



Newsletter December 2016/January 2017

Our Vision: Holistic and inclusive Early Childhood Development access for every child of Pakistan.

Greetings from ECDNP and Happy New Year!

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

On

Envisioning Holistic Early Childhood Development for Pakistan

Creating an Equitable, Pluralistic and Sustainable Society

March 27-28, 2017, Islamabad

Over the years, Pakistan has seen an increased focus on early childhood interventions. The country still needs a huge commitment to expand the access and quality of early childhood care and education for all children in the age bracket of 0-8 years. Early childhood has received a renewed focus globally after the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. To place a renewed focus and envision on an integrated approach to ECD in Pakistan, the ECD Network of Pakistan in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training and development partners is planning to organize a national conference on ECD in Pakistan. The two-day national conference will be held in Islamabad on March 27-28, 2017. The major purpose of the National Conference on ECD is to bring together local and international experts and practitioners to provide a platform for sharing experiences and highlighting the ECD needs in Pakistan. The conference will identify and recommend strategies and actions to consolidate and expand ECD services in the country.

Conference Sub Themes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current status of ECD in Pakistan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A holistic early childhood vision for Pakistan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy discourses around ECD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches to a holistic early childhood curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECD funding: challenges and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher preparation for ECD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECD: community-based models and practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy, awareness-raising and social mobilization for ECD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and best practices in teaching, learning and assessment of ECD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy interventions in early childhood

The submission of Paper /Posters for ECD Conference has been extended

Submission of Conference Abstract/Posters	January 27, 2017
Notification of Decision to contributors'	February 6, 2017
Submission of full papers/Printed Posters	March 6, 2017

Abstracts and Papers Received for National ECD conference

ECDNP is receiving abstracts for papers and posters for the National ECD conference. Those papers are being reviewed by the Academic Committee formed by ECDNP to promote research on ECD in Pakistan.

A Dialogue Session in Sindh with ECD Stakeholders

A consultative sessions was held in Karachi on December 1, 2016. The venue was Hotel Mövenpick, Karachi. Around six organization working on ECD were invited for presentations to discuss the challenges and expansion of ECD services in the Sindh Province. General Secretary ECDNP, Mr. Ghulam Nabi moderated the session.

The welcome note was delivered by Mr. Nasruddin Rupani, Chairman ECDNP. He paid gratitude to the participants and meeting organizers. Mr. Rupani emphasized the need of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Pakistan. He said, “We are all part of civil society in Pakistan and need to work together to promote ECD in the country.” He shared that Rupani

Foundation is practicing community based model in Gilgit Baltistan and Sindh for many years. The model is cost-effective and so successful that it can be replicated in other parts of the country. He expressed his concern over the lack of awareness about ECD, and especially about ‘the power of mothers’ in Pakistan. He urged that mothers need to be empowered to bring change in society. “Presently we are all family focused in the country, but we need to be more child focused families. And, this will definitely bring change in our societies and future.” He concluded his welcome note by inviting all to join their hands together to bring



change in Pakistani society by working on ECD.

Mr. Siraj Narsi, Founding Director of ECDNP delivered the keynote address. He thanked all the participants for their presence at the consultative session. He gave details of how ECDNP was founded with the help of friends and supporters of ECD in Pakistan. Mr. Narsi said, “After a yearlong consultative process of discussions, deliberations and meetings amongst various stakeholders involved in national ECD endeavors, ECDNP was created in March 2014 with an aim to promote the cause of ECD in Pakistan in every way possible.” He added, “The founders of ECDNP believe that the process of mutual learning, cooperation and support can bring tremendous benefits to ECD sector in Pakistan that would influence and channel mass awareness, advocacy and government policy in promoting holistic ECD practice as a foundational tool of child development, and thus, by extension, national development.” He emphasized, “It is the time in Pakistan to give high priority early childhood.”





A Dialogue Session in Punjab with ECD Stakeholders

ECDNP is reaching out to major stakeholders across Pakistan to get their ideas and input prior to the ECD conference to discuss gaps, challenges, opportunities and perspectives of ECD. A consultative session was held in Punjab on Friday, December 02, 2016.



The session was moderated by Ms. Kishwar Hameed. The participants identified challenges and opportunities as :

ECD Challenges

- Lack of basic facilities, resources and consumables at ECE centers
- Unavailability of trained and accredited ECE teachers
- Slow processing and lack of understanding of ECE/ECD within government
- Parents' lack of awareness towards the importance of ECD

ECD Opportunities

- Implementation of Education Sector Reforms and improvements in National Plan of Action
- Growing interest in ECE job opportunities
- Growing interest among youth and public sector in getting ECE certification
- ECE to help changing attitudes and improvement in skills of teachers

- Limited access and low quality of ECE programs
- Absence of integration and coordination among ECD stakeholders
- Lack of capacity at district level to plan, implement and monitor ECE programs
- No focus on quality and devising parameters set for assessment
- Lack of support from provincial government department
- No institutionalization of the ECE program in community-based schools
- Teacher-student ratio in schools with ECE programs
- No involvement of head teacher in the planning process
- Lesson plans are not reviewed on daily basis
- Lack of capacity and resources in the use of technology
- Attention to children with “challenging behaviors” and “special needs” is lacking
- No integration of cultural and linguistic diversity into ECE/ECD programs
- Gaps in linking of ECE teachers, parents and community.

- Room for reforming ECE policy, curriculum and learning materials
- Opportunity to benefit from experience of local/international NGOs through collaboration
- developing and replicating ECE/ECD models
- Training of teachers, facilitators and school management
- Introduction and expansion of active learning
- Orientation of parents and communities
- Advocacy on ECE/ECD across Sindh
- Policy interventions such as Sindh ECD Policy to ensure ownership of ECE
- Like SDG 4.2, the provincial sector plans and National Education Policy should have a major focus on ECE
- Mothers should a primary focus of ECE/ECD programs
- Provision of basic infrastructure and ECE resources



Upcoming Events/Activities:

To discuss the National conference themes/subthemes with different stakeholders, number of consultative dialogue meetings are planned in multiple cities:

ECD Dialogue session in Baluchistan

Jan 2017

ECD Dialogue session in AJK

Jan 2017

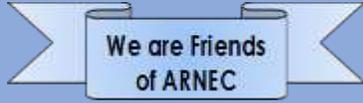
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