National Education Policy and Early Childhood Education

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AKU-IED contributions to ECCE

Closely work with Federal and Provincial government

• Research intervention to support Home school partnership
• Review ECD policy, standers, programs and materials
• Curriculum reviews and Value addition to SNC
• Conduct Teacher trainings
• Developing Teachers training manual and guide books for Federal and Provincial Government
Age group of ECCE in the National Education Policy 2021

• A crucial time for development, growth and learning in human development.
• During the period from conception to approximately age six, the brain develops so much and so rapidly laying important foundations that affect learning.
• During this time, young children need responsive caregiving, nurturing and rich learning experiences to help shape healthy brain circuits (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2007).
• The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) longitudinal study which investigated the attainment and development of children found that quality Pre-school (3-5 years old) has a positive and long term impact on children’s attainment, progress and social-behavioural development(2004).
• It will be helpful on the agreement on age and duration of ECCE program to avoid confusion.

Language of instruction

- Success in the early years of school and in the development of literacy is strongly linked to language development.

- Children develop and learn through positive interactions with their parents and caregivers, for example through playing, singing, talking, telling stories and being read to.

- In their early years children make great progress in their ability to use language. They progress from using non-verbal communication to verbal communication or spoken language, which is the most complex skill human beings develop (Weitzman & Greenberg, 2002).

- Language rich learning environments can support children to develop a strong vocabulary and to use sentences of increasing length and complexity.

- Language goes hand-in-hand with play and learning in early years classroom environments.

- Home languages are important in early years. As Pakistan has multilingual context where many languages are spoken. In schools possibly Urdu/English with value given to the home language.
The sustainable development goals to which Pakistan is signatory have highlighted that “Early childhood development (ECD) can help drive the transformation we hope to achieve over the next 15 years.”

SDG 4, target 4.2

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.
Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 4.2 indicators to see if this is achieved are:

**SDG 4, target 4.2 indicators**

**4.2.1**
- Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex

**4.2.2**
- Participation rate in organized learning (one year before official primary entry age), by sex

National curriculum for ECCE competency, learning outcomes set nicely to achieve SDG 4.2
Well-trained early childhood teachers: Key to achieving SDG 4, target 4.2

- Early childhood teachers / educators / practitioners should be
  - Professionally qualified
  - Empowered
  - Motivated
  - Adequately recruited and remunerated
  - Supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems

Equity gap in education is exacerbated by the shortage and uneven distribution of professionally trained teachers, especially in disadvantaged areas

(Pardhan, 2012, 2017)
Play-based learning in early years

• Children’s ‘work’ is play

• Children are unique, learn by doing, construct knowledge (Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky)

• Children make sense of the world by exploring, developing and representing learning experiences through play.

• Children need safe, secure environments

• High scope approach has adopted and included in both SNC curriculum and Sindh Curriculum.

Role of the educator / teacher/ caregiver:
Promote children’s interests for discovery and inquiry

(Pardjono, 2016; Williams, 2017)
Inclusive education

• All children have right to quality education and ensure that curriculum, recourses and teacher training
• Individual differences and special needs of children are two important aspects of child development.
• All children need to be treated as individuals with diverse learning needs so that they can make good progress especially at critical moments in their learning.
• Clarity on the understanding on how we understand the concept of inclusive in education in National Education policy
• Need to add additional plan for inclusive education
• Ensure both girls and boys get equitable access of education
• In curriculum, materials, and teaching practice gender equity need to be consider.
• Through observations and interactions with children, teachers/ caregivers play an important role in identifying and responding to children’s individual needs which may be physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural or environmental
Nutrition and health together with schooling to provide a more holistic ECE experience

• Young children are more likely to reach their full potential for growth and development when they eat nutritious foods and are able to express their interests, thoughts and feelings in a supportive and safe environment.

• Promoting healthy practices for and with young children is not an easy task and requires all stakeholders in early childhood education to work together.

• It should be a multi-sectorial approach where we create networks with individuals involved in the provision of health services like health workers, health officers, doctors, nurses, lady health visitors (LHVs) and dentists to support children’s healthy development.

• Ensure its part of policy, curriculum.

• Need to think on facilities for children like proper place for learning, clean water to drink, health and safety facilities in schools.
Suggested Recommendation

• Ensuring a multi-sectoral approach
• Ensure that transition from home (prenatal to birth to preschool is captured
• Ensure that home-school-community partnerships is captured

Image Credit: WHO Nurturing Care Framework