Regional Training Workshop:
Early Childhood Policy Review
< Day 2 >

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How to conduct early childhood policy reviews
Types of Review

• Diagnostic review
  – To learn where to start

• Thematic review
  – To find solutions to a particular issue

• Comprehensive review
  – To assess and evaluate globally
Steps for a diagnostic review

• One expert
• Taking a short mission of 2-3 days
• Pointing out:
  – Areas needing improvement
  – Issues needing attention
  – Entry points to needed actions
• Could serve as a pre-assessment stage for a thematic or comprehensive review
Steps for Thematic & Comprehensive Reviews

1. Pre-assessment
2. Establishing country taskforce
3. Compiling background information
4. On-site review mission
5. Presentation of results
   • Full report + Seminar
1. **Pre-assessment**
2. Establishing country taskforce
3. Compiling background information
4. On-site review mission
5. Presentation of results
   - Full report + Seminar
Pre-assessment

• To check the needs of the gov’t

• To identify the key issue(s) to review
  – Critical review of the issues mentioned by the gov’t
1. Pre-assessment
2. Establishing country taskforce
3. Compiling background information
4. On-site review mission
5. Presentation of results
   • Full report + seminar
Country Taskforce

• No need to be formal or big
• What is needed is:
  – The point of authority representing the gov’t
    • Who will approve the final results
  – An easily / daily accessible communication channel
1. Pre-assessment
2. Establishing country taskforce
3. **Compiling background information**
4. On-site review mission
5. Presentation of results
   - Full report + seminar
Background information

• To assist the review mission
• Compiled by the country taskforce
• Using the templates
• All related data must be collected
  – A task deserving a separate effort
1. Pre-assessment
2. Establishing country taskforce
3. Compiling background information
4. **On-site review mission**
5. Presentation of results
   - Full report + Seminar
On-site review mission

Reviewers
On-site review mission

– **Experts** who will write the review results
– Optimal number is **3** (including one leader)
– **Do not set up the team only with ECCE experts**
  • Include experts in education policy, economics, health etc.
– Each member to examine a particular issue
On-site review mission

• Scheduling the mission:
  – All key service types should be covered
  – Meetings with all relevant stakeholders
  – Geographical, social and economic representation
  – Between 5-7 and 10-12 working days
On-site review mission

After the mission:

- Reviewers to send inputs to the leader
  - Within 15 days
- Structure of the input to be determined in advance among the reviewers
1. Pre-assessment
2. Establishing country taskforce
3. Compiling background information
4. On-site review mission
5. How to make recommendations
6. **Presentation of results**
   - Full report + Seminar
Report structure

- Introduction (the Project + Review + Reviewers)
- Executive Summary
- Contextualising the country
- Critical issues facing the country
- Policy dynamics: how the issues have or have not been dealt with
- Recommendations: What thus remains to be done on access, quality, resource, government coordination and R&D
- Conclusion: Next steps
How to make recommendations
How to make recommendations

• **Principles:**
  – Holistic development
    • “for the child”
  – Equitable access
    • “for the poor”
  – Smooth transition from home to EC to school
    • “lifelong learning”
How to make recommendations

- No “hopes, dreams or ideals”
  - No long laundry list
- Must consider inevitable trade-offs
- Prioritising, Phasing, and Optimising as the three governing strategies
How to make recommendations

- **Strategies:**
  - Prioritisation / phasing
    - “one at a time”
    - Age-group-wise
  - Optimising
    - “start where we’re”
How to make recommendations

- **Policy quandaries:**
  - Pre-primary education vs. 0-3
  - Universalisation vs. targeted policy
  - Building systems vs. creating activities
  - Expansion of access vs. ensuring quality
  - Partnership vs. leadership
Presentation of results

• Presenting recommendations:
  – Evidence-based
    • Convincing: Data-based arguments
  – Comparative
    • Drawing attention: Cross-country information
  – Visual
    • Drawing attention: Generous use of charts and graph
Presentation of results

– The report:
  • Strong advocacy tool
  • Solid policy reference material
– The target audience must include decision makers outside the ECCE community
– Media coverage for wider and effective dissemination of the results
How to present background information: Common Mistakes in Reporting on ECCE
Example 1

• During the Soviet period, preschool education in Kazakhstan reached a peak.
• The enrolment rate in kindergartens reached 90% in 1991.
• But early childhood education has suffered greatly from the transition.
• As a result, only 295,000 young children attended pre-primary education in 2000.
Point to remember

• Consistent use of terminology
  – Preschool education vs
  – Kindergartens vs
  – Early childhood education vs.
  – Pre-primary education

Also:
  • Nurseries vs
  • Day care centre vs
  • Creches
During the Soviet period, preschool education in Kazakhstan reached a peak.

The enrolment rate in preschools reached 90% in 1991.

But preschool education has suffered greatly from the transition.

As a result, only 295,000 young children attended preschools in 2000.
• Indicate the concerned age

  - Reference to an early childhood programme or service is meaningless if the concerned age group is not indicated
During the Soviet period, preschool education for 1-6-year-olds in Kazakhstan reached a peak.

The enrolment rate in preschools reached 90% in 1991.

But preschool education has suffered greatly from the transition.

As a result, only 295,000 young children attended preschools in 2000.
**Point to remember**

- **Present rates, not raw statistics**
  - Raw enrolment statistics are meaningless unless the size of the concerned age cohort is provided
  - Rates (%) should be provided
During the Soviet period, preschool education for 1-6-year-olds in Kazakhstan reached a peak.

The enrolment rate in preschools reached 90% in 1991.

But preschool education has suffered greatly from the transition.

As a result, enrolment in preschools reached only 28% in 2000.
• **Gross or net enrolment**

  – Identify if an enrolment rate is **GER** or **NER**
• During the Soviet period, preschool education for 1-6-year-olds in Kazakhstan reached a peak.

• The *gross* enrolment rate in preschools reached 90% in 1991.

• But preschool education has suffered greatly from the transition.

• As a result, *gross* enrolment in preschools reached only 28% in 2000.
Example 2

• *Since 1998, the education budget in Kazakhstan increased by 250%.*
• *MOE’s expenditure on preschool education was 5 B.*
Point to remember

• Data year and source

  – The year and source of data must be indicated
    • Distinguish the data year from the publication year
  – Provide time-series data to show trends
    • Must indicate beginning and end years
The education budget in Kazakhstan increased by 250% between 1998 and 2003 (MOE statistics, 2005).

MOE’s expenditure on preschool education was 5 B in 2004 (MOE statistics, 2006).
Point to remember

• **Data units**
  – Indicate **units**
    • US$, F.CFA
  – Indicate the **exchange rate** of the local currency:
    • e.g., 1US$ = 125 Tenge (as of Jan 2005)
  – Indicate **denominator**
    • % of GDP, % of total education expenditure
• The education budget in Kazakhstan increased by 250% between 1998 and 2003 (MOE statistics, 2005).

• MOE’s expenditure on preschool education was 5 B Tenge in 2004, equalling 3% of total education expenditure (MOE statistics, 2006).

(footnote: 1US$ = 125 Tenge, as of January 2005)
The law states that preschool education is the first level of education.

There is a government plan to make the attendance in this first level of education compulsory.

Attendance in preschools will be subsidised for poor children.

The government also has a plan to provide training for preschool personnel.
Point to remember

• Clear use of terminology
  – “Law”
    • Which legislative document? What year?
  – “Government”
    • Which ministry? Sector? Level of government?
  – “Poor”
    • What income level?
  – “Personnel” / ”Staff”
    • Teachers? Supervisors? Assistants? Animators?
• The Education Law of June 1999 states that preschool education is the first level of education.

• There is a plan by the MOE to make the attendance in this first level of education compulsory.

• Attendance in preschools will be subsidised for poor children from families with a monthly income below 1,000 Tenge.

   (footnote: 1US$ = 125 Tenge, as of Jan. 2005)

• The MOE also has a plan to provide training for preschool teachers.
Expression of age

- European convention:
  - 3-5 means children 3-year-old to 48 months, not including 5-year-olds
  - But not globally used and accepted

- Alternative:
  - Provide, at the outset, an operational definition
  - (e.g., 3-5 means 3, 4 and 5-year-olds)
Key reminders

• Clear and consistent use of terminology
• Indicate concerned age
• Present rates, not raw statistics
• Year and source of data must be identified
• Data units must be indicated
Other suggestions

• Frequent use of footnotes and technical notes to clarify definitions
• Generous use of tables and graphs for easy reference and comparisons
• Disaggregate data by age, gender, region, socio-economic distribution etc.