

Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

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Preface

It gives me an immense pleasure to note that Bangladesh has reached another milestone towards achieving the rights of children, especially ensuring quality primary education for them. The Pre-school Education Operational Framework will surely fulfil the longstanding demand and need in this respect.

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is a holistic child development concept. The Pre-school framework refers to the essential preparedness of young children before they enter the formal learning arena. This framework would be considered an integral part of a comprehensive ECCD framework currently under consideration.

Keeping in view the long-term vision and the short-term priorities, the framework has covered the national needs and aspirations, as well as the requirements of the young children to encourage and help them acquire appropriate learning competencies to participate effectively in primary school. The contents, structure, materials and methodological aspects have been considered in line with the scientific views of child development as well as the socio-cultural realities of Bangladesh.

Informal and unstructured pre-schools, such as the “baby class” have been in existence in many communities, but organized pre-schools are conducted mostly by the private schools, NGO-run schools and some major projects supported by international agencies. This well-formulated and approved operational framework will firmly establish the rationale and urgency for pre-school structure, contents, scope and standards.

The operational framework was developed by a working group comprising members from MoPME, MoWCA, NCTB, DPE, Institute of Education Research (IER) of Dhaka University, DAM, ECDRC of BU-IED and UNICEF. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all members of the working group who, under the chairmanship of Mr. A. S. Shameem Ahmed, Joint Secretary (Development), MoPME, worked hard for timely preparation of this operational framework. Special thanks are due to the Joint Secretary (Development), MoPME, for his able leadership to initiate the dialogue, organize the consultation process and activate the working group for formulating and finalizing the operational framework. I acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Nazmul Haq of IER, Dhaka University, Ms. Mahmuda Akhter of ECD Resource Center at the Institute of Education Development, BRAC University, Dr. Golam Mostafa of UNICEF and Ms. Qurratul Ayen Safdar, Senior Assistant Chief, MoPME in drafting and editing this document.

We deeply appreciate the contribution of the Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) and all of its members for the valuable inputs they have provided to formulate the draft of the operational framework. Special thanks are also due to the ECD Resource Centre (ECDRC) at the Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University and UNICEF Bangladesh for their technical and logistic support during the formulation process. I sincerely hope that the concerned governmental and non-governmental agencies, academic institutions and development partners, who contributed to the formulation of the framework, would play an even stronger role in the implementation of pre-primary education in Bangladesh in line with the operational framework.

M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan
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Acronyms

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
BRAC	-	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSA	-	Bangladesh Shishu Academy
BU-IED	-	BRAC University-Institute of Education
CAMPE	-	Campaign for Popular Education
CBO	-	Community based Organization
CEDAW	-	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	-	Convention on Child Rights
CMC	-	Centre Management Committee
DFA	-	Dakar Framework for Action
DAM	-	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DPE	-	Directorate of Primary Education
DPs	-	Development Partners
ECCE	-	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
ECDRC	-	Early Childhood Development and Resource Centre
EFA	-	Education for All
GoB	-	Government of Bangladesh
IER	-	Institute of Education and Research
IMED	-	Implementation Monitoring and Evaluations Division
INFEP	-	Integrated Non-formal Education Programme
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
MoCHTA	-	Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
MoPME	-	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MoRA	-	Ministry of Religious Affairs
MoWCA	-	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NCPE	-	National Committee on Primary Education
NCTB	-	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NFE	-	Non-Formal Education
NGO	-	Non-government Organization
PMED	-	Primary and Mass Education Division
PPE	-	Pre-Primary Education
PRSP	-	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SMC	-	School Management Committee
ToT	-	Training of the Trainers
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Summary

The Government of Bangladesh is strongly committed, both nationally and internationally, to achieve Education for All (EFA). Pre-primary education has a strong and positive impact on further learning during the primary level and beyond. Global experiences indicate that pre-primary education programmes have a significant contribution toward reducing dropouts and grade repetitions.

Available data show that only 14.6% of the children aged 3-5 years are attending pre-primary education. Currently there are 'Baby Classes' in 26,300 primary schools under the Ministry of Primary Education. In addition the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs and the Ministry of Religious Affairs are operating pre-primary classes under development projects. Besides, many private kindergarten schools and more than 150 NGOs are operating pre-primary education throughout the country.

The long-term vision of pre-primary education includes ensuring access to pre-school programmes for all the children of 3-5 years and the current target is to provide pre-school education to all children aged 5 to below 6 years.

Pre-primary education has been defined as the developmental and educational support provided to the child in the age range of 3 to 5 years in order to ensure the child's right to protection, care, survival and preparation for school education through play, amusement and introduction to literacy and numeracy, irrespective of the child's physical, mental and social status.

For effective implementation of the pre-primary education programme throughout the country, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has taken an initiative to bring all pre-primary education activities under a framework. For this purpose, MoPME has constituted a committee comprising pre-primary education experts under the leadership of the Joint Secretary (Development) of the Ministry. The draft Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education prepared by the committee was shared with the stakeholders in a national workshop held at DPE on 12 September 2007. The draft was finalized on the basis of the recommendations of the workshop.

The specific objective of pre-primary education is to provide all necessary care and education to young children for their development through physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional growth. The Operational Framework will provide a matrix of developmental domain, curricular framework and operational strategies with a future direction.

MoPME will act as focal point for pre-primary education and coordinate the activities of all stakeholders and service providers and set standards for child-friendly facilities and teaching-learning activities. Besides, the Government, with the support of the NGOs, CBOs and private organizations will implement pre-primary education. NCTB will develop the curriculum for pre-primary education on the basis of learning outcomes.

Pre-primary education centres will be established either within the primary schools or in separate houses adjacent to the existing primary schools. The Pre-Primary Education Centre will be managed by a separate Centre Management Committee. Capacity building for pre-primary education is a vital task, and therefore, the opportunities for professional training and skill development in this regard would be explored.

The next steps to be taken are:

- ❖ Mapping of pre-primary education;
- ❖ Review and inventory of pre-primary education materials;
- ❖ Establishment of a National Coordination Committee;
- ❖ Setting up a Pre-primary Education Unit within DPE;
- ❖ Expansion and improvement of pre-primary education, and eventually its integration with the system as a component of universal primary education.

The Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education

1. Introduction

Learning begins at birth. The period from birth to the entry to primary education is a critical formative stage for the growth and development of children. The learning outcomes – knowledge, skills and values – of primary education are stronger when appropriate learning and development occur in the years preceding regular schooling. This results in fewer dropouts, more completion and higher achievement of learning competencies. There is also evidence that early learning improves the child's chances of enjoying good health, finding work later in life, being socially skilled, and not committing crimes.

Both the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) and the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) have underscored the importance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as part of a comprehensive approach to achieving Education for All (EFA). It is relatively a new discipline combining elements from several fields including infant stimulation, health and nutrition, early childhood education and child development. Recognizing the significance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for intellectual, emotional and physical development and socialization of the young child, various international forums have placed utmost importance on it.

Development of a child begins within the family and mostly depends on the parents. Educated parents are able to prepare their child for the smooth entry into formal education. As many of our parents are uneducated, they are unable to prepare their children adequately for school. The lack in school readiness makes it difficult for children to adapt themselves to school and have a tendency to drop out. Therefore, early childhood education including pre-primary education is regarded as a necessary area of intervention for the success of primary education.

Several international and national commitments of the Government of Bangladesh, besides the EFA commitments (1990 and 2000) are relevant for policy and operational guidelines in early childhood development. These commitments relate to the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000) adopted by the United Nations. These documents emphasize both the rights of children and the obligations of the state, society and the international community. The Government of Bangladesh is a signatory to all of the above international documents. These international pledges have been followed up at the national level through policies and programmes formulated by the government. The key national documents which have provided ideas and indicated directions for the pre-primary education framework include the National Children's Policy (1994), The Poverty reduction Strategy (2005-08), National Programme of Action for Children (2004-09) and the Second National Programme of Action for Education for All (2005-09). The commitments, strategies and goals contained in these documents have been taken into account in preparing the framework for pre-primary education (See Figure 1).

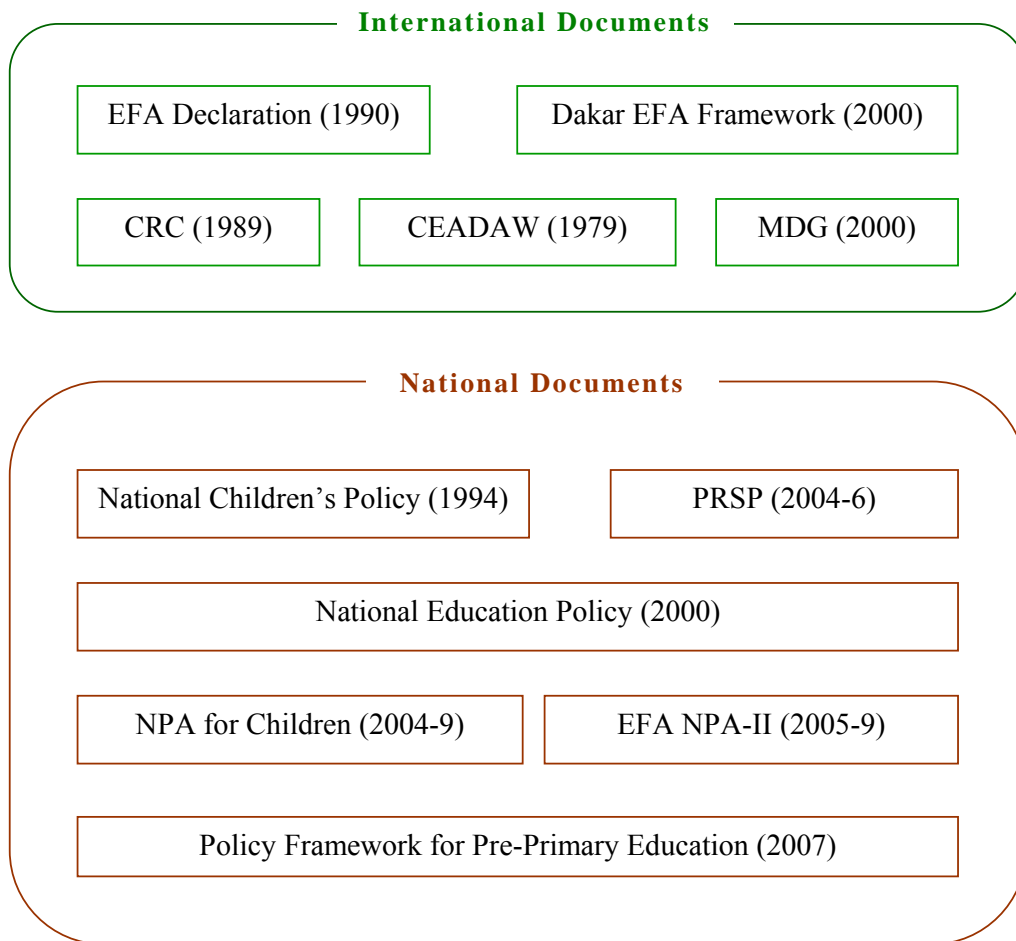


Figure 1. Precursors of the Policy Framework for Pre-Primary Education

In keeping with EFA goals, GOB recognizes the need for and importance of early childhood care and pre-school education for children in the age range of 3-5 years to ensure the well being of children, their physical and mental development and effective participation in primary education. The DFA EFA goal for ECCE is '*expanding and improving early childhood care and education, especially for most vulnerable and disadvantaged children*'. Studies have confirmed that children completing pre-school education do better in Grade 1. National Education Commission (2003) has recommended it and PRSP (2005) shows it in its policy matrix, indicating goals, activities and responsibilities of concerned agencies, GOB and others. However, developing a system and operational framework for providing ECCE service to target child population remains a big challenge.

Spontaneous and informal “Baby Classes” have existed in government primary schools for pre-school age children (<6 years), who accompanied their older siblings to school. During the 1990s, nearly one million children attended these classes in Government Primary Schools (GPS); and similar number attended kindergartens, madrasahs, ethnic neighbourhood centres

and other government and non-government institutions for children. By a circular in 1994, the government (PMED) encouraged primary schools to organize “baby classes” but made no provision for a fulltime teacher or regular curriculum. The “baby class” served more as an “activity for familiarizing children with schooling” but “not oriented toward ‘child development’” (PMED, 1999). The Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme (INFEP), 1991-97, under PMED had a component on ECD; a curriculum and learning materials were developed and 63,000 children benefited from this programme.

The National Committee on Primary Education (NCPE) recognized the importance of pre-school education but in view of shortage of teachers and physical facilities in schools and severe resource constraints, it proposed instead to treat the first six months of Grade I of primary school as preparatory education, thereby obviating the need for separate pre-school program or baby class. That would leave out the children of the hardcore poor who do not enrol in primary schools. PRSP proposes to organize pre-school programme for at least six months. However, the ‘baby classes’ continue to exist in many schools but without proper organization and formalization. There have also been several NGO initiatives to develop pre-school programmes, utilizing community approaches.

The benefits of early childhood care and education

ECCE has a strong and positive impact on further learning, in primary education and beyond. In the Brazilian PROAPE project, it was found that the total costs of schooling including the early learning program itself, for pupils up to grade 2 of primary education, was 11% lower for those who participated in ECCE than for those children who did not. In this and other programmes, dropout and grade repetition on primary education turned out to be lower as well (Myers, 1992)¹. Similar outcomes were found for the Integrated Child Development Service in India, a project serving 32 million children (Young, 2002)². Besides these international, studies research conducted by Plan Bangladesh, BRAC and ICDDRB indicated that early stimulation and preparation for education enhance student learning in school and increase the possibility of retention up to the terminal grades.

In addition to these evidences, there is a growing body of knowledge resulting from recent developments in brain research that supports ECCE policies. The notion of sensitive periods in which certain things are best learned has been sharpened. It appears that there are very specific and sometimes brief periods in which the developing brain is particularly fit to acquire certain skills. These skills themselves have also been broken down (for example language acquisition consists of a multitude of sub-tasks with differing sensitive periods) (OECD, 2002)³. The sensitive periods are not rigid, but if certain stimulation is not provided, the nerve cells become less functional (Bruner, 1999)⁴. These findings indicate that learning experiences, both structured and unstructured, are required for children before they enter primary school.

¹ Myers, R. (1992) *The Twelve Who Survive: Strengthening Programmes of Early Childhood Development in the Third World*. London, Routledge.

² Young, M. E. (ed.) *From Early Childhood Development to Human Development*. Washington, D. C., World Bank.

³ OECD (2002) *Organization for Economic Coordination and Development. Understanding the Brain: Towards a New Learning Science*. Paris.

⁴ Bruner, J. T. (1999) *The Myth of the First Three Years: A New Understanding of Early Brain Development and Lifelong Learning*. New York. Free Press.

Definition of Early Childhood Care and Education

A definition that captures different dimensions of the child's developmental needs will be appropriate in formulating the operational framework for ECCE programs. Such a definition is proposed by Evans et al., (2000)⁵, which will serve our purposes:

Early childhood care and education means providing all the supports necessary for every child to realize his/her right to survival, to protection, to care and to education

Development of a child during the early childhood years depends on various care giving opportunities and institutions like parents or family care at home, a mini centre for child care in the neighbourhood, and pre-primary education class or centre. The first care-giving facility, the family, is independent of any state or non-state institutional system; however, the neighbourhood childcare centre and pre-primary education centre may be brought under an organizational system. The third stage, pre-primary education, which is preparatory to formal education, is a critical transition point in child development. Appropriate

care and learning opportunity at this stage ensures that the child is prepared for and able to benefit fully from formal education. This stage of early childhood development - pre-primary education - can be defined as follows:

Pre-primary education is the developmental and educational support provided to the child in the age range of 3 to 5 years in order to ensure the child's right to protection, care, survival and preparation for school education through play, amusement and introduction to literacy and numeracy, irrespective of the child's physical, mental and social status.

How children develop

Child development is a natural, continuing and cumulative process. Human body is genetically wired for receiving and exploring novelty; this allows the brain and physical body to mature. This process is known as development. However, the process will be impaired if the child is not provided the environment congenial for development. Child development comprises different domains (Annex 1), which are also interdependent. Development in one area/domain facilitates development in the other domains. These domains fall into five categories:

- Physical development
- Cognitive development
- Language development
- Emotional development
- Social development

⁵ Evans, J. L et al. (2000) Early Childhood Counts: A programming guide on early childhood care for development. Washington D.C. The World Bank.

When the above domains are stimulated through age-appropriate and interactive care (Annex 2), children learn and develop better. Stimulation of each and every domain is the ultimate objective of child development and early care and education. There are many ways to stimulate the domains; the child, however, needs help to receive and benefit from stimulation. Caregivers, particularly, parents and teachers, are the principal helpers and facilitators in providing a variety of stimuli to improve and maximize development. The following are some of the ways children may receive stimulation for learning and development.

- ❖ Play with stimulating objects and physical games,
- ❖ Practice and participation in play activities,
- ❖ Verbal interaction, especially dialogue,
- ❖ Getting instruction from others,
- ❖ Learning by reading and by being read to or told stories,
- ❖ Watching and listening to people and events,
- ❖ Having social interaction with others,
- ❖ Getting involved in imaginary play and drawing,
- ❖ Stimulating all the sense organs through different means,
- ❖ Involving emotions in the activities undertaken,
- ❖ Free drawing,
- ❖ Being acquainted with nature in various ways, and
- ❖ Matching, sorting and comparing things using colour, shape, size, and function.

Thus the early childhood development program and the curriculum should contain opportunities for all the above developmental domains with necessary learning activities. It is important, however, that the program and curricular guidelines ensure that there is flexibility in the way these are applied allowing for the circumstances and individual differences of children and that the curriculum and the program are not over-loaded. Instead of a rigid routine, the learning activities should be adapted, based on a core set of learning experiences, to children's needs and level of development. The teacher or caregiver should be assisted and encouraged to exercise judgment to add or subtract experiences depending upon the needs of a group of children or an individual child.

ECCE and Pre-Primary

The early childhood care and education (ECCE) is about meeting the child's multiple needs by taking into account health, nutrition and psychosocial stimulation through education, while at the same time creating a friendly environment in which the child lives and learns. The overall objective of an ECCE and Pre-Primary Education program is to enhance child's development potential before his/her stepping into the primary school. The specific objectives would include, among others, the following:

- a. To provide all the necessary care and education to young children that will help their development through physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional growth and change; with due attention to children of disadvantaged groups, children with special needs, and children of ethnic minorities.
- b. To support language development of children through active interaction among and with children and creating opportunities for using the skills.




- c. To support parents and other caregivers by providing knowledge and skills necessary to meet children’s developmental needs.
- d. To create a congenial and child friendly atmosphere at home, community and places of learning so that children benefit fully from care and learning activities.
- e. To develop and train the trained human resources and support them effectively to carry out their work in early care and education of children.

The above objectives encompass the development needs of children from birth to transition into primary school. Pre-school or pre-primary education forms an integral part of this continuum and should be planned and implemented taking into account the links and the cumulative process of development.

2. Purposes of the Pre-Primary Operational Framework

The bulk of ECCE activities at present consist of pre-school education programmes of NGOs supported by government and with funding assistance from development partners (Annex 5). They follow varying objectives, methodology and curricula with inadequate coordination. They do not necessarily focus on children with special needs or in highly disadvantaged circumstances. The teacher/facilitator tasks are defined differently in different projects and are not comparable. In the absence of a standard curriculum, some important components of development are not taken into consideration in many programmes. Development of a curricular and operational framework, therefore, would provide the parents, teachers and decision-makers an appropriate sense of direction for the development of children. A framework for planning, designing, coordinating and managing the pre-primary activities nationwide is necessary for developing the programme, ensuring the learning outcomes and extending its reach to serve eventually all children.

Thus the policy and operational framework will provide:

-  A matrix of age-appropriate developmental milestones for major developmental domains for young children - physical, social, cognitive, emotional and language development, which would place pre-primary program in the continuum of total ECCE activities.
-  A curricular framework that will indicate learning objectives, content, outcomes, sequence and assessment approach for pre-primary program appropriate for children, irrespective of their gender, ability, and linguistic and ethnic origins.
-  Organizational and management framework to facilitate and support consideration of policy, strategy, programme development and implementation of pre-primary programme through the involvement of all major stakeholders and providers of services.

3. Process of developing the framework

Recognising the importance of a policy framework for ECD/ECCE by the government; Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) invited a group of people associated with child development, education and curriculum development from within the Government in April 2006. The present status of ECD activities were discussed in the Meeting and some future directions were identified to implement pre-primary education throughout the country. On the basis of that Meeting, a committee was formed to develop Pre-Primary Education Policy Framework under the leadership of Joint Secretary (Development) of Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. The committee comprised of members from MoPME, MoWCA, DPE, NCTB, ECDRC of BU-IED, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Institute of Education and Research, Dhaka University and UNICEF.

The Committee met several times and drafted the Operational Policy Framework of Pre-Primary Education. The framework indicated the objectives, learning outcomes, proposed activities in preschools, required learning materials as well as operational aspects of the preschool programme. Information regarding the current status of pre-primary education was also included. This information was derived from a survey of pre-school education undertaken by BU-IED among members of the ECD network, complementing it with information from the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA).

The draft of the framework was then shared with the concerned departments, Divisions, NGOs, UNICEF and other relevant experts for their comments and suggestions. The Policy Framework was shared with government and non-government stakeholders in a workshop arranged by DPE on 12 September 2007. The recommendations and suggestions of the workshop was further reviewed in the Pre-Primary Education Committee after that the Framework has been revised to incorporate pertinent suggestions of the workshop.

4. Vision, Mission, Goal and the Target Population for Pre-primary Education

Vision Long term vision is that all children, 3-5 years of age, are attending pre-school programmes of some kind and have access to programmes of health, nutrition, social, physical and intellectual development, and being initiated into formal education; Short term vision is to include all children of 5 to below 6 age group under pre-school education.

Mission The mission of the programme for pre-primary education is to promote, encourage and provide theoretical, conceptual, and operational support to all stakeholders and providers of services for effective pre-primary education within the continuum of early childhood development for all children in Bangladesh.

Goal The overall goal of pre-primary education is to fulfil the right to children's education by ensuring their development and preparation for entry into primary education, enabling them to get benefit fully from educational opportunities and to grow and develop in order to realize their human potential.

In order to achieve this goal, appropriate policies and programmes will have to ensure that:

- a. All children, especially those subject to various forms of disadvantages, are served by pre-primary education programmes of acceptable quality;
- b. Standards and criteria are set and models are developed for quality in pre-primary education programmes and mechanisms are established to apply the standards of quality;
- c. Supportive and child-friendly environment is created in educational facilities, in communities and at home, so that children benefit fully from the educational programmes;
- d. Appropriate human resources including teachers, facilitators, planners, managers and specialists for early childhood development, including pre-primary education, are developed; and
- e. Adequate resources are mobilised from government budgets, communities, the private sector and through international cooperation; and the resources are used effectively through partnerships and coordinated efforts among stakeholders, actors and service-providers.

Target population of pre-primary education

At present pre-primary education programmes will serve children aged 5 to below 6 years all over Bangladesh with priority given to children of poor

5. Developmental milestones for early childhood development including the Pre-Primary stage

The continuum of early childhood development from birth to primary school entry has been noted, different domains of development have been indicated and how growth and development in these different domains unfold has been mentioned. The milestones at different stages in the early years of the child are included in Annex 1. The benchmarks

for development at the preschool age also has been indicated which underscores the continuing and cumulative process of development and that preparation and readiness of the child for formal education in primary school have to be built on the continuum of development. A sample of age-appropriate interactive care to be carried out by parents and caregivers are shown in Annex 2. The role and tasks of the caregivers and teacher/facilitator and the importance of interaction between home and preschool also have been underscored in Annex 3 as well as in 1 and 2. The purpose again is to emphasize the need for looking upon the pre-primary program, in conceptualising and implementing, as a component of the total ECCE process.

6. The pre-primary curricular framework

The curricular framework, the details of which will need further elaboration, includes pre-primary learning outcomes, core curricular materials, and duration of program, target learners, and assessment of learning.

Pre-primary learning outcomes

Participant children in the pre-primary education, on completing the course, will be able to:

- ❖ Say own name, name of parents, address of family and own date of birth,
- ❖ Say names and function of different parts of the body,
- ❖ Follow social practices – say greetings, respect elders, giving thanks, ask permission and engage in appropriate social interaction with relatives/friends,
- ❖ Recite children’s rhymes, sing children’s songs, national anthem and tell stories,
- ❖ Categorize similar objects/articles and differentiate dissimilar objects/articles,
- ❖ Draw and name circle, triangle, rectangle,
- ❖ Recognize and tell the names and functions of natural objects around them e.g., flower, fruit, fish, bird, animal, sun, moon, tree, transport, weather, land and water,
- ❖ Show creativity by making objects, toys/ play materials by self choice using block, clay, leaf, paper, sticks etc.,
- ❖ Count, recognize, read and write numbers from 0–20;
- ❖ Do simple addition and subtraction (with numbers below 10),
- ❖ Recognize, read and write Bangla letters,
- ❖ Read and write words composed of two Bangla letters,
- ❖ Describing events from picture,
- ❖ Have an expressive vocabulary of words presented in Class 1 reader,
- ❖ Recognise or say opposite word for known word.

Core materials for pre-primary education

Implementation of the pre-primary education curriculum will require the preparation and availability of the following materials:

- ❖ The curriculum content,
- ❖ Trainers’ manual,
- ❖ Teacher’s guidebook/manual,
- ❖ Set of toys/ blocks for play,
- ❖ Children activity book/exercise khata
- ❖ Alphabet chart/ alphabet blocks/0-20 # blocks,
- ❖ Bangla primer
- ❖ Math primer
- ❖ Picture book providing new and known environmental objects,
- ❖ Number chart,
- ❖ Story books.

NCTB will develop these materials with the help of the experts in this field.

Supplementary materials

The following materials will be desirable to have in pre-primary education centres and should be progressively made available:

- ❖ Pictorial books,
- ❖ Health and environment charts,
- ❖ Story cards,
- ❖ Word, number and memory games,
- ❖ Audiovisual materials.

NCTB will develop the Supplementary Reading Materials through engaging experts.

Development of curricular content and teaching learning materials

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has the responsibility for preparing curricula for the public education system. NCTB also developed primer for pre-primary education in 1995, which was not updated afterwards. A core pre-primary curriculum will be developed by NCTB. During this process, all existing materials for preschool and school readiness programmes including the primer developed by NCTB will be reviewed.

For the development of age appropriate curriculum for the pre-primary stage, considering the need for common core learning materials as well as culture and language specific supplementary materials, NCTB would develop pre-primary curriculum in consultation with service-providing and academic organisations which have been engaged in preparing ECD and pre-primary learning materials.

Teaching learning materials for the pre-primary age group has to be attractive, cost-effective and challenging. In the Pre-primary programme, children will not receive any book or printed material to take home. By the middle of their pre-primary course, a literacy book with only words, letters and numbers will be introduced in the classroom. Children should have adequate play materials, real objects, educational blocks and items from the natural habitat in the locality. Other than the prescribed learning materials, additional audio-visual materials for the children may be prepared and provided by the concerned organization depending upon their capacity.

Besides developing the children's materials, facilitator's manual would be developed for the pre-primary education teachers. This manual will contain information on child development, teaching/learning basic tips, techniques of using teaching/learning materials, basic standards for pre-primary education in a child friendly environment and preparing or improvising learning materials for children.

Training of trainers and pre-primary teacher/facilitator

A core group of Master Trainers will be developed for providing training to the trainers of pre-primary teachers. The responsibility of such training (for TOT) may be provided to competent education institutions active in the ECD field. The trainers of pre-primary teachers must have the background of child development education and preferably bachelor of education with pre-primary/primary majors. On recruitment, the trainers of pre-primary teachers must receive basic training on ECD/ECCE with focus on pre-primary education.

As the number of teachers would be large and would be from local rural communities with minimum educational background, orientation on child care, child development and improvising learning materials should be provided to them. The teachers should receive initial basic training and periodic need based refreshers training on a regular basis.

Duration of course and classroom organization

Duration of pre-primary education course: Priority will be accorded expanding coverage following the present pattern of the one year course; daily 2 to 3 hours for 5-6 days a week. A model of the daily session plan is shown in Annex 4. On completion of the one year course children will move into nearby primary schools.

Number of children in each centre or class: Ideally, there should be no more than 20-30 children in each class with preferably two teachers/facilitators. However, actual number of children may vary based on the available space in the learning centre for organizing learning sessions in a child friendly environment and resources for facilitators.

Assessment of learning achievements

Participatory methods using standard tools (to be developed) should be used for assessment of learning achievements. These will be based on existing methods and tools in use in different programmes, which will be reviewed and further developed as appropriate.

7. Operational strategies

Basic principle and focal point The operational strategies for planning, coordinating and implementing pre-primary education will be based on the recognition that:

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, on behalf of the government, has the responsibility of developing policy frame work, facilitating coordination among all stakeholders and service-providers, setting standards for child friendly facilities and teaching-learning, helping mobilise necessary resources, and ensuring that the children's rights, wellbeing and interests are protected.

The non-government organizations, including education and development NGOs, community organisations and the private sector are the principal providers of services and mobilisers of resources for this purpose; their participation and effective involvement in policy-making, planning, monitoring and assessment and all other significant decision-making at national and local levels, therefore, are essential.

While the total range of ECCE activities will require the involvement of multiple government agencies and non-government actors, in respect of pre-primary, current policy and practice indicate that MOPME will be the responsible government authority. However, recognizing the principle of the continuum, MoPME would involve other Ministries, such as MOWCA

and Ministry of Health in an appropriate way. NCTB will develop the curricular framework and ensure articulation between pre-primary and primary education. As noted earlier, NCTB, collaborating closely with service-providing and academic institutions active in ECD, will be the focal point for designing and developing the curriculum and facilitating the preparation of teaching learning materials for pre-primary education.

For the policy development, effective coordination and establishing regulations and standards, MOPME will be the focal Ministry for pre-primary education. It is proposed that a section at the DPE, headed by a Director, will have the core responsibility for taking the lead and facilitation of planning, coordination, setting standards, and promoting pre-primary education working closely with other concerned agencies in the government, non-government service providers and academic and research institutions.

Coordination and linkage

Early childhood education is a technical and multi-faceted discipline. A pre-primary education coordination committee comprising major stakeholders, such as, experts in developmental psychology, child health and nutrition, and language development; major service providing NGOs; NCTB; and academic institutions with interest in early childhood development will be formed under MOPME auspices at the national level to provide policy guidelines for implementation of the pre-primary program. The Pre-Primary section at DPE will serve as the secretariat of the Pre-Primary Education Coordination Committee.

The Coordination Committee may form technical working groups for specific purposes, especially, preparation of a common core curriculum for pre-primary education, formulation of standards for facilities and personnel for pre-primary programmes, establishing guidelines for training of pre-primary education personnel, and developing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of pre-primary programs.

The DPE Unit for Pre-Primary Education will have necessary sub-units for administration, curriculum and training, and monitoring and evaluation. It is expected that these units will seek the cooperation of major service provider organizations and academic/research institutions in carrying out their work and outsource tasks as appropriate.

Coordination committees also will be set up at district and upazila levels comprising representatives of service providing NGOs and concerned government agencies. The District Primary Education Office and the Upazila Primary Education Office will be the secretariat at the respective tiers.

8. Guidelines for pre-primary education delivery at the field level

Establishment of the pre-primary education centre

The centre will be set up either in a primary school or in a separate house having at least 250 square feet space for 20-30 children. It will be run by a trained teacher/care giver (preferably helped by an assistant) and a centre management committee having at least members including the teacher. The centre's furnishing will include, at least, a small table and a chair for the teacher (for occasional use), one chalk board, one bulletin board or wall hanger for hanging children's class work, and sitting mats for children. Children may sit in a 'U' shape formation, though sitting will be rearranged often for small group or individual work or other

activities. There will be several corners for various activities and space outside class for outdoor activities. Provision for wall shelves for keeping children's work and learning materials will be desirable. Assessment of the existing baby classes attached with the Government Primary Schools will be carried out to provide necessary support for continuation as pre-primary education in line with the policy.

Location of pre-primary centre

Ideally it should be located inside or adjacent to existing primary schools. This arrangement will facilitate interaction between pre-primary teachers and primary school teachers and thus transition (enrolment) of 100% children from pre-primary schools to primary schools. However, in disadvantaged areas where existing primary schools may not be available close to children's home, the location of pre-primary centre may be in a suitable place agreed by the community.

Centre management

Every centre will be managed by a separate 7-9 members CMC either under the existing school management committee or local NGO management (in case where there is no such primary school). Local NGO and primary school centres may form an area committee at the level of the Union for sharing their views and experiences. This will enhance field level partnership among the teachers and organizations.

The formation of the Centre Management Committee (CMC) for pre-primary education centres will be as follows:

- Head Master of the concerned primary school or nearby primary school /Chairman
- Representative from implementing NGOs /Member
- Selected two members (one male and one female) from SMC /Member
- Two persons from the parents (at least one member would be female) /Member
- Teacher of the pre-primary education centre /Member Secretary

The committee may co-opt two additional members.

Supervision, monitoring and reporting of the pre-primary activities

Supervision and monitoring mechanism and procedure will be developed cooperatively with the service-providing NGOs. The service-providers will take a major responsibility for supervision and support to the preschools. Supervision objectives and focus and monitoring tools and methods will be determined collaboratively under the auspices of the central Pre-Primary Unit at DPE. The Upazila Education Office and the Upazila Resource Centre will be involved in the supervision and monitoring process, without overburdening them and taking full cognizance of their primary education responsibility. Training and staff development of the personnel involved in supervision and monitoring will be undertaken by the service providing organizations following guidelines developed collaboratively with them.

Orientation of key actors

In order to promote support and understanding for the program at the local level, various steps have to be planned and undertaken by the service-providing organizations. Orientation sessions for the program organizers care givers and parents involved in the education program have to be undertaken with a view to:

- ❖ Create a sense of importance of early childhood period with focus on early learning and school readiness in the context of further learning in primary school and beyond.
- ❖ Give importance to girls' education and to equal care for both the girl and boy child.
- ❖ Ensure attention to children with social, economic and other disadvantages.
- ❖ Give importance to creating a child friendly environment at home in the context of total development of child.
- ❖ Enhance understanding of the role of parents and other family members in creating child friendly environment at home.
- ❖ Foster knowledge and understanding of roles and responsibilities of parents and other family members for proper functioning of the learning centre activities and subsequent enrolment of their children in primary school.
- ❖ Recognise teacher's role for creating child friendly environment.

Community participation and parental mobilization

Community participation will be encouraged through monthly parental meetings where other interested community members may also be present. Through this meeting, parents will come to know about the importance of pre-primary education, how they can help their own children's development, and how they can help the pre-primary centre function well.

Transition from pre-primary school into primary school

This should be considered as a critical element to ensure enrolment and retention of all children in grade-1 in nearby Government Primary School, Registered Non Government Primary Schools or NGO run Primary school. In this regard following tasks have to be carried out:

- ❖ Development of guideline including implementation mechanism for transition from preschool to primary schools involving policy makers and other key stakeholders from Government, NGOs, Professional groups, teachers, SMC, parents, children.
- ❖ Organization of Upazila/ward wise planning workshops involving key stakeholders for orientation and development of action plan for transition from pre-school to primary schools.
- ❖ Orientation of preschool and primary school teachers, members SMC and pre-primary school management committee.

9. Capacity building

Professional capacity building for the respective organizations and personnel in ECCD and pre-primary education is a vital task. Therefore, the opportunities for professional training and skill development would be explored. Programmes and plans for capacity building will be developed, resources for this purpose will be mobilised. The responsibilities will be assigned to all concerned parties including service providers, academic institutions and development partners. Capacities and potentials of existing organisations and institutions will

be assessed. Categories and levels of training and professional development will be ascertained.

Needs-based short training courses, professional development at post-graduate certificate, diploma and degree level will be provided to the planners, managers, trainers of trainers, and specialists through existing facilities. A coordinated approach for training at different levels needs to be developed.






Capacity building of the existing training organizations of the Government with regard to pre-primary education will be done so that the organizations could develop adequate trained manpower to operate pre-primary education.

10. Resources for Pre-Primary Education


It is however, necessary, given the recognised importance of ECD and pre-primary education in fulfilling national education objectives, to have a coordinated approach, overall perspective and an overview of resource prospects and requirements for ECD and pre-primary education in the context of objectives and strategies in this sub-sector. The proposed National Coordination Committee can form a technical committee to assess resource needs and prospects, which can be the basis for MoPME's dialogue with development partners and major service providers regarding resource mobilization for pre-primary education. Such a technical assessment and planning perspective for resource needs will facilitate rational and effective mobilization and use of resources for pre-primary education.

11. Way forward/Conclusion

A large number of government and non-government agencies, such as, MOPME, MOWCA/MOCHTA, MoRA, City Corporations, NGOs including BRAC/Plan Bangladesh/SC-USA/DAM/Members of CAMPE/Members of ECD network, Private sector such as proprietary kindergarten owners, are running pre-primary schools. Following actions are proposed as steps for way forward:

-  Mapping of the pre-primary education locations/geographical coverage/children coverage by various agencies. This information will help in considering expansion of pre-primary education ensuring quality, coverage and equity.
-  Inventory of pre-primary education materials under use by various agencies.
-  Review of existing materials and adaptation with modification if needed for the development of generic core materials for common use.
-  An ECD database will be developed.
-  A technical committee under the proposed Coordination Committee under MOPME

As indicated above under different sections, the following steps have to be undertaken to move the expansion and improvement of pre-primary education programme forward:

 Establishment of a National Coordination Committee under the auspices of MOPME, including in it members from all the important

Annex 1: Major domains and basic competencies for each domain respective to the age group

Developmental domains and milestones by the end of 12 months

Social and Emotional

- ❖ Shy or anxious with strangers
- ❖ Cries when mother or father leaves
- ❖ Enjoys imitating people in his or her play
- ❖ Shows specific preferences for certain people and toys
- ❖ Tests parental responses to his actions during feedings. (What do you do when he refuses a food? Ask if child wants another food or to pause and talk)
- ❖ Tests parental responses to his behaviour. (What do you do if he cries after you leave the room? Reassure that you will return; then leave)
- ❖ May be fearful in some situations
- ❖ Prefers mother and/or regular caregiver over all others
- ❖ Repeats sounds or gestures for attention
- ❖ Finger-feeds himself
- ❖ Extends arm or leg to help when being dressed

Movement

- ❖ Reaches sitting position without assistance
- ❖ Crawls forward on belly
- ❖ Assumes hands-and-knees position
- ❖ Creeps on hands and knees
- ❖ Gets from sitting to crawling or prone (lying on stomach) position
- ❖ Pulls self up to stand
- ❖ Walks holding on to furniture
- ❖ Stands momentarily without support
- ❖ May walk two or three steps without support

Language

- ❖ Pays increasing attention to speech
- ❖ Responds to simple verbal requests
- ❖ Responds to "no"
- ❖ Uses simple gestures, such as shaking head for "no"
- ❖ Babbles with inflection
- ❖ Says "dada" and "mama"
- ❖ Uses exclamations, such as "Oh-oh!" when surprised or sees a problem
- ❖ Tries to imitate words

Cognitive

- ❖ Explores objects in many different ways (shaking, banging, throwing, dropping)
- ❖ Finds hidden objects easily
- ❖ Looks at correct picture when the image is named
- ❖ Imitates gestures
- ❖ Begins to use objects correctly (drinking from cup, brushing hair, dialling phone, listening to receiver)

Caregiver Practices for the first year (0 to 12 months)

- ✓ Deliver your baby in a safe, clean place; make a birth plan ahead.
- ✓ Give your special colostrums milk; give only breast milk for 6 months.
- ✓ Keep your newborn warm next to your skin.
- ✓ Only after 6 months give soft rice, eggs, *dal*, fruit, and vegetables 5 times daily.
- ✓ Talk often and respond to your child's sounds and cries as in conversation.
- ✓ Hold your baby up or let your baby sit or walk, so he or she can see what is happening nearby.
- ✓ Let your baby hold and play with objects; add objects as he/she matures.
- ✓ When your baby smiles, smile back; when your baby calls to you, talk even while you work.
- ✓ Tell your baby when you love him and when he or she does something good

Developmental domains and milestones by the end of 3 years

Movement

- ❖ Climbs well
- ❖ Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet
- ❖ Kicks ball
- ❖ Runs easily
- ❖ Bends over easily without falling

Hand and Finger Skills

- ❖ Makes vertical, horizontal and circular strokes with pencil or crayon
- ❖ Turns book pages one at a time
- ❖ Builds a tower of more than six blocks
- ❖ Holds a pencil in writing position
- ❖ Screws and unscrews jar lids, nuts and bolts
- ❖ Turns rotating handles on faucets

Language

- ❖ Follows a two- or three-component command (e.g. bring plate & sit down)
- ❖ Recognizes and identifies almost all common objects and pictures
- ❖ Understands most sentences and many words
- ❖ Understands physical relationships ("on," "in," "under")
- ❖ Uses four- and five-word sentences
- ❖ Can say name, age and sex
- ❖ Uses pronouns (I, you, me, we, they) and some plurals
- ❖ Speaks clearly so strangers can understand most of his or her words

Cognitive

- ❖ Puts together multiple blocks, sticks in different ways
- ❖ Matches an object in her hand or room to a picture in a book
- ❖ Plays make-believe with dolls, animals and people
- ❖ Sorts objects by shape and colour
- ❖ Completes puzzles with three or four pieces
- ❖ Understands concept of "two"

Social

- ❖ Imitates adults and playmates
- ❖ Spontaneously shows affection for familiar playmates
- ❖ Can take turns in games
- ❖ Understands concept of "mine" and "his/hers"

Emotional

- ❖ Expresses affection openly
- ❖ Expresses a wide range of emotions such as joy, sadness, pride, anger
- ❖ By 3, separates easily from parents

Caregiver Practices for the second and third year (12 to 36 months)

- ✓ Listen to your child's words and answer back as in conversation; speak in long sentences so your child will hear lots of words together.
- ✓ Let your child walk and run; let your child lift things and pick up small things.
- ✓ Give 3 meals and 2 snacks daily varying the family foods; let him or her self-feed; don't force feed; be patient and talk. Your child will lose interest in food if it is always rice and mother-fed.
- ✓ Give a play bag with pieces of smooth wood, pieces of cloth, sticks, pictures, small cups and bowls.
- ✓ Look at pictures together and read or tell him or her stories about the pictures; listen while he or she tells you another story.
- ✓ Take your child out of the house to see new people and places with you; let him or her see that new things are interesting and not frightening.
- ✓ Let your child play with other children.
- ✓ Tell your child when you love him and when he or she does something good.

Developmental domains and milestones by the end of 5 years

Movement

- ❖ Stands on one foot for 10 seconds or longer
- ❖ Hops, somersaults
- ❖ Swings, climbs
- ❖ May be able to skip

Hand and Finger Skills

- ❖ Copies triangle and other geometric patterns
- ❖ Draws person with body
- ❖ Prints some letters
- ❖ Dresses and undresses without assistance
- ❖ Feeds self expertly
- ❖ Usually cares for own toilet needs; washes own hands and body

Language

- ❖ Recalls part of a story
- ❖ Speaks sentences of more than five words
- ❖ Uses present, past, future tense
- ❖ Tells longer stories

- ❖ Says name and address
- ❖ Expanded vocabulary is understood and used

Cognitive Milestones

- ❖ Can count 10 or more objects
- ❖ Correctly names at least four colours and 3 shapes
- ❖ Better understands the concept of time
- ❖ Knows about things used every day in the home (money, food, tools)

Social

- ❖ Wants to please family and friends
- ❖ More likely to follow rules
- ❖ Likes to sing, dance and act
- ❖ Shows more independence and may even walk to school or relative's home

Emotional Milestones

- ❖ Aware of body functions
- ❖ Able to distinguish fantasy from reality
- ❖ Sometimes demanding, sometimes eagerly cooperative

Caregiver Practices for the fourth and fifth year (36 to 60 months)

- ✓ Listen to your child's words and answer back as in conversation; speak in long sentences so your child will hear and speak in sentences. Read books or tell stories from the pictures and let your child make up new stories.
- ✓ Give more play materials, such as many smaller blocks, small pieces of cloth, an old bangle, rope, bottle caps, buttons, pictures or books.
- ✓ Let your child run and play with other children.
- ✓ Give 3 meals and 2 snacks daily with a variety of family foods including eggs, fish, chicken, dal, orange and green vegetables and fruits.
- ✓ If your child does something wrong by mistake, tell him or her the rule to follow. If your child destroys or hurts, warn him or her to stop two times before punishing (an effective punishment is to sit facing the wall or corner for 30 minutes).
- ✓ Children can do household chores, but cannot properly supervise a naughty younger sibling.
- ✓ Tell your child when you love him and when he or she does something good.

Taken from American Academy of Paediatrics www.medem.com/MedLB

Annex 2: Sample of age appropriate interactive care to be carried out by parents and caregivers for promotion of child development (Ref: Facts For Life, 2002)

By the age of ONE MONTH:

- ▶ make skin-to-skin contact and breastfeed within one hour of birth
- ▶ support the baby's head when you hold the baby upright
- ▶ massage and cuddle the baby often
- ▶ always handle the baby gently, even when you are tired or upset
- ▶ breastfeed frequently, at least every four hours
- ▶ talk, play and sign to the child as often as possible
- ▶ visit the health worker with the infant six weeks after birth

By the age of SIX MONTHS:

- ▶ sit the baby on a clean, flat, safe surface so she or he can move freely and play with many objects
- ▶ let child sit where child can see what is happening
- ▶ continue to breastfeed on demand day and night, and start adding other foods (3 meals + 2 snacks a day at 6-12 months)
- ▶ talk, read and cuddle the child as often as possible

By the age of 12 MONTHS:

- ▶ point to objects and name them using full 5-word sentences, talk and play with the child frequently
- ▶ use mealtimes to encourage interaction with all family members
- ▶ if the child is developing slowly or has a physical disability, focus on the child's abilities and give extra stimulation and interaction
- ▶ let child crawl or walk around to exercise
- ▶ make the area as safe as possible to prevent accidents
- ▶ continue to breastfeed and ensure that the child has enough food and a variety of family foods
- ▶ help the child experiment with self-feeding; give own bowl or plate
- ▶ make sure that the child is fully immunized and receives all recommended doses of micronutrient supplements.

By the age of TWO YEARS:

- ▶ read, sing and play games with the child
- ▶ teach the child to avoid dangerous objects, but let the child run around and explore and play
- ▶ Talk to the child normally – do not use baby talk
- ▶ continue to breastfeed and ensure the child has enough food and a variety of family foods
- ▶ encourage, but do not force, the child to eat
- ▶ provide simple rules and set reasonable expectations
- ▶ praise the child's achievements.

By the age of THREE YEARS:

- ▶ read and look at books with the child and talk about the pictures
- ▶ tell the child stories and teach rhymes and songs
- ▶ answer child's questions
- ▶ continue to encourage the child to eat, giving the child as much time as her or she needs
- ▶ help the child learn to dress, wash her or his hands and use the toilet.

By the age of FIVE YEARS:

- ▶ listen to the child, answer questions, ask about feelings
- ▶ interact frequently with the child
- ▶ praise the child's achievements
- ▶ read and tell stories
- ▶ encourage the child to play and explore
- ▶ encourage the child to play & interact with other children
- ▶ encourage the child for group learning and group play

Annex 3: Participants analysis at various intervention levels in caring and nurturing of under five children.

Intervention level	Participants group		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Home	Mother	Father, Grand parents (mother in law), Elder siblings, HA, FWA, CNP, FLWs of NGOs, ELC teachers/facilitators	Community leaders (elected female and other UP members, religious leaders, primary school teachers), Supervisors of FLWs, Media and other opinion leaders
	Father	Mother, Grand parents (mother in law), Elder siblings, HA, FWA, CNP, FLWs of NGOs, ELC teachers/facilitators	Community leaders (elected UP members, primary school teachers), Supervisors of FLWs (AHI, HI, FPI) Media, SMCs and other opinion leaders
PP school/Learning Centre in rural areas	Teacher	Supervisor , Parents, CMC members	Chairman & members of UP, ATEO, DPEO, Media
PP school/Learning Centre in Urban slums	Teacher	CDO, UDC caretaker, Parents, Centre Management Committee (CMC) members	Ward commissioner, Media, DPEO, Project Director, EC members of KG associations and Upazila Parishads
Community based Health & Nutrition fixed centre i.e. UHFWC, NGO clinic, CNC	Medical Assistant, FWV, Nurse, CNP	Medical Officer (MCH), Sr. FWV, CNO, THFPO, TFPO	Chairman & members of UP, CNC management committee members
Hospitals (Medical colleges, district & Upazila in EmOC intervention areas, MCWC)	Paediatrician, Obstetrician, Medical Officer, Nurse	Superintendent /Director hospitals, paediatric association, Neonatal association, OGSB, Nurses association	Director hospital services, Director MCH, Director nursing services

Annex 4: Example of weekly session plan

Day	Duration					
	10 minutes	20 minutes	30 minutes	40 minutes	25 minutes	25 minutes
Saturday	National anthem/ songs, rhymes	Story	Reading & writing	Play as you like (corner play)	Math	Environment & health
Sunday	do	do	do	do	do	do
Monday	do	do	do	do	do	Guided play
Tuesday	do	do	do	do	do	do
Wednesday	do	do	do	do	do	do
Thursday	do	Songs, dance	Review session	Guided play	Review session	Review session

Note: First three months pre- reading & writing and pre-math only. Introduction of Bangla letters, writing & reading from 4th month and math from 5th month. Below follows a summary description of (a) pre-reading & writing, (b) pre-math, (c) Bangla letter writing & reading, (d) math.

- ❖ **Pre-reading :** Sound practice (phoneme), picture reading, assemble different parts of a pictures, play with various materials, definitions of new words
- ❖ **Pre-writing :** Draw as you like, draw pattern
- ❖ **Pre-math:** Conceptual understanding on (a) right & left, (b) small & big, (c) inside & outside, (d) up & down, (e) near & far, (f) front & back, (g) middle, (h) long & short, (i) fat & thin, (j) different from others, (k) more, less & same. (l) logical patterns, (m) shapes
- ❖ **Bangla letter writing & reading:** Draw as you like, draw pattern, letter reading using pictorial letter chart, letter writing using pre designed letter khata (note book), letter writing practice
- ❖ **Math:** Conceptual understanding on (a) different size & shapes, (b) count & write numbers from 0-20, (c) addition not more than 10 (ten) , (d) subtraction not more than 9 (nine), measurement, patterns.

Annex 5: Pre-Primary Education Requirements and Current Provisions

In order to have a better idea about the situation of existing ECCE provision, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, in order to collect information necessary for developing the operational framework for pre-primary education, expressed the need for a mapping of pre-primary education. The mapping of pre-primary facilities was prepared by ECDRC at BRAC University with the help of the ECD network. A total of 147 organizations provided information on early childhood activities. These organizations are situated in all 64 districts and their coverage is about 791,500 children in 2006. However, out of these 147 organizations only 16 larger NGOs provided 95 percent of the coverage. This mapping exercise provides basic information that would help further work to develop a fuller picture of pre-primary and ECD provisions.

Further analysis of the data available with ECD network shows that on the basis of 2001 census the current (2006) population of 5-6 year old children is about **2,220,000**. If these children are brought into pre-primary program, 88,800 centres (25 children per centre) would be required. At present, over 25,000 pre-primary classes run by Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Hill Tracts Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs and NGOs like BRAC, Plan Bangladesh, and Save the Children USA are serving 1.1 million children. There is also large number of private kindergartens which total approximately 20,000 have pre-primary classes.

Table 1: Estimated population of 5-6 year old children in Bangladesh and requirements for centres

Divisions	Total Population (2001)	5-6 year old Children	Centres required ¹
Barisal	8,153,960	146,165	5,847
Chittagong	24,119,660	432,359	17,294
Dhaka	38,987,140	698,868	27,955
Khulna	14,604,900	261,802	10,472
Rajshahi	30,088,740	539,359	21,574
Sylhet	7,896,720	141,553	5,662
Total	123,851,120	2,220,106	88,804

Source: 2001 Census

On an average 25 children attend a pre-primary centre.

Notes: Number of 5-6 year old children in 2006 is estimated by taking children of 0-1 year in 2001 census and applying the child mortality rate of 76 per one thousand live births. The total 0-1 population estimate in 2001 is based on applying a ratio of 1.94 percent of the total population for the 0-1 age group.

¹ The number of preschool centres required in each district is calculated by assuming enrolment of 25 children in a centre.

Table 2: Division wise Pre-Primary Centres run by three NGO's and UNICEF funded projects (2006)

Divisions	UNICEF Funded Projects	Plan Bangladesh	Save the Children USA	BRAC- BEP	Total
Barisal	6	-	360	282	648
Chittagong	2,278	20	336	2,472	5,106
Dhaka	116	119	360	5,932	6,527
Khulna	44	39	360	2,478	2,921
Rajshahi	35	197	320	8,175	8,727
Sylhet	4	-	360	887	1,251
Total	2,483	375	2,096	20,226	25,180

Source: Data collected from concern organizations

Notes:

1. The above table shows information from the major NGO partners and UNICEF funded projects. There may be other local NGO's running pre schools. Information for this category is not readily available.
2. Estimated number of Kindergartens is 18,000-20,000 (Eighteen to Twenty thousand) all over Bangladesh runs privately. But district-wise data is not available (Source: Mr. Nuruzzaman Kayes, Secretary General of Kindergarten Association)
3. UNICEF funded project are implemented by Bangladesh Shishu Academy in collaboration with Chittagong Hill Tract development Board and City Corporation.

Table 3: Division wise number of schools and students of baby class

Type wise number of schools and students of baby class by division.														
(On the basis of PEDP-II Survey 2005)														
Type of School	No. of schools and students of baby class by division												Total	
	Rajshahi Division		Khulna Division		Dhaka Division		Chittagong Division		Barisal Division		Sylhet Division		Schools	Students
	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students		
Govt. Primary School	1617	70616	1842	66134	2686	136513	2991	146645	2581	85393	330	12637	12047	517938
Regd. NGPS	1485	61906	1706	57507	1029	44877	875	38078	1704	55278	168	6203	6967	263849
Non-regd. NGPS	79	3567	81	3740	89	4462	115	5056	32	1391	59	2947	455	21163
Ebtedaee Madrasa	482	18551	157	5882	232	11171	122	6236	459	18773	50	2470	1502	63083
Kindergarten	450	20173	231	11779	848	41643	425	18752	64	2494	130	4187	2148	99028
NGO(Complete)	18	658	43	1773	74	4152	22	622	7	376	19	684	183	8265
Community	74	2274	151	4300	212	8595	282	11363	174	5146	35	1175	928	32853
Attached to High Madrasa	640	23591	334	10975	246	10577	175	8070	204	10456	24	1059	1623	64728
Attached to High School	59	4341	68	3715	249	18263	37	2815	26	948	7	406	446	30488
Total	4,904	205,677	4,613	165,805	5,665	280,253	5,044	237,637	5,251	180,255	822	31,768	26,299	1,101,395

Notes:

1. The above table shows division wise information on number of schools and students of baby class within Govt. Primary School, Regd. NGPS, Ebtedaee Madrasa, kindergarten, NGOs, Community, Attached to high Madrasa and attached to high school all over Bangladesh.
2. The total number of Schools is 26299 (Twenty six thousand two hundred ninety nine) where the students are 1,101,395 (One million and hundred and one thousand three hundred ninety five)
3. The survey was based on PEDP-II in 2005. It is likely that there is an overlap in counting of centres with table 2 above

END