Introduction to MELQO Modules

The MELQO initiative convened from 2012-2016 to provide high-quality, free global tools for the measurement of children's development & early learning and the quality of early learning environments. Led by UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, MELQO comprised an international consortium of individuals and institutions working to make early learning assessment more accessible around the world. MELQO's measurement modules are sub-divided into two categories 1) Measure of Development and Early Learning (MODEL) and 2) Measuring Early Learning Environments (MELE). The modules were field-tested in 10 countries,[1] and are constantly updated as they are used and improvements are recommended. The following grid describes the domains of MODEL and MELE mapped onto what they aim to measure.

Table: MELQO MODEL and MELE Domains

	Domain	What does this measure?
Measure of Development and Early Learning (MODEL)	**Literacy**	Motivation, expressive language, alphabet knowledge, receptive language, listening comprehension
	Mathematics	Numbers and operations, measurement, spatial relations
	Social-emotional development	Self-regulation, social understanding/pro-social behaviour, social competence, emotional well-being
	Executive function	Working memory, inhibition
	Physical development	Fine motor, overall health
	Contextual information	Socio-economic conditions, parent education, household composition, participation in early learning, home learning environment/parent involvement, neglect, child health
	Construct	**What does this measure?**
Measure of Early Learning Environments (MELE)	**Play**	Emphasis of the programme on creating opportunities for all children to explore and engage in free play and group play: the presence of adequate toys and spaces to play
	Pedagogy	Approaches that teachers take in teaching children, including individualized and/or group lessons and opportunities for dialogue, and in supporting a successful transition to primary school, independent work
	Interactions	Type and quality of interactions between teachers and children, and between children and their peers
	Environment	Physical space and safety of the classroom, including access to clean water and toilets, and adequate space for each child
	Personnel	Experiences of teachers and directors in training, years of service, compensation, supervision and monitoring
	Parent and Community Engagement	Extent to which parents and community members are encouraged and able to engage in children's education

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1 Bangladesh, Colombia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Madagascar, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Sudan and Tanzania (mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar).

Adaptation of MELQO modules to Pakistan Context

The items in MODEL and MELE were selected as a starting point for testing and adaptation within countries. Because much of the research to date on predicting children's school achievement comes from a small number of high-income, Western cultures, some of these constructs and items are not relevant in all settings while others are more useful across a larger variety of country contexts. For this reason, an adaptation process is required in each country where the tools are used.

To begin the adaptation process for Pakistan, the MELQO items in the modules listed above were mapped against the ELDS 2009 and the Pakistan National ECE Curriculum 2007. The MELQO modules used for this mapping were "generic" versions, with the objective of creating a Pakistan-specific version through this research project.

Of the 145 ELDS standards, 110 were determined to be covered by MELQO items (75%). However, the degree to which the standards were aligned varied. Some ELDS standards have a MELQO item that is nearly identical to the standard (e.g. child can identify numbers), while others have a more general alignment (e.g. a mathematics activity is observed).

The greatest alignment between the MELQO items and the Pakistan curriculum and standards was found in three ELDS domains: (1) Personal, Social and Emotional Development; (2) Language Development; and (3) Cognitive Development. There are more than 10 MELQO items that correspond to the multiple ELDS standards in these three domains. Additional MELQO items were added for standards where there were only one or two items. The purpose of administering the MODEL and MELE tools is to get a snapshot of the kinds of things children know and can do, and a general sense of classroom quality. This is not meant to be a comprehensive assessment of all of the Pakistan standards and curricula. Therefore, if the majority of the standards in an ELDS subdomain is covered by MELQO items, it was considered sufficient.

There are some MELQO items on emerging domains such as self-regulation and executive functioning, which are not standards included in ELDS or the National ECE Curriculum. These constructs were not widely measured when the ELDS were developed in 2009 but are nevertheless expected to be highly correlated to outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Therefore, the research team recommended that these items remain in the assessment.

Following the mapping exercise, a core version of each MELQO module was reviewed by the research team and suggestions on adaptations were made. The final versions were translated into Urdu and are enclosed for reference.