



NATIONAL ECD CONFERENCE 2019

6-7 November, 2019 at Spectra Convention Centre, Dhaka



Lending momentum to holistic early childhood development across sectors

Concept Note

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN), as in the past, plans to organize a National ECD Conference in conjunction with BEN Annual General Meeting in 2019. The theme this year is **“Lending momentum to holistic early childhood development across sectors”**. The two-day national event will be held from 6 to 7 November 2019 at the Spectra Convention Centre, Gulshan-1, Dhaka. About 200 guests including high officials from government, UN agencies, national and international organizations, ECD practitioners, experts and representatives from BEN member organizations are expected to participate in the conference.

Background

The Sustainable Development Goals, the global development agenda for 2030, have embraced for the first time young children’s development, seeing it as key to the transformation that the world seeks to achieve. Embedded in the SDGs on hunger, health, education and justice are targets on malnutrition, child mortality, early learning and violence – targets that, together with others, outline an agenda for improving early childhood development.¹

SDG Target 4.2 to ensure *“by 2030 all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”* is the driver of strategy and action for advancing comprehensive early childhood development, thus helping achieve the overarching education goal SDG4 and other Sustainable Development Goals.

The Government of Bangladesh is committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Realizing the importance of the first thousand days of a child’s life, the major focus of the Government is on SDG target 4.2. The Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Policy adopted in 2013 encourages all stakeholders including “government agencies and non-government actors including NGOs, community organizations and the private sector” under the leadership of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA). They are committed to be engaged in a coordinated and comprehensive national effort to meet the

¹ Nurturing care for early childhood development: a framework for helping children survive and thrive to transform health and human potential; was developed in 2018 by UNICEF, World Bank Group, WHO, ECDAN, The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, and Every Women Every Child

developmental needs of young children. The operational strategy and implementation plan of this policy, approved in 2016, gives direction towards working in multisectoral approach for the effective implementation of the Comprehensive ECCD Policy.

The G20 leaders in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2018 also have signed a declaration signaling prioritization for the early childhood development agenda.

The national and global developments over the last few years indicate high commitment towards early childhood development, which has been perceived as a key to achieving Sustainable Development Goals. This is the result of advocacy effort of stakeholders in Bangladesh and across the globe.

Ben's Role and Mission

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) is a forum of stakeholders including government, non-government and international organizations working in Early Childhood Development. Since its inception in 2005, BEN has been instrumental in advocacy with the stake holders particularly with the government on early childhood development. The coordinated advocacy effort brought about a major success when the government endorsed Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy in 2013. BEN has been providing technical support in subsequent development regarding the implementation of the policy. BEN is a member of National ECCD Coordination Committee chaired by the State Minister of MoWCA which is responsible to coordinate among the ministries for effective implementation of the policy.

BEN also provided technical support for adoption, content validation and further review and translation of the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) for Bangladesh under MoWCA. BEN also worked with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) through Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and made a significant contribution to the development of Pre-Primary Education (PPE) Operational Framework, PPE teaching learning package development and GO-NGO collaboration guideline and implementation plan for PPE.

With all these efforts from both government and non-government actors, there is greater openness and receptivity to change on the part of government and non-government actors. However, these need to go further to meet the challenges of multi-sectoral collaboration within the government agencies and between government and non-government sectors in addressing early childhood development issues.

National ECD Conference 2019 Theme and Sub-Themes

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) has continued its legacy by planning to organize a National ECD Conference in 2019 on early childhood development issues in the perspective of sustainable development goal and nurturing care framework.

The subthemes of this conference have been chosen from the nurturing care framework which includes the five crucial sectors crucial for early childhood development.

1. Good Health
2. Adequate Nutrition
3. Responsive Care
4. Security and Safety
5. Opportunity for Early Learning

The Conference is expected to have a high profile inaugural session where key policy and strategy concerns related to the theme will be discussed with the participation of personalities with a role in policy development. Other concurrent sessions will be held with presentation of interesting programs, research results and implications for action.

All interested about Early Childhood Development in Bangladesh are requested to mark the dates on their calendar. For further information and to offer any suggestion, please contact Mr. Mehedi Hasan (email: bangladeshecdnetwork@gmail.com Mobile: 01738259267, 01826401812).



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