

Motion on Early Childhood Care and Education

Successful Transition into School¹

- Ensure pre-schooling for all, particularly the marginalized
- Invest the best in early primary
- Develop minimum targets in education budgets for financing ECCE

GCE recognises that:

1. Learning begins at birth. ECCE programmes are concerned with ensuring young children's rights, provide the base for achieving all EFA goals and contribute powerfully to reducing poverty, the overarching objective of the MDGs². The early years, from zero through eight, are the foundation for lifelong learning.
2. The early primary years are the key to systemic failures in education. Academic failure is concentrated in the first grades. Many children who continue in school miss foundational skills they cannot recoup; they leave school unable to read fluently, calculate, or solve problems.
3. Costly wastage can be avoided by investments in good quality early primary education combined with quality pre-schooling services. This improves the efficiency of the schooling system by reducing repetition and drop-out, and improving achievement, especially for girls and marginalised groups. Continued exclusion of some groups works against the achievement of EFA goals and the MDGs.
4. In most systems the level of human and financial resources invested per early primary student is significantly lower than in later educational cycles. A higher investment in early primary is urgent/necessary to resolve the learning and equity crises in education.
5. Schools must be ready for *all* children, those who participated in early childhood programmes and are "ready", and those who have not. This includes ensuring:
 - Support for families to engage in their children's learning before and after entry to school
 - A welcoming, appreciative, healthy and inclusive environment where the child feels safe and stimulated
 - Experienced, capable and appropriately trained and supported teachers in lower primary classes (opposite of current practice)
 - Manageable teacher-child ratios

¹ Submitted by the Consultative Group on ECCD, November 2010, approved at the GCE General Assembly February 22-24, 2011

² <http://www.unesco.org/education/GMR/2007/chapter1.pdf>

- Active learning combined with structured supports for reading and writing, so that ALL children, not just the better off, become fluent
- Use of home language for basic concepts and literacy, and culturally relevant books and learning materials

Therefore, the World Assembly calls on GCE to:

Support the expansion of ECCE especially for the most disadvantaged, and advocate for prioritizing attention and resources to early primary

- Reaffirming the 2008 motion on ECCE on the importance of investment in young children 0-8 years, including in national policies and global frameworks
- Encouraging and supporting GCE coalitions to take initiatives at the local, national and international levels for children to be ready for school and schools to be ready for children, such as:
 - Expanding quality pre-primary programmes with special attention to reaching the most disadvantaged/vulnerable.
 - Developing minimum financing targets in education budgets for ECCE programmes (before school) and early primary grades (classes 1 – 3)
 - Prioritizing attention and resources to early primary as a central component of education reform. This should be reflected in the plans of PRSPs, EFA, MDGs, FTIs, etc.
- Committing 2012 Global Action Week to ECCE

