



TAJIKISTAN



9.3 million  
population (AoS, 2020)



73.8% lives in  
rural areas



864,429 children  
of 3-6 years of age



219,510 children  
of 6 years of age



1,547,905 all  
children < 6 years

84%

OF CHILDREN OF  
3-6 YEARS OF AGE  
REMAIN DEPRIVED  
OF ATTENDING  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION  
SERVICES.



THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

unicef  
for every child



# Early Childhood Education in Tajikistan

UNICEF, January 2021

## OVERVIEW

- 662 traditional preschool settings (57% in urban areas) reaching out to 102,175 children.
- 1,771 alternative ECE centres mainly in rural areas (77%) reaching out to 49,721 children of 6 years of age.
- Total ECE budget 299.2 mln Tajik Somoni (EMIS, 2019-2020)
- 1.1% of public allocation for preschool sector out of the total state budget.
- 6% of public allocations for preschool education out of the total education budget.
- 0.34% of GDP.

## 21 CURRENT SITUATION

### SDG Target 4.2:

By 2030 countries should ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

### National ECE targets:

By 2025 30% children of age 3-6 years old enrolled (15.9% as of 2020) (MTDP)

By 2030 50% children of age 6 years old enrolled (32.4% as of 2020) (NEDS)

Required actions to achieve national  
target for 3-6 y.o. (30%) by 2025:

#### Option I. Traditional KG model:

813 additional KGs to be built for  
121,983 children (150 children/KG). Set-  
Up cost: 3.9 bln TJS

#### Option II. ECE centers:

4,879 additional ECE centers to be built  
for 121,983 children (25 children/center).  
Se-Up cost: 249 mln TJS

Required actions to achieve national  
target for 6 y.o. (50%) by 2030:

#### Option I. Traditional KG model:

454 additional KGs to be built for 68,234  
children (150 children/KG).  
Set-Up cost: 2.2 bln TJS

#### Option II. ECE centers:


2,729 additional ECE centers to be built  
for 68,234 children (25 children/center).  
Set-Up cost: 136 mln TJS



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 151,896 children (102,175 in traditional KG model and 49,721 in ECE centers) making 15.9% (age 3-6) of enrolled children in 2,433 ECE settings (1,771 ECE centers and 662 traditional KGs).
- Total enrolment increased by 1.2% from 2018-2019 school year and by 3.6% from 2015.
- Total ECE centers increased by 4.1% adding 74 new centers and traditional KGs increased by 3.9% adding 26 new settings from 2018-2019.

## ECE research evidence

Children that have negative early experiences and don't receive a high-quality early childhood education are:		
25%	more likely to drop out of school	
40%	more likely to become a teen parent	
50%	more likely to be placed in special education	
60%	more likely to never attend college	
70%	more likely to be arrested for a violent crime	

## Challenges

Despite increased investment and focus on Early Childhood Education (ECE), the enrolment rates have stagnated at 15.9 percent, without significant change over the past five years (2014-2020). Considering limited public resource allocations, continuous demographic growth, reliance on external funding and unaffordable rates, the national target to increase ECE enrolment for children of 3-6 years of age remains challenging to achieve.

- **Preschool education** system offers limited services in public, alternative and private settings, which continue to rely critically on external funding collected mainly by parents. Public allocations for early childhood education is underfunded, standing at only 6 per cent out of the total education budget and 0.34% of GDP (EMIS, 2019-2020).
- **Over 70 %** of ECE teachers do not have required qualification to support young children's development and learning.
- **Lack of collaboration** between different sectors responsible for provision of services to young children leads to absence of a common vision to ensure holistic development of the child.

Before the COVID-19 shock, the fiscal deficit was projected to rise to 5.2 percent of GDP in 2020 and then to stabilize to an average 4% in 2021–2022. However, after the outbreak of COVID-19, as a result of lower revenues and increased spending on health and social transfer in response to the pandemic, the overall budget deficit is now projected to rise to 7.7 percent of GDP, equivalent to about USD 612.5 million (IMF). This additional deficit might have negative impact on public allocations needed to sustain the reform of the ECE sub-sector.

## Priority areas to accelerate ECE enrolment

The following priority areas are defined in the National Education Development Strategy (NEDS) 2030 and ECE national plan as key solutions to achieve the defined national target of 50% of pre-primary school age children enrolled by 2030.

- Supporting district operational planning within the framework of national ECE policy targets.
- Address regional inefficiencies in ECE financing including public-private partnership and harmonization of Per-Capita Formula beyond state ECE provision.
- Provide policy and technical support on introducing one-year compulsory pre-primary education for all 6-year old children.
- Develop ECE basic package and various media learning packages reflecting minimum requirements for provision of quality ECE services across various models.
- Support to parents and caregivers to provide stimulation and early learning within the home and community; outreach and behaviour change work around responsive care; strengthening linkages between home and early education programmes in preschools and other settings.
- Support education systems to systematically measure learning outcomes of children in ECE services.

## National ECE enrolment (EMIS 2019-2020)

Table 1. Estimated coverage to achieve national ECE 30% targets until 2025 (MTDP 2025).

Region	# of children in 2018		ECE coverage in 2019-2020		Estimated ECE coverage in 2025	
	6 y.o.	3-6 y.o.	6 y.o.	3-6 y.o.	6 y.o. (50%)	3-6 y.o. (30%)
Dushanbe	17,542	58,193	6,849	25,895	8,771	17,428
Khatlon	81,781	331,681	23,703	34,753	40,891	99,504
Sughd	63,473	256,502	52,301	53,942	31,737	76,951
DRS	52,644	200,977	8,923	14,912	26,322	60,293
GBAO	4,070	17,076	6,294	7,844	2,035	5,123
Total	219,510	864,429	71,070 (32.4%)	137,346 (15.9%)	109,755	259,329

Table 2. Estimated coverage to achieve national ECE 50% target until 2030 (NEDS 2030)

Region	Estimated # of children in 2030		Estimated ECE coverage in 2030
	6 y.o.	3-6 y.o.	6 y.o. (50%)
Dushanbe	18,756	75,023	9,378
Khatlon	106,901	427,606	53,450
Sughd	82,671	330,648	41,335
DRS	64,775	259,101	32,377
GBAO	5,504	22,015	2,752
Total	278,607	1,114,429	139,303

Description and minimum estimated cost for covering one pre-primary year for all 6-year old children as part of the transition to a 12-year education system in the Republic of Tajikistan.

Gradually introduce one year of pre-primary education based at schools or community facilities, while improving existing 11 year of general secondary education.							
Description	Key Characteristics			Main challenge			
Envisages introducing gradually a compulsory pre-primary year offered in facilities built in school premises or as part of accredited, community based ECE centres before pupils enter Grade 1.	This scenario balances out infrastructure and operational costs between school premises and accredited community based ECE centres, thereby reducing the pressure on existing educational facilities.			Management of the transition will require a balanced spread of resources between general secondary educational institutions and community-based ECE centres reviewing existing normative to ensure Private Public Partnerships. Curriculum review and training of teachers.			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	
Total estimated cost (mln Tajik Somoni)	77.8	547.2	663.7	669.4	760.1	1,055.8	
Total estimated cost (in % of the total estimated general government budget for the education sector)	1.6	10.2	11.1	10.1	10.3	12.9	
of which: operational costs (mln Tajik Somoni)	57.0	129.7	212.4	289.9	373.7	489.8	
of which: setup costs (mln Tajik Somoni)	20.8	417.5	451.3	379.5	386.4	566.0	

(Source: Costing report of transition to 12-year education system in Tajikistan)

## Advancing the ECE transformative agenda addressing COVID-19 pandemic challenges



### TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIONS

Promote alternative engagement modalities for the provision of quality content, which can supplement early learning. This include technology and innovation fostering communication between families and preschool professionals.



### ALTERNATIVE MODELS

Prepare teachers to engage with families and children outside of preschool settings.



### CURRICULAR CONTENT AND METHODS

Recognize gaps in skills and opportunities for blended and more progressive ways to building capacity.



### ENGAGEMENT OF PARENTS

Reaffirm the importance of play, outdoor education, social and emotional learning, psychosocial wellbeing and soft skills.



### TEACHER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICES

Reinforce the relationship between - child-parent-educator: integrate parents in the process of pre-primary education as true partners.

## UNICEF ECE Programmatic focus 2021-2022



**Area 1:** Strengthen policy, financing and advocacy for adoption of clear regulatory framework enabling provision of affordable, inclusive and quality early learning services.

### Key interventions:

- Support the effective and strategic integration of the pre-primary sub-sector within Education Sector Planning processes.
- Support effective costing of ECE through adoption of financing and regulatory framework (per-capita financing and Public Private Partnerships).
- Provide policy support on introducing one-year compulsory pre-primary education for all 6-year-old children.



**Area 2:** Strengthen ECE curriculum through capacity building of stakeholders and development of inclusive and child-friendly programmes and alternative models to ensure the most marginalized children benefit and learn.

### Key interventions:

- Ensure availability and accessibility to alternative ECE media package (Magic Box, books) for young children and their parents to support early learning in formal settings and home-environment.
- Development and institutionalization of multilingual and peace education pedagogical approach in a national teacher training and professional development framework. Formation, support and capacity building of parents, teachers, caregivers that meet regularly to ensure pro-social, positive messages are consistent across different environments in which the young child develops.
- Development of technology-based solutions to expand ECE activities through innovations and digital resources to ensure uninterrupted learning and development.



**Area 3:** Develop programmes to empower and build parental skills in provision of responsive care and learning for children at home.

### Key interventions:

- Parenting support specifically for vulnerable or marginalized parents (e.g., single mothers, etc.) with the goal of socializing young children towards peaceful attitudes and behaviours.
- Development of ECE video materials to ensure open access to educational resources for parental capacity building to provide responsive care and learning to a child.



**Area 4:** Facilitate development of comprehensive M&E framework and tools for monitoring and assessment of learning outcomes.

### Key interventions:

- Design a model focusing on measurement of child development and quality learning in different ECE settings (public, alternative and community based).

## General ECE Statistics based on EMIS data 2019-2020

