of school children were girls.

Sindh: The survey was conducted in 180 randomly selected villages in 6 districts of Sindh. 67% of the total 2493 children were not enrolled in any type of schools. Around 48% of out of school children were girls.

Gilgit Baltistan: Of the 30 randomly selected villages surveyed of Gilgit district (rural), 36% of the total 197 children were not enrolled in any type of schools. Almost 54% of the out of school children were girls.

State of Early Childhood Education in Pakistan:

- More than 50% of 3-5 age group children are currently enrolled in ECE if urban areas are included.
- Pakistan’s Education For All National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) 2001-2015 target is 50% enrollment in ECE by 2015. Pakistan has achieved the enrolment target nationally with 45% in rural areas.
- 62% or a majority of the ECE children in rural areas are enrolled in government schools.
- A high ratio of children in katchi/ECE is an opportunity to reach the goal of Universal Primary Education (UPE) provided the children once enrolled can be retained and move to the next class/grade. ECE is the EFA Goal No.1 and is the best mechanism to ensure that children do go to primary and complete primary education (MDGs Goal No.2).
- The government has an excellent ECE National Curriculum 2007 (Urdu/English), along with ECE national standards which have not been widely disseminated to schools and teachers. Thus far the distribution of ECE curriculum has been through corporate social responsibility (CSR) and civil society efforts.
- Sadly in government schools, there are: a) no specific teachers appointed for katchi, as it is just an additional multi-grade class with often the largest number of students enrolled; b) the teachers are not trained for ECE; c) there are no classrooms in government schools for ECE; d) learning materials are missing and with very poor learning facilities for this sensitive age group.
- There are some high quality learning materials/tools available for ECE /katchi, but often they are not officially included in the minimum requirements of a school, both government or private.
Suggested Actions for 3-5 Year Olds – the Katchi/ECE age group

Planning and Budgeting

- Implement the policy action #3 of NEP pertaining to ECE (p. 36) to ensure that it is recognized and attached to primary schools with additional budget, teachers and assistants.
- Prepare an implementable plan/budget over the next 10 years (2011-2020) to have one classroom/toilet teacher and one assistant for every katchi/ or kindergarten class in all government and private schools.
- Government must have a healthy budget allocation for katchi/ECE in its regular and development budgets. These must be for: ECE Classrooms/toilets/water facilities; ECE teachers; ECE Assistants; ECE Learning Materials; ECE in-service and pre-service training.
- ECE research budgets be included to track impact of ECE on primary enrolment and retention.

Teachers’ Training and ECE Pedagogy

- Plan and undertake the improvements in quality of ECE on a concept of holistic development of the child that provides a stimulating, interactive environment, including play, rather than on rote learning and rigid achievement standards.
- ECE/katchi teachers must be trained in at least a one year diploma as a pre-service program
- For the newly initiated B.Ed Honors 4 year professional teachers’ program there is an option by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for Elementary and Secondary education; ECE should also be included as a specialist option.

Learning and Physical Resources

- A separate classroom/toilet/water facility for ECE shall be provided in each primary school/section with adequate space for interactive teaching and learning to take place indoors and outdoors.
- Ensure provision of trained ECE teachers and appropriate learning materials for each school.

Parental Awareness and Institutional Alliances

- Develop an ECE support network across the country and in provinces for teachers to share experiences and learn from good practices.
- Involve educational organizations, education departments and teachers to create awareness about the significance of Early Years Learning amongst parents and community members. Moreover, create spaces and time for active parental involvement in learning process at schools.

References:


