

An Evaluation of the Early Childhood Care and Development Programme in Bhutan



Ministry of Education, Bhutan, and
UNICEF Bhutan Country Office, January 2020

ཡེ་ལོ་གུ་རྩེ་གི་སྐོར་བྱེད་ལས་ཁུངས་ཀྱི་འཕེལ་རྒྱུ་ལྟུང་ལྟུང་གི་འཕེལ་རྒྱུ་

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A brief overview of the national ECD landscape in Bhutan

- Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programme
- Lead government agencies: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health: 0 to 3 years
 - Maternal health (pre-natal and post-natal care)
 - Newborn health and Child health
 - C4CD and C4CD plus
- Ministry of Education: 3 to 5 years (since 2009)
 - Centre-based preschool programme: ECCD centres
 - Parenting education
 - Alternative models: mobile ECCD facilitators
 - Early stimulation and development



The National ECCD Evaluation (2019-2020)

Why was the evaluation conducted?

- First national-level ECCD evaluation through a multisectoral lens (health, education, and protection)
- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the ECCD programme
- Sample: 3 districts from three regions (East, West, Central)- 51 ECCD centres, District Education Officers (9), District Health Officers (9), parents of birth to 2 year olds, ECCD facilitators, primary school teachers, Centre Management Committee.

The National ECCD Evaluation (2019-2020)...contd...

What are the key findings?

- ECCD-related policies are aligned to the NCF
- A common understanding of ECCD is lacking among stakeholders-linked to lack of multi-sectoral planning and implementation
- Access to ECCD centres remain a challenge
- ECCD participation in centres is positively related to child outcomes based on parent reports
- Standards of ECCD centres are a concern
- Health workers, creche and ECCD facilitators seek opportunities for targeted professional development

The Way Forward

- Implement a whole-system approach to ECCD through cross-sectoral collaboration – to address this UNICEF and MoE are developing Bhutan's first Multi-Sectoral ECCD Strategic Action Plan
- Improve professional development opportunities for ECCD professionals
- Promote and improve parenting- parenting education and caring for caregiver programme
- Improve maternal and child health support/services
- Continue to advocate for ECCD focusing on increasing participation, improved learning conditions