

ECD /ECCE in China

Feb 6-8

Bangkok



Background



- Big population, total population 1.3 billion, the 0-6 years old population is about 100 million
- Demographic and geographic diversity and unbalanced development level between urban and rural areas
- Social development is behind economic progress



Policy Development



- In 2003, the General Office of the State Council forwarded the issuing of the ***Guidelines Governing the Reform and Development of the Early Childhood Education*** formulated by 10 ministries and commissions including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Health, National Working Committee of Children and Women, etc.
- The ***Education Law of the People's Republic of China*** stipulates that “the State applies a school education system embracing pre-school education, primary education, secondary education and higher education,” thus identifying preschool education as an important component of China’s school educations system.



- In China, ECCE in the broad sense is education for children from birth through age 6 or 7. ECCE is divided into two major types: nurseries for children under age 3 and kindergartens for children from age 3 to 6. Nurseries are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, with kindergartens are under the Ministry of Education. As the government and the public are now attaching more importance to education in early years, nurseries are gradually expanding their focus of provision to education in addition to child care, and thus the MOE takes on the responsibility for supervising the education component of the nurseries. Most kindergartens are full-time with three age levels, while some also operate on one- or two- year basis. For children in the remote areas with sparse populations and poor transportation, ECCE services include residential boarding schools, mobile kindergartens, play centers, children's activity stations, toy libraries, and touring instruction teams, and children participate in different formats, such as seasonal classes, weekend classes, or mix age groups.

■ Administration and Funding:

- Due to the unbalanced development of the economy, geographical vastness, cultural and linguistic complexity, and educational limitation in the various regions, the central government has to rely on the local government to administer ECCE. The state sets out national guidelines for ECCE while local governments are given the autonomy to set up their own development plans and service systems and supervise the specific implementation. This diversity not only exists between provinces or urban areas and the countryside, but also within cities and municipalities.
- The government sets up and support models of ECCE facilities for training and emulation, which is seen as an effective way of improving their quality.
- Consistent with the policy-making and implementation mechanism, the government has always regards ECCE as an enterprise with a strong local and public orientation, delineating the respective responsibilities of various stakeholders for the provision and funding of ECCE.
- Since ECCE is not included in the compulsory education system, government input is relatively small when compared with the other sectors. It accounts for 1.3-1.5% (1.3% for 10 years average) of the total national educational expenditure. Non-state entities are to be the main providers of nurseries and kindergartens, supplemented by institutions provided by the governmental bodies, enterprises and institutions, communities and individual citizens. Parents are expected to pay fees and share a reasonable amount of the educational cost.

Best Practices

- Establishing the Goal of the ECCE Development. Formulating National Laws and Corresponding Policies on ECCE
- Laying Down the Cross-departmental management system of “Local Responsibility, Stratified Management, Division of Responsibility among Relevant Organs”. Accountability defined clearly among government sectors
- ECD development goals, guidelines and monitoring /evaluation defined based on the condition of different types of areas. Resource based approach and minimum standard setting.
- Local policy and action taken to promote ECD service in variety of ways (formal, informal...)
- Actively Developing ECCE in Rural and Remote Regions
- Constructing the Community Network for early Education and inter-sectoral approach
- Continued effort to improve quality. National curriculum guideline and local kindergarten criteria mean to improve quality

Issues

- Low access to pre-school education(41%)
- Shortage of ECD services, especially in rural areas
- Quality of service also differed
- In rural and poor areas, there are not sufficient materials tailored for early childhood care and development.
- Varying types and quality of pre-schools exist that do not comply with child development standards.
- A diversified system for Kindergarten operations have brought new management challenges
- ECD is in the process of re-structuring along with the economical system reform, need to identify the accountability among government, society, and the parents on ECD service.
- Lack of the recognition to the significance of ECD ,still not the priority of the government agenda.
- Limited investment from government (1.3%)
- No ECD law



Establishing the Goal of the ECCE Development

- ***(Guidelines Governing the Reform and Development of the Early Childhood Education)***
 - By 2007, the rate of three-year preschool education for children is to reach 55% nationwide and the rate of one-year preschool education is to reach 80%; the three-year preschool education is to be universalized in the large and medium-size cities; the capacity for scientific nursing on the part of parents and nurses of children aged 0 to 6 is to be improved comprehensively.
 - In accordance with the different characteristics of cities and the countryside, an ECCE service network is to be gradually established based in the community, centered around model kindergarten, integrating flexible and multi-faceted childhood education forms, and providing ECCE services to children aged 0 to 6 and their parents.
 - In 2005, the gross enrolment rate for children aged 3 to 5 reached 41.4%.
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Formulating National Laws and Corresponding Policies on ECCE

- Laws been formulated:
 - Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors
 - Law of the People's Republic of China on Maternal and Infant Health Care
 - Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Disabled Persons
 - Education Act for the Handicapped
 - Act for Kindergarten Management (1989)
 - Procedural Regulations for Kindergartens (1989)
 - Guiding Framework for Kindergarten Education (2001)
 - Standards for the Institutional Organization of Day and Boarding Kindergartens (1989)
 - Measures for the Healthcare Management of Nurseries and Kindergartens (1993)
 - A Checklist of Toys and Teaching Aids for Kindergartens (1992)
 - Qualifications and Requirements for the Position of Kindergarten Directors
 - Guidelines Governing the Reform and Development of the Early Childhood Education (2003)
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Laying Down the Cross-departmental management system of “Local Responsibility, Stratified Management, Division of Responsibility among Relevant Organs”

- In the ***Guidelines Governing the Reform and Development of the Early Childhood Education***, the General Office of the State Council defined the responsibilities of the governments of various levels and relevant authorities:
 - The educational administrations are the competent organs of childhood education, which should implement conscientiously the guidelines and policies of childhood education, study out administrative laws and regulations, formulate important rules and regulations, develop plans for childhood education, organize the implementation, and undertake the professional guidance for childhood education, cooperate with health departments in guiding the parents aged 0-3 in their scientific nursing.
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Upholding the Principle for Development of “Walking on Two Legs”, Providing Flexible and Diversified Forms of Early Education, Offering Educational Opportunities to More Eligible Children

- **Walking on Two Legs:** local governments establish and support kindergartens, all social forces are mobilized and depended upon for the establishment and operations of kindergartens. Through diversified channels and in various forms, ECCE development combines public operations with private operations.
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- ❑ The health department are responsible for drawing up the laws and rules and regulations in terms of kindergarten hygiene and health care, supervising and guiding the hygiene and healthcare work of kindergartens. They are responsible for guiding the parents of children aged 0 to 6 in terms of hygiene, healthcare, nutrition, growth and physical development.
 - ❑ The educational administrations, together with finance department and competent pricing departments, on non-profit principles, formulate the charging management measures for kindergartens and/or preschool classes.
 - ❑ The construction department, together with educational administrations, rationally determine the layouts and locations of kindergartens in township planning, construct kindergartens that match the resident population characteristics.
 - ❑ The civil affairs department take childhood education as an important component of urban community building, and together with educational administrations, explore management mechanisms and relevant policies for developing childhood education with the support of communities.
 - ❑ The labor ad social security departments are responsible for the preschool teachers' social insurance matters.
 - ❑ The institutional organizational department, together with educational administrations and finance departments, formulate organizational standards for kindergarten staff and faculty.
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Actively Developing ECCE in Rural and Remote Regions

- Since 1990s, MoE and UNICEF has implemented CEED programs in 66 poverty-stricken counties of 12 western and central provinces.
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