



Early Childhood Care and Development



Challenges

- Lack of access to quality ECCD programs and services especially for children between 0 and 3 years, remote locations, and children with disabilities.
- No clear designated lead agency for birth to 3 programs.
- Limited capacity of ECCD personnel, including facilitators and teachers, to implement quality ECCD services.
- Providing access to ECCD services in remote and scattered settlements.
- Attracting and retaining quality facilitators.
- Absence of a National Coordination Mechanism for ECCD.

Priorities

- Ensure access to quality ECCD programs for all children, including those with special needs.
- Enhance parenting and care practices within the home environment and communities.
- Strengthen early learning opportunities through ECCD centers by involving private operators, work places, NGOs, and communities.
- Ensure adequate resources to support ECCD programs.
- Capacity enhancement and retention of facilitators through accredited training (Diploma in ECCD), and promotion of facilitators' position as a career.

Noteworthy practices

Community-based ECCD

- Centres are set up through active involvement of the community. Communities are actively engaged in building and managing the centres and/or making play materials and equipment for the centres. The District governments employ the facilitators, and the Ministry of Education ensures quality learning and support through training of facilitators, and supply of teaching-learning materials. Development partners such as UNICEF and Save the Children provide funding and technical support. Many of these centres provide parenting education classes.
- Achievements: All Government-supported and CSO-supported centres follow this model ensuring sustainability through strong community engagement and ownership. It has contributed to a 12% increase in ECCD access to 3-5 years-old in the past three years.

Buzip or community daycare

- In addition to being community-based, these centers run by Tarayana Foundation in remote and disadvantaged communities benefit from a high-profile leadership/patronage, nutrition supplements, and parent volunteers to help operate.
- Achievements: Overall improvement in children's learning, health, and wellbeing, as well as positive changes in socio-economy and health and wellbeing of families and community members have been observed and reported.

For more information, please contact:
 ARNEC Country Coordinator, Bhutan
 Mr. Karma Gayleg
 karmicgel@gmail.com
 www.arnec.net/country-pages/



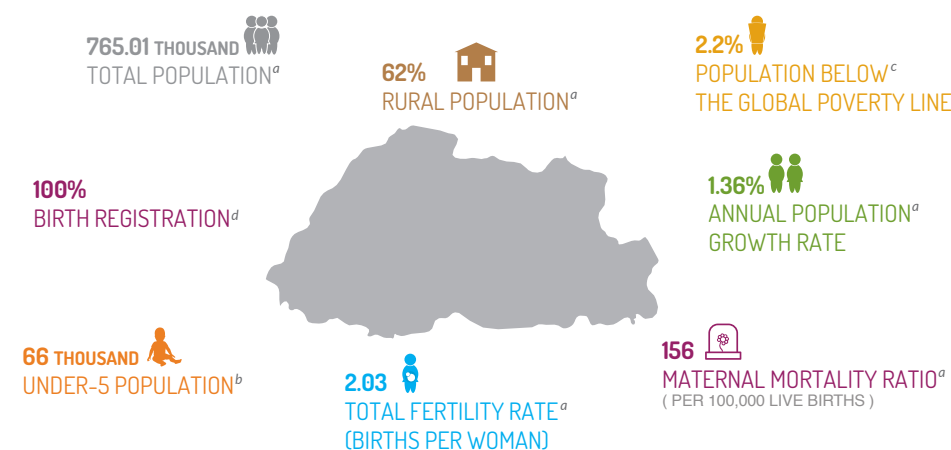
General information about ECCD in Bhutan¹²

ECCD is a relatively new development in Bhutan. The government began to prioritize it in the beginning 2008 by drafting the National ECCD Policy which is currently pending approval. The draft policy has been instrumental in guiding the implementation of planned activities.

The term ECCD is generally used in Bhutan and includes three subgroups of children between birth and age 8: i) home-based parenting education programs for children under 3, ii) center-based ECD programs for children aged 3-5 years, and iii) preschool classes (PP-II) to enhance developmentally appropriate teaching and smooth transition for children aged 6-8 years.

Bhutan shows progress in reducing under-five mortality rates. There is also a strong focus by the government to increase provisions of center-based ECCD to move from the current 17% towards a target of 50% by 2024 as mandated within the Education Blueprint. Provisions for children aged 3-5 years are supported via: i) fully-funded community centers by the government, ii) workplace centers supported by corporate agencies and employers, iii) private centers, and iv) NGO-initiated centers. UNICEF continues to be the main development partner, having supported the establishment of close to 70% of the fully-funded community-based centres thus far.

DEMOGRAPHICS³ AND PRENATAL



BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

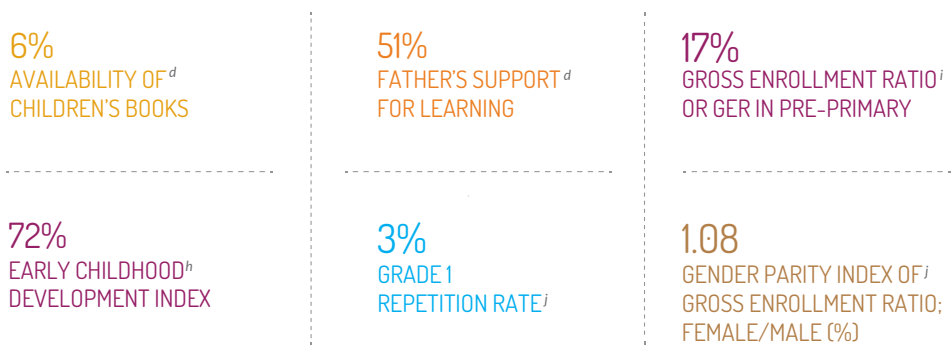


Sources (year)

^a World Bank (2014)	^b UN Population Division (2015 ⁴)	^c World bank (2012)
^d SWOC (2005-2013)	^e UN IGME (2015 ⁵)	^f SWOC (2009-2013)
^g SWOC (2012)	^h MICS (2010 ⁶)	ⁱ UIS (2013)
	^h UIS (2014 ⁷)	

Disclaimer: Numbers have been rounded except for fertility and population growth rate. Data is as of May 2016.

SCHOOL READINESS



Key policies
 ECD National Policy drafted in 2011; pending approval from the Cabinet Ministers.

- Bhutan Early Learning & Development Standards
- National Policy on ECCD
- Bhutan Education Blueprint
- Education Sector Strategy: Realizing Vision 2020 Policy and Strategy
- 11th Five Year Plan 2013-2018: Programme Profile (Vol.2)

Ministries in charge: Ministry of Education

References

- ¹ Wangchuk, et al. (n.d.). The status of early childhood care and development in Bhutan: An internal report for ECCD situational study.
- ² Yeshey. (n.d.). Fulfilling child rights through early childhood care and development in Bhutan (Presentation for UNICEF EAPRO).
- ³ World Bank. (2015). World Bank Open Data (Accessed May 3, 2016).
- ⁴ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2015). World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, DVD Edition (Accessed May 3, 2016).
- ⁵ United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME). (2015). Level & trends in child mortality: Report 2015 (pp. 23). New York: UNICEF.
- ⁶ National Statistics Bureau. (2011). Bhutan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2010. Thimphu, Bhutan: National Statistics Bureau, UNICEF, and UNFPA.
- ⁷ UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). (2016). Education dataset (Accessed May 3, 2016).