

EDUCATION FOR ALL GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT 2007

Special Theme – Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Outline for Consultation 18 November 2005

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This draft outline is a work-in-progress intended mainly to solicit comments and recommendations on the structure for, and content of, the 2007 Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report's (GMR) special theme of Early Childhood Care and Education. The outline was informed by contributions from the GMR Editorial Board and from the Consultative Group on ECCD during their respective annual meetings in September 2005. This is a working document for consultation mainly with policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and scholars engaged in the early childhood work in local, regional, national, and international arenas. Comments are invited on any aspect of the outline, though the moderated online consultation will focus on the ECCE theme. The GMR Team pledges to consider all comments carefully, while maintaining its independence. *The final report will not necessarily reflect all comments nor will it necessarily be organised in the same order as this consultation outline.* Meanwhile, the team has commissioned thematic background papers on many of the issue in this outline, as well as a series of country and regional studies.

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Introduction

As with the previous Reports, the 2007 Global Monitoring Report will monitor movements towards the six Education for All goals, the contributing national programmes and commitments made by the international community and focus in greater depth on one of the goals. The goal selected for this report is Goal 1, which pertains to ECCE: ‘Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children’.

The proposed coverage of the general monitoring component will be in three chapters:

The first will record general movement across the six EFA goals by focusing on developments in: ECCE, access and coverage in primary education (and with some consideration of secondary and tertiary education), learning outcomes and quality measures of schooling, adult literacy, and appropriate learning and life skills programmes for youth. The main source of information will continue to be administrative data provided by the UIS but will be augmented by analyses of household surveys. Attempts will be made to disaggregate the data by regions, and by other characteristics, particularly for the most highly populated countries. The distribution of out-of-school children across countries will also be presented with some reporting on their background characteristics. As in previous reports, consideration will be given to the likelihood of countries, and perhaps regions within some countries, achieving various EFA goals by 2015. The possibility of refining the Education Development Index will also be examined.

The second monitoring chapter will build upon previous efforts to document and analyze country efforts to move towards the EFA goals including presentation of policy statements and strategies and partial assessments of their implementation. Measures being taken to bring out-of-school children (back) to school and/or to alternative forms of instruction will be included. Previous assessments of public education expenditure will be updated and selected financing issues examined. In addition, some issues arising from the need to include the most marginalized groups of children, and from some specific circumstances in/for which the provision of educational services is particularly problematic, will be examined and experiences shared.

The final monitoring chapter will monitor the implementation of commitments which have been made by the international community to augment national governments’ efforts to achieve the EFA goals by 2015. The levels, patterns and distributions of aid for education from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies will be examined together with an assessment for some countries of this aid in the context of total aid received and total domestic public expenditures on education. Case studies will also be undertaken of the broad impact of aid on the overall development of the education sector. The continuing efforts to improve the coordination and harmonization of donors/aid will be recorded with attention also being given to issues of dependency, sustainability, accountability and the possibilities of resource substitution between different levels of the education sector. Examples of how donor representatives are working together within specific countries and how they are interacting with governments will be presented. Finally, the ‘needs’ for external financial support over the next decade will be discussed together with an assessment of likely future aid flows, including those associated with debt cancellation.

The thematic ECCE component will attempt to reach the following objectives:

- Raise public and political awareness of the importance of ECCE and EFA Goal 1
- Trace the historical background and contemporary context of ECCE
- Synthesise international research on determinants and outcomes of ECCE
- Compile data from a range of sources to monitor country and regional progress
- Highlight innovative and effective policies and practices
- Identify strategies for helping countries achieve and monitor EFA Goal 1
- Review development aid agency policies for ECCE

Topics to be covered in the report include those listed below; this list also provides an indication of the structure of the thematic part of the report, although the latter may evolve during the development of the text.

1. Definitions and analytic framework for ECCE
2. Rationale for strengthening ECCE – A research review
3. Assessing progress toward the EFA goals
4. Managing and implementing national ECCE policies
5. Supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
6. Funding the expansion and improvement of ECCE
7. Improving ECCE: Making it happen

1. Definitions and Analytic Framework for ECCE

This first part will provide an introduction to the special theme, including an overview of the broader contextual landscape for ECCE policies and programmes. It will include definitions of key terms and an overview of the framework for the rest of the thematic sections.

1.1 Context for ECCE and child well-being

Drawing on historical materials from the archives of international and professional organisations, as well as surveys conducted by UNESCO and other agencies since World War II, this section will provide the reader with a comparative historical analysis of ECCE policy and programme development around the world. In Europe, for example, some infant schools and day nurseries emerged more than a century ago. In Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the discussion will focus on (de)colonisation, diffusion of European pedagogical theories (e.g., Comenius, Froebel, Montessori, Pestalozzi, and Piaget), and growing interest of donor agencies and international institutions in ECCE projects. Special attention will be accorded to key international agreements (e.g., UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, EFA, Salamanca) and trends related to access, quality, delivery, governance, etc.

The next section will explore the main demographic, economic, social, and political factors that have influenced ECCE policies and programmes in different parts of the world over time. The section will discuss contextual changes – shifting household structures, growing numbers of mothers with young children participating in the labour market, migrating populations from rural to urban settings, diverse fertility rates in different parts of the world, economic globalisation and greater demands on the education system, the fall of the former Soviet Union, global health crises (HIV/AIDS), and other emergencies (e.g., famine, natural disasters, civil war). These factors have influenced the types of ECCE policies and

programmes that have developed (part-time, full-time, public-private, etc.) as well as the extent to which nations have made progress toward expanding and improving ECCE.

With this background, what is the *current* status of young children’s well-being in different parts of the world? The section will discuss some of the trends in child well-being indicators including a shift away from a deficit approach, which focuses on child survival and the adults children will become in the future to a more strengths-based approach, which considers a broader notion of child well-being and the intrinsic value of childhood. The report will use available indicators to paint a picture of national, regional, and international progress toward child well-being. (Current policies and provision for ECCE will be profiled in later sections).

1.2 Visions of childhood and the objectives of ECCE

This section will provide an analysis of different views, assumptions, and understandings of childhood across disciplines and across cultures. For many years, the field of ECCE has been dominated by the discipline of developmental psychology, which takes a normative and universalistic approach to the study of children. More recently, critiques of this approach have argued that childhood is a social construction and that developmental psychology de-contextualises the wide range of children’s experiences in different cultures and situations. After reviewing the academic literature in areas of anthropology, pedagogy, sociology, child development, philosophy, health, and nutrition, as well as the emergent field of childhood studies, the section will provide a discussion of the cultural underpinnings of childhood and ECCE. We shall present prominent ECCE practices and knowledge in developing country contexts in their own right, and then explore the extent to which some of these practices have been eroded or undermined in light of the diffusion of Western views and norms.

These social constructions of childhood shape the objectives of ECCE. Indeed, ECCE around the world may have a number of different objectives including:

- Providing health care, immunization, and nutrition (feeding)
- Creating a safe environment for play and socialisation of young children with their peers
- Promoting school readiness and preparation for primary school
- Providing custodial care for children of working parents
- Supporting new parents through information sharing and parenting education
- Building community and social cohesion

1.3 EFA Goal 1 is different from other EFA goals

EFA Goal 1 for ECCE is different from other EFA goals in several ways. First, ECCE is characterised by diverse settings, arrangements, and delivery schemes (household/home, centre, school, community, NGO), funding (public, private, mixed), and programme content (education, psycho-social, health, nutrition). This diversity creates challenges for the role of the state and its relations with other public and private actors – in terms of coordinated policymaking, funding, planning and monitoring. Moreover, unlike some of the other EFA Goals, it has no quantitative targets in terms of access, participation, or quality.

Second, unlike the strong support that exists for universal primary education, governments in both more and less developed nations accord varying levels of priority to ECCE. Like literacy (the theme of the 2006 GMR), ECCE takes place largely in the non-formal sector and receives less policy attention than more formal types of education. Some policymakers view

ECCE as part of the family realm, and therefore not subject to government intervention, whereas others – in part influenced by international priorities – have preferred to focus limited resources on universal primary education. Although a growing number of policymakers and donors recognise ECCE as a springboard for future schooling, fewer see ECCE as an individual right.

A third specificity is that ECCE is multi-sectoral, combining education, health, nutrition, and family support. Several ministries, levels of government, and non-governmental actors are engaged in providing and funding ECCE. A monitoring approach that is restricted to education data would miss some of the key aspects of ECCE, such as the ability to support children’s comprehensive early development and learning and the flexibility to be delivered in diverse settings and arrangements. At the same time, a definition which is too broad might be unwieldy for the EFA team to monitor, especially given the limited and uneven data available.

1.4 Definition of terms

EFA Goal 1 states: “Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.”

The Dakar Framework for Action provides additional guidance. Although government holds the primary responsibility for policy, the Framework says that ECCE can be implemented in *partnership* with governments, NGOs, communities, and families in both formal and non-formal settings. *Comprehensive* ECCE means addressing the whole child, including health, nutrition, and hygiene, as well as cognitive, social, and emotional development. The framework calls for flexible, adaptable programmes that are *appropriate to children’s age* and not simply a downward extension of formal schooling. Improving access to quality ECCE should be a *priority for vulnerable and disadvantaged children* (i.e., poor, disabled, orphans, workers in exploitive conditions, etc.). To the extent possible, services should be delivered in children’s mother tongue. Achieving EFA Goal 1 can be facilitated through the *education of parents and other caregivers*. Finally, the Framework calls on governments to use *early childhood indicators* systematically to monitor progress on EFA Goal 1.

Guided by the Dakar framework, the GMR proposes to use the following definitions:

*This report follows the commonly accepted definition of **early childhood** as birth to age eight. In this report, **early childhood care and education (ECCE)** serves children prior to their entry into primary schooling¹ in informal and non-formal settings (delivered by partnerships of governments, NGOs, communities, and families), with a focus on supporting children’s comprehensive growth, development and learning (e.g., health, nutrition, hygiene, cognitive, social, and emotional development). The report will address the need to adapt the early grades of primary education to the fact that children are still in their early childhood. The report will highlight the linkages between ECCE and the transition to primary school, as well as other EFA Goals.*

Note: Given the limitations in available comparable data, we will need to use a more narrow definition for cross-national monitoring purposes (see section 3). As much as possible, the report will seek to move beyond the narrow definition of ISCED 0 - pre-primary education.²

¹ The official entry age to primary school varies around the world from 4 to 7. If, for example, official school starts at 6, then ECCE serves children from 0 to 6 and primary school covers the rest of the early childhood period (6-8).

² Pre-primary education is defined as level 0 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), i.e. it is normally designed for children aged 3 and above and includes organised learning activities that last for at least 2 hours per

1.5 Proposed structure of the thematic sections of the report

Part 2 provides the rationale for strengthening ECCE as part of a child-centred, rights-based approach to the EFA agenda. Through a review of international research, the section will also discuss a variety of short- and long-term outcomes of access to quality, comprehensive ECCE for children, families, and society-at-large. *Part 3* will assess progress toward EFA Goal 1.³ It will focus on participation, access, and quality proxies. It will also discuss the determinants participation in ECCE using a variety of administrative and survey data. *Part 4* will explore national strategies and policies for meeting EFA Goal 1 and highlight successful efforts for overcoming common challenges. *Part 5* will focus on identifying and addressing the needs of children living in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged circumstances. *Part 6* will address the role of national and international funders in expanding and improving ECCE. Building on identified challenges and lessons learned from country experiences, *Part 7* will outline strategies for expanding and improving comprehensive ECCE, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and will delineate the possible roles of different stakeholders in working toward EFA Goal 1.

2. Rationale for strengthening ECCE

Part 2 will present a rationale for strengthening ECCE. First, it will argue for a child-centred, rights-based perspective. Second, it will discuss the importance of the early years of children’s lives in terms of brain development and other precursors for children’s later learning. Third, it will present evidence, drawn from evaluations around the world, in support of the short- and long-term benefits of comprehensive ECCE interventions. Fourth, it will argue that ECCE is central for meeting key international development and education goals.

2.1 Children have a right to have their care and learning needs met

As with previous reports, this GMR will adopt a framework for EFA for “rights, capabilities and development.” Building on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which affirms children’s rights to *survival, development, and protection*, the EFA agreements at Jomtien and Dakar recognise that children are born with the right to have their learning needs met, and properly-designed, comprehensive ECCE may be an adequate answer to those needs. As part of a rights-based perspective, the report will recognise children’s needs, strengths, and capacities, which vary for individual children depending on their age and the context in which they live. Taking a child-centred approach means viewing positive early childhood as both an end in itself and a springboard for further learning. A rights-based perspective also means including children’s voices in making decisions about their lives – even though this may be challenging with very young children.

2.2 Early childhood is a unique time in human development

Another reason for supporting ECCE is that the early years of children’s lives are a time of tremendous opportunity for stimulating brain growth and development, when thousands of connections between neurons take place. Research has shown that young children’s brain development in the first five years occurs at the most rapid pace of their whole lives. If

day and 100 days per year (e.g., kindergarten, nursery school, preschool, etc). Other ECCE includes child development programmes not included in the definition of pre-primary education.

³ The exact structure and content of the monitoring of the other five goals will be determined later.

windows for promoting children’s healthy growth and development are missed, problems are likely to be more difficult and costly to address later in life. While critics caution that interventions after age five are not too late and that brain research claims are exaggerated, there is widespread agreement that the least public investment occurs at a time when children experience the greatest brain development.

Either supporting or as a substitute for quality ECCE settings, stimulating home environments provide valuable moments for parents and other caregivers to support young children’s healthy brain development. Indeed, there are strong links among: parenting knowledge, attitudes and practices; the home environment; and children’s early development and learning. We know that positive, regular parent-child interactions are essential to children’s early development and learning. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (2001) found a positive relationship between parents who engaged in literacy activities (e.g., reading books; telling stories; singing songs; playing with alphabet toys; playing word games; reading signs and labels out loud) and 4th graders’ reading performance in the 35 participating industrialised, transitional, and developing countries. Positive parenting is also important for developing non-cognitive skills such as sharing, empathy, and self-regulation, to name a few.

This section will also explore other important aspects of child development, in particular, the role of health and nutrition. For example, we know that stunting (a proxy for poor nutrition) is related to children’s learning outcomes when they are in school. In addition, health problems that are not diagnosed or addressed in early childhood may have long-lasting effects. For example, untreated ear infections may impair children’s long-term language development. These linkages call for a multi-pronged, multi-sector strategy to support young children.

2.3 Research shows that quality ECCE benefits children, families, and society

In light of this research on children’s early development and learning, there have been a number of interventions to promote young children’s educational and social outcomes, particularly for children who are most at-risk of having difficulties in school and later life. Drawing on short- and long-term evaluations of such early interventions, this section will review outcomes of ECCE for children, families, and society-at-large. Longitudinal analyses conducted in the US (e.g., Hi/Scope Perry Preschool, Abecedarian, Chicago Child-Parent Centers) and the UK (e.g., EPPE in UK) have found, for example, that participants in early childhood programmes have better health and development outcomes, greater school achievement, and need less remedial education. Some of these studies have followed participants for more than 30 years. For example, in the Perry Preschool study, adult participants committed fewer crimes, had higher incomes, and were more dependent on welfare than those who did not participate. (Evaluations of home-based programmes are presented in Section 4).

Due to resource limitations, the research in developing countries is less likely to be experimental or longitudinal. Nonetheless, a body of studies in developing nations (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, South Africa, Turkey) point to the importance of participation in quality ECCE for outcomes including: better nutritional and health, increased school readiness, and higher enrolments (especially among girls) in first grade. In Asia and Africa, where there have been high drop out rates in the first two years of primary school, there is some evidence that ECCE participation may increase school survival rates too (increasing internal efficiency).

2.4 ECCE supports poverty reduction and other international goals

Finally, ECCE is an essential component of an overall poverty reduction strategy. The effects of economic deprivation on children are even greater than for their parents and other adults. By focusing on young children, the international community can work to meet its commitment to alleviating poverty. Indeed, according to UNICEF, the first six of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can be met by ensuring children’s rights to health, education, protection, and equality. These are the same six goals identified in “A World Fit for Children,” the outcomes of the UN General Assembly’s Special Session on Children in 2002: (1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; (2) achieve universal primary education; (3) promote gender equality and empower women; (4) reduce child mortality; (5) improve maternal health; (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.⁴

Goal 1 also contributes to the realisation of the other EFA goals in a number of ways. For example:

- *Goal 2 – universal primary education:* Children who participate in ECCE and have positive early learning experiences, may make better transitions to primary school, and may be more likely to begin and remain in primary school. Getting young children off to a healthy start may mitigate the need for special education and other remedial supports. By reducing the costs of drop out and repetition, EFA Goal 1 can improve the internal efficiency of primary education.
- *Goal 3 – life skills & Goal 4 – adult literacy:* Quality ECCE provides caregivers with access to parent education and other forms of support which can improve their education and skills. Moreover, educated parents are more likely to send their children to (pre)school.⁵ Improving parents’ life skills and literacy skills may encourage them to provide more stimulating interactions with their children.
- *Goal 5 – gender equality:* ECCE is an important instrument for promoting gender parity. ECCE may relieve school-aged girls from looking after their younger siblings so that they can attend school. Moreover, ECCE provides an opportunity to teach all young children about gender equality and to overcome stereotypes about traditional gender roles. Access to ECCE may enable mothers to work and become more economically self-sufficient.
- *Goal 6 – quality:* Children who attend *quality* ECCE are more likely to have better educational outcomes when they attend school (whereas low quality ECCE can be detrimental to children’s development and well-being). Quality improvement efforts in ECCE and primary school may promote cross-sector learning (e.g., primary school could adopt a more child-centred pedagogy and ECCE could better foster school readiness).

3. Assessing progress towards EFA Goal 1

Part 3 will draw on a variety of quantitative sources including household surveys (e.g., MICS 2, LSMS) and administrative data (UIS and IBE databases) to assess country progress on components of EFA Goal 1 (e.g., participation, equity, access, and quality).

⁴ The other MDGs are: (7) ensure environmental sustainability; (8) develop a global partnership for development.

⁵ Indeed, mother’s education level is the single most influential variable in predicting children’s educational achievement, holding socio-economic status constant.

3.1 Monitoring of country progress toward EFA Goal 1

Monitoring EFA Goal 1 is challenging due to the following data limitations:

- Unlike other EFA goals, there are no quantitative targets established for meeting Goal 1.
- Quality and comprehensiveness of data on ECCE is a problem due to limited capacity for national data collection and the complexity of the field.
- International data collection on ‘pre-primary’ education provide only limited coverage of non centre-based arrangements and most of the programmes for children under three.
- Since 2000, UIS has collected data on ‘other ECCE programmes’ but much is missing, often because these are not available at the country level.

Given these data limitations, the report will focus on indicators with reliable cross-national data to monitor country progress toward Goal 1:

- GER in pre-primary education and other ECCE programmes (EFA indicator by UIS)
- NER in pre-primary education at different ages (EFA indicator by UIS)
- Net attendance rates in ECCE (drawn from household surveys such as MICS, LSMS)
- GER in ECCE by age and gender
- Percent of 1st graders who attended preschool by age and gender (EFA indicator by UIS)
- Whether a child, age 3 or 4, attends any organized early learning programme and, if so, for about how many hours during the last 7 days (MICS 2)
- Whether a child, age 5 or older, is attending preschool during the current year and/or attended during the previous year (MICS 2)
- Patterns of participation of ECCE for children ages 3 to 6 according to wealth, urban/rural, and other characteristics of the family (MICS 2)
- Effects of participation in ECCE on:
 - appropriate age of entry in grade 1
 - drop-outs in grade 1
 - survival rates to grade 5
 - repetition rates in primary school
- Child nutritional/health outcomes:
 - immunisation and prophylaxis
 - child mortality
 - height and weight for age
 - nutritional status (iron, iodine)
- Child development and school readiness outcomes (cognitive, social, motor, etc.)

3.2 Patterns of organisation of ECCE

This section will analyse how ECCE is organised, with special attention to the differences between the 0-2 and the 3-primary age groups. We will attempt to distil from the diverse national patterns a small number of basic types which capture different ‘mixes’ of the main policy and programme dimensions of ECCE. These types could possibly be evaluated in terms of their ‘quality’ and the extent to which they serve the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children. Among the possible dimensions for classifying ECCE frameworks are:

- Administrative auspices responsible for ECCE (education, health, etc.)
- Compulsory age for (pre-)primary
- Eligibility criteria for participation (age, income, etc.)
- Modes of provision - preschool, centre, home-based, small scale intervention
- Types of providers - public, for profit, not for profit
- Intensity of participation - duration of programme and hours per week

- Components of the programme – health, nutrition, cognitive, social-emotional, etc.
- Attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged children

3.3 Certain groups of children have limited access

Equity will be the lens through which enrolment patterns are examined. Millions of children – often those who would benefit the most from quality early experiences – do not have access to ECCE. Using household surveys (MICS 2 and LSMS) covering more than 50 countries, this section will include an analysis of the main predictors of ECCE participation (e.g., family income, geographic location, age of child, family education). In addition, based on country-level data, it will assess: To what extent do children in vulnerable situations – special needs, refugees, linguistic and ethnic minorities, children affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans and vulnerable children, etc. – have access to ECCE? Are there geographical disparities (e.g., rural vs. urban)? Are user fees a barrier? Another equity issue is the impact of universal access to primary education on ECCE participation. Does increased spending on primary education result in a decrease in ECCE funding? Are parents more likely to keep their children out of fee-based ECCE until they can enroll them in (free) primary education?

3.4 Quality is uneven and difficult to measure

This section will discuss why quality is difficult to measure given that it is a contextually-based concept. Again, equity will be used as the criteria to assess the extent to which children have access to quality ECCE. Existing cross-national data on – or proxies of – quality *inputs* include: expenditures; % trained teachers; group size; and child-staff ratios. The section will present the debates around standardized instruments to assess *process* quality (e.g., Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – ECERS). Several countries have developed indicators to measure and monitor quality inputs, process, and outcomes though not without challenges (e.g., misapplications, high costs, inefficiency). An alternative approach is for different stakeholders – community members, professionals, parents, children – to be involved in defining and monitoring quality standards at the programme level.

3.5 Meeting EFA Goal 1 for children under three

The report will highlight the unique situation of infants and toddlers – children under age three. This is the age group for which there is the most controversy in terms of what ECCE policies are in the best interest of the child. There is some concern that children who attend early childhood centres before the age of two or three will have difficulties later on in terms of cognitive and social development. Some research finds that full-time, non-maternal care before the age of 1 can be detrimental in children’s early years (it is unclear what happens when they get to school). In light of the research (again mostly from the US and UK), should governments expand child care centres for babies or should they subsidise in-home nannies or family day care providers? Or is paid parental leave the best option? Indeed, in most OECD countries, paid and job-protected parental leave allows one or both parents to take at least a few months and as much as a couple of years off from work to take care of their babies. These parental leaves are an unknown luxury in most developing nations, especially given that many mothers work in the informal sector. In fact, we have very little cross-national data on where and with whom children under three spend their days – particularly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America – and even less on the quality of these arrangements. Some infants and toddlers will accompany their mothers to work, whereas others will be cared for by relatives and friends. Even fewer will take part in more formal non-parental, early childhood settings, such as child development centres. It is hoped that case studies will shed more light on the situation of children under three. In addition, section 4.6 on parenting and

family support will address some of the formal and informal strategies that exist to support the early growth, development, and learning of very young children.

4. Managing and implementing national ECCE policies

Part 4 will review current national policies, main issues and challenges (e.g., staffing, curriculum, parent engagement, funding, etc.), and promising practices. The material will be based primarily on country and regional case studies and will seek to highlight examples that can yield possible lessons for other countries.

4.1 National policy attention to ECCE

What is the role of the state in ECCE policy development and implementation? Despite the benefits of investment in ECCE, this EFA goal often does not receive enough national attention, in terms of policy as well as financial and human resources, because of:

- Limited public awareness or recognition of benefits of ECCE
- Ambivalence about the role of government in the lives of children and families
- Insufficient political will and policy capacity
- Limited financial resource levels and allocations
- Insufficient numbers of trained staff and other personnel
- Other competing priorities (e.g., HIV/AIDS, primary education, emergency response)

Yet, there are also facilitators that have emerged, particularly in the past ten years, including:

- Emerging attention to ECCE within national education reforms
- Funding for projects and capacity building by international donors
- Large number of active NGOs in the field
- Strong regional and international ECCE networks
- Growing body of research on the benefits of quality ECCE

This section will explore the extent to which countries have recognised the role of the state through explicit policy objectives for ECCE. The report will present findings from a review of existing national ECCE policies (and related policy documents), EFA plans of action, and other plans (e.g., national development plans, PSRPs, MDG plans). In addition to the concrete policy goals, targets, legislation, etc. the section will focus on the vision of the child expressed in these policy documents, as well as the role of the state in this domain.

4.2 Governance, coordination, and responsibility for ECCE

Administrative integration: In most countries, ECCE policies and programmes are divided among two or more different administrative departments or ministries, with pre-primary programmes falling under education auspices, and other forms of ECCE (especially for children under age three) falling under auspices of health, social welfare, or children and women's affairs. A small, but increasing number of countries have integrated responsibility for all forms of ECCE under one ministry to provide more coherent policymaking, and there is a trend toward having education as the lead (e.g., Brazil, Jamaica, Kenya, New Zealand, Sweden, Spain, Viet Nam). In addition to the administrative structure, the degree of coordination across different ministries/departments around early childhood and family issues is a big challenge. This section will explore the kinds of government coordination mechanisms that have developed across ministries/sectors to facilitate attention to children's holistic development, including the conditions that make these mechanisms successful.

Decentralisation: Around the world, there has been a trend toward decentralising public services to lower levels of government, and ECCE is no exception. This section will explore the extent to which responsibilities for ECCE such as quality regulations, funding, and monitoring are decentralised. On the one hand, decentralisation may lead to broader inequalities, leading to uneven implementation of national policies or absolving central governments of their responsibilities completely. In some countries, the regulatory role of the state is deteriorating. On the other hand, decentralisation can lead to more local transparency and the freedom to adapt services and resources to local needs and circumstances. The challenge for policymakers (and donors) is how to address these tensions.

Role of the private sector: Based on UIS data, this section will present the share of private enrolment in pre-primary education enrolment across countries. Depending on available data, public-private breakdowns of other forms of ECCE will be examined. In many countries, the market has been favoured as a mechanism for expanding the supply of ECCE services. Yet, countries vary with regard to the extent to which private providers (including both for-profit and non-profit) are regulated by the state. This section will also investigate the consequences of market-based approaches, and the involvement of the private sector more generally, for equity (e.g., access to ECCE among vulnerable and disadvantaged children).

4.3 Staff training and working conditions

This section will discuss the mix between trained “professionals” and other community members/parents who work with young children. It will provide an overview of cross-national trends in the required qualifications for working in ECCE and will assess the main training needs (e.g., supervision and ongoing professional development). There will be some attention to innovative training models that have emerged in recent years, for example the Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU), which provides distance learning and leadership development to ECCE specialists in Africa and the Middle East. Next, the section will focus on working conditions for staff, including wages and benefits, and opportunities for career advancement. Issues of recruitment – including the effect of HIV/AIDS on the pool of available teachers – will be addressed. The involvement of men as ECCE professionals also varies across countries, with potential consequences for gender equality in education. In most countries, however, there are few men who work in early childhood settings.

4.4 Curriculum, standards, and assessment: what and how children are learning⁶

This section will provide an analysis of curricula, standards, and assessment developed for ECCE programmes. Formal goals or standards commonly exist in North America and Europe, but are less common in developing countries. Recently attention has focused on aligning standards with curriculum, and child-focused assessments. Drawing on various international indicators projects, in particular UNICEF’s *Going Global* project, the section will illustrate common views of what children should know and be able to do at school entry (e.g., being able to write their names or show empathy toward another child) and will also raise some of the challenges of developing early learning standards, particularly in countries with less developed ECCE systems. In terms of accountability, the section will discuss the pros and cons of the different uses of assessment (e.g., to identify and address the needs of individual children, to give general information on programme quality).

⁶ Programme standards – what conditions need to be in place for high quality ECCE (e.g., group size, teacher training, materials, etc.) – will be addressed in Part 3.

National curricula for ECCE vary in the extent to which they cover the main domains of child development (cognitive, social, emotional, physical, etc.). In countries where they exist, these curricula tend to be broad frameworks of goals and objectives rather than detailed prescriptions for teachers and are likely to focus on the pre-primary age group. Around the world, there are several curriculum models (e.g., Step-by-Step, High/Scope, Montessori) that have been “imported” from more developed contexts to a variety of settings. This section will explore the tensions between donor “packages” and traditional childrearing practices and local curricula, as well as the possibility of adapting existing curricula to diverse contexts.

Regardless of the curriculum adopted, it is important to know how children actually spend their days in ECCE settings. What kinds of pedagogies are used? What is the frequency and nature of the interactions between adults and children? For example, the IEA Preprimary Project in 11 countries focused on how children spent time in their pre-primary programmes and compared the differences between time spent in free-choice vs. teacher-directed activities. Across countries, the children with free-activities scored significantly higher language scores than the others, yet children spend the bulk of their days in the former.

4.5 Strengthening the transition from ECCE to primary school

The transition from home or ECCE to primary school is a critical moment in children’s development and learning, which can have a strong impact on the rest of their educational experiences. Children make the transition to primary school at different ages around the world. (Also, in some cases, when there are not adequate ECCE opportunities, younger children often attend primary school with their siblings). This section will discuss successful strategies to promote children’s school readiness and ease their transitions to school. What are the advantages and disadvantages of joint training of pre-school and primary teachers, common curricula across early childhood and primary education, integrating ECCE into the school buildings, and making one or two years of pre-primary education compulsory (e.g., Argentina, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela)? This section will focus not only on how to prepare children for school, but also how to ready schools for children. To what extent do the content and methods of primary education influence ECCE and vice versa?

4.6 Supporting and educating parents, families, and other carers in communities

Most children under three, particularly in developing countries, will not take part in a formal ECCE programme, but are more likely to be cared for in their homes by parents and other caregivers.⁷ Children who participate in ECCE also benefit from supportive parenting. This section will articulate the linkages between the quality of the home environment (e.g., materials, activities) and young children’s development and learning. Then, the section will provide examples of promising formal (e.g., home visiting) and informal strategies (e.g., media) to support parents in their roles as children’s first educators from around the world. The section will include a review of the evaluations of models including: the Mother-Child Education Program in Turkey (and Belgium, France, Germany, and Bahrain); the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) in Israel (and 6 other countries); and the Parents as Teachers (PAT), Early Head Start (EHS), and the Elmira Home Visiting Program in the US. While many of these programmes focus on mothers (or female caregivers), there are also efforts to involve fathers, too, in their roles as parents. Finally, in addition to supporting children and caregivers, ECCE can play in community-building and

⁷ We recognise that families may take many different forms. The term “parent” refers to the main caregiver responsible for a young child regardless of the biological relationship between that person and the young child. “Care providers” refer to ECCE staff – voluntary or paid.

social cohesion by reaching out to the most marginalised residents in non-threatening ways and linking them to services in the community: job training, social services, health providers.

4.7 Role of the media

First, this section will provide an overview of *media in the lives of children*, including regional and/or country examples of the use of media for delivering early education content and trends or patterns of delivery. It will review the research on the effects of television, computers, radio, and other forms of media on children’s early development and learning. It will include highlights of effective efforts by organisations and governments to improve children’s media environment and deliver quality ECCE (e.g., Sesame Street Workshop). Second, this section will discuss *media projects which provide information about children* to parents, practitioners, policy makers and the general public on child development topics such as breastfeeding, early stimulation, health care and nutrition. Finally, the section will discuss how the media can help parents improve the home learning environments for young children.

5. Supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

EFA Goal 1 calls for a focus on expanding and improving ECCE for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. ECCE can be an instrument for reducing inequalities (including gender inequality). Part 5 will focus on how policymakers define and identify vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, as well as the extent to which inclusive strategies and policies successfully reach those children.

5.1 The need for an inclusive approach

EFA Goal 1 calls for a focus on expanding and improving ECCE for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children: children with disabilities and other special education needs; children in emergencies (including refugees and internally displaced children); working children in exploitive conditions; abused and neglected children; street children; orphans and children in institutions; children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS; indigenous children; linguistic, ethnic, and cultural minorities; migrants and nomads, among others. This approach is consistent with a rights-based perspective, as well as with recent international conventions (e.g., Salamanca) on inclusive education for all children, regardless of their individual circumstances, and in both developing and more developed contexts.

Meeting EFA Goal 1 for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children means not only increasing enrolment, but also ensuring that the organisation, content, and ancillary services available suit the diversity of individual children living in the most difficult circumstances. For example, this could mean providing mobile ECCE units to children living in remote areas, or providing wheelchair accessible ramps for disabled children, or ensuring that the curriculum is not biased against certain minority groups. In other words, the report will recognise that the needs and strengths of these children will vary within and across countries, as will the appropriate responses for ensuring they have access to quality early experiences.

5.2 Targeting to the vulnerable and disadvantaged?

After reviewing policy statements for definitions of “vulnerable and disadvantaged children” in different countries, the section will investigate governmental and NGO efforts to provide quality ECCE arrangements to children underrepresented groups. It will explore the main attitudinal, financial, logistical barriers to supporting inclusive ECCE, as well as strategies to overcome these obstacles. In particular, it will discuss efforts to *target* ECCE resources and

programmes to the most disadvantaged groups, particularly initiatives that have gone to scale such as the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) in India and PROMESA in Colombia. The section will also discuss some of the debates around targeting versus more universal approaches. In many European countries, ECCE developed as a two-track system during the 19th century, with full-time day nurseries serving poor and ‘needy’ children of factory workers, and part-time nursery schools serving children of middle and upper-class families. The legacy of this division between ‘care’ and ‘education’ still persists in some countries. Risks with targeted programmes are that they will not garner enough political support to serve all eligible children and that quality will remain inferior. Another concern is that children will be segregated according to income or some other “risk” characteristic. Yet, when countries face limited resources, should they not be allocated to those most in need?

5.3 Promoting gender equality

An inclusive approach also means considering the role of gender – in the family and in early childhood settings. Who are the primary caregivers for infants and children? What are the results of fathers’ involvement in family literacy programmes (e.g., Turkey’s Acev father-child programme)? ECCE can be an important instrument for reducing gender inequalities. As argued above, expanding ECCE may relieve older girls of caregiving responsibilities for their younger siblings so that they can attend primary school. In addition, ECCE provides an opportunity to address gender stereotypes that may be reproduced in early childhood. Yet, why are there so few men working in ECCE and what are the consequences of the feminisation of the ECCE workforce? Are challenges faced by girls (e.g., in primary school) and by boys (e.g., in secondary school) related to different early education or care needs?

5.4 Language policies and practices

Most children today are growing up in multi-lingual societies. Yet, ECCE institutions are often mono-lingual, and language minority children may have difficulties fully participating. Another concern is that while the ECCE or preschool setting may provide activities in children’s home language, most often only the official language is taught in early primary schooling. This section will review the research on the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of monolingual and bilingual approaches. After discussing the challenges (e.g., attitudinal, financial, logistical, etc.) to successful integration of linguistic minority children, the section will provide examples of promising practices from diverse contexts including Canada, India, Nigeria, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Uganda.

6. Funding the expansion and improvement of ECCE

Section 6 will examine the costs of existing approaches to ECCE, as well as the financing mechanisms that have been implemented in a variety of country contexts. Drawing on this analysis, it will try to estimate the costs of achieving EFA Goal 1 under different assumptions regarding the extent to which existing approaches should be expanded and improved. Finally, this section will address the role of the international commitments to Education for All in helping developing countries achieve EFA Goal 1, and thus ask how significant and relevant official development assistance to ECCE currently is and could be during the next decade.

6.1 Financing mechanisms

Financing mechanisms for ECCE vary widely from country to country given multiple funders, forms of delivery, and the prevalence decentralised financing. The total investment

in ECCE on a country basis is thus one of the most challenging figures to ascertain. This section will try to estimate investment in ECCE, as well as to unpack how costs are shared among government, private actors, parents, and international donors. It will discuss possible factors that influence decisions about how to prioritise and allocate resources, e.g., between 3-6 year olds and 0-3 year olds, and between ECCE and other EFA goals (e.g., UPE). It will explore the tensions between targeting and a more universal approach, in particular with regard to reaching those children and families most in need. In addition, the section will include a review of possible supply-side and demand-side approaches to financing that policymakers might consider, including: conditional cash transfers (Mexico); payroll tax scheme (Colombia); dedicated taxes or constitutionally guaranteed shares of total revenues (Brazil - for primary school); government subsidies as entitlements; tax incentives for firms; community and cooperative schemes; family fees on sliding scale.

6.2 Estimating the costs of ECCE

This section will provide evidence on the costs of existing ECCE programmes. It will take into account the diversity of those programmes, according to coverage (universal vs. targeted programmes), age of child enrolled, type of provider, intensity, staff qualifications, relative importance of the education and care components, etc. A typology of ECCE programmes and their associated costs could be arrived at, providing an idea of the diversity of options open to country governments depending on their own policy priorities. Indeed, recent studies (e.g., Bahamas, Brazil, Nepal, Paraguay, Philippines) have identified wide ranging unit costs – from about \$45 to about \$200 or more. To the extent possible (i.e. to the extent reliable evaluations are available), costs will be supplemented with information on quality and outcomes of ECCE to arrive at a comparison of different models according to their cost-effectiveness. The section will discuss possible tradeoffs (e.g., larger ratios with higher trained staff; targeting services to lowest income children; fees on a sliding scale, etc.), while highlighting the very high returns to ECCE. Indeed, several cost-benefit analyses conducted on these programmes reveal high rates of returns for investment, even relative to other areas of social and economic development (e.g., infrastructure). Based on World Bank calculations, every \$1 invested yields a societal benefit ranging between \$4-\$7.

6.3 Costing the achievement of EFA Goal 1

EFA Goal 1 calls for an expansion and improvement of comprehensive ECCE targeted at the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, but does not include any quantitative benchmark against which it could be assessed. Costing the goal therefore requires making strong assumptions about the public policies that would correspond to its spirit, while taking into account each country's current ECCE scenario. In other words, meeting Goal 1 does not imply implementing the same kind of public policies in all countries. Keeping this conceptual caveat in mind, as well as data limitations, this section will try to estimate the costs of alternative ECCE scenarios, based on cost estimates discussed in section 6.2. It should draw on existing tools such as the ECD Calculator developed by the Amsterdam Institute for International Development (AIID) for the World Bank.

6.4 International commitments to ECCE

The comparison between the costing estimate of EFA Goal 1 and current levels of funding for ECCE programmes in developing countries will provide an order of magnitude of the funding gap that official development assistance (ODA) could help bridge. Current levels of and trends in ODA to ECCE will be discussed, focusing on:

- The extent to which bilateral and multilateral aid agencies have clearly defined policies regarding ECCE;

- International aid flows to ECCE relative to other areas of education;
- Allocation of donor resources (e.g., programmes, policy development, etc.);
- Issues of coordination with attention to the role of sector-wide approaches;
- Potential strategies for ECCE draw more attention from international donors and NGOs (e.g., a “Fast Track Initiative” to make the challenges of Goal 1 more transparent?).

7. Improving ECCE – Making it happen

The conclusion will highlight strategies for expanding and improving comprehensive ECCE by 2015. First, lessons from successful efforts to raising awareness and garnering national and international policy attention to ECCE will be presented. Second, the section will discuss the needs for developing an ongoing system for data collection and analysis. The final section will outline a set of recommendations for different stakeholders and will take a position on contentious issues so that the report can be used for advocacy purposes.

7.1 Building political will and public awareness

This section will provide examples of successful efforts to build political will and make ECCE a political priority. It will investigate the predisposing factors that lead to reform movements around ECCE. For example, lessons might be drawn from Latin America (e.g., Colombia, Chile), Asia (e.g., Cambodia, Viet Nam, Pakistan), Africa (e.g., Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Mauritania, Senegal, Zanzibar), and the Arab States (e.g., Jordan, Syria). In Cambodia and Pakistan, for example, the EFA framework has sparked government to make major decisions on ECCE. will also investigate how of media campaigns (e.g., Maldives) and INGOs (e.g., Kenya) can successfully draw attention and resources to ECCE.

7.2 Identifying and addressing data needs and requirements

- Recommendations for strengthening national data collection capacity for ECCE
- Priorities for research and evaluation - How to go to scale with effective programmes
- The role of EFA global monitoring reports in supporting data collection and monitoring

7.3 Who should do what...and by when

- Division of responsibilities among governments, civil society, international agencies for:
 - policy development
 - implementation
 - funding
 - service provision
 - monitoring and evaluation
- Recommendations on contentious issues including:
 - targeted vs. universal access to ECCE
 - role of the government in the sector
 - formal vs. non-formal arrangements
 - public vs. private provision
 - appropriate arrangements for under threes
 - *other issues?*
- Discussion of potential benchmarks for achieving EFA Goal 1, including target dates.