

TOOL 1.3. WORKSHEET

DEFINING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN YOUR COUNTRY

Use the worksheet to define the subsector in your country context.

This worksheet may be useful as a focus for a Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting or as a discussion guide with other bodies¹, leading to a summary of the way or ways that pre-primary or early childhood education is defined in your country. It will also anchor the definition of subsector vision and priorities, and ultimately inform how to frame and define early childhood education (ECE)/ pre-primary education (PPE) in your Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and Education Sector Plan (ESP). Having consensus on the definition will also help determine how ECE should be implemented and captured in results frameworks for monitoring over time.

Subsector Name

QUESTION 1: Is there one widely used name for the subsector in your country?

Y N

If Y: Proceed to Question 2.

If N: If there is no name for the PPE/ECE subsector, you may wish to make one responsibility of the ECE TWG to discuss this issue, brainstorm and propose different names. A consultative process should be followed across levels of the education system (national to school level) and across partners and relevant sectors to arrive at a consensus.

If there are different names, please see Question 3.

QUESTION 2: If Y, what is that name?

Note: This is the name for the entire subsector, not for specific services that may be provided within the subsector. For example, some countries call the entire subsector “Kindergarten,” while others call it “ECE” with services including those called “Child Care,” “Preschool,” and “Kindergarten.”

- Pre-Primary Education (PPE)
- Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- Preschool Education
- Kindergarten
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECDE)
- Other _____

¹ It is ideal to include individuals representing work with gender and social inclusion in the completion of this worksheet.

QUESTION 3: If different names for the subsector are used by different groups, which names are used by which groups (such as government ministries, private program providers, etc.)?

Subsector Name	Group(s) Using this Name
Pre-primary education	
Early childhood education	
Preschool education	
Kindergarten	
Early childhood care and education	
Early childhood care development and education	
Other: (specify)	

If your country has several different definitions of the subsector, perhaps:

- Make one responsibility of the ECE TWG to discuss varying definitions and attempt consensus. The definition(s) could be validated through a consultative process across levels of the education system (national to school level), across partner types (development partners, civil society, academia), and across sectors that coordinate with the education sector and ECE subsector.
- Make recommendations in your ESA and in the corresponding ESP and subsector plan to address inconsistent or conflicting definitions through government policy/legislation/directives.

Ministerial Responsibilities, as Defined for the Subsector

QUESTION 4: In your country, is one ministry primarily responsible for this subsector?
Y N

If Y, which ministry? _____

If N: Please go to Question 5.

QUESTION 5: If responsibility for the subsector is divided across ministries, which are those ministries and what is their specific responsibility with respect to PPE/ECE?

Ministry Name	Responsibility

Documentation of the Subsector's Definition

QUESTION 6: Where is the definition of PPE/ECE found?

- Government policy or legislation for the education sector
- Early childhood legislation or policy framework
- Government policy or legislation for the health sector
- Government policy or legislation for youth/workforce development
- Other _____

If the definition is not found in any document, you may wish to consider including a recommendation in your ESA and ESP to address this (for example, reviewing existing relevant policies and legislation, and put in motion a process for including a definition in them).

QUESTION 7: What is the name of the policy/legislation where the definition is found? Please also include the wording/text of this definition:

Name of the policy/legislation	Wording/text

Ages and Populations Served, as Defined for the Subsector

QUESTION 8: Is there a generally agreed-upon age range for this subsector? Y N

If yes, what is the range? Age _____ to age _____

QUESTION 9: If different groups (such as government ministries, private program providers, etc.)² use different age ranges to define the subsector, what are those age ranges? (list)

Group	Age range

² See the table in "Subsector Services and Service Providers" for possible groups (see Question 16).

If there are varying age ranges, you may wish to make one responsibility of the ECE TWG to discuss this issue, engage in a consultative process to arrive at a consensus around the age range. A consultative process should be followed across levels of the education system (national to school level) and across partners and relevant sectors to arrive at a consensus.

You may also wish to consider including a recommendation in your ESA and ESP to address this (for example, reviewing existing relevant policies and legislation, and put in motion a process for clarifying the age range issue in them).

QUESTION 10: Who are the populations that are served? That is, does the PPE/ECE subsector serve all children within the age range, including special populations such as children with disabilities, children living in emergency settings such as refugee camps, immigrants, refugee children or internally displaced persons, ethnically and linguistically diverse populations, etc.?

Please specify these populations: _____

QUESTION 11: If special populations are not specifically included, which policies/legislation/directives or service providers and their documents, such as humanitarian actors and emergency response plans, address the ECE opportunities for these children?

Name of the document	Wording/text

If ECE opportunities for special populations are not addressed in policies and normative documents to date, you may wish to do one or more of the following:

- Conduct a mapping of which agencies provide ECE services to vulnerable populations, and which services are provided to whom and where, to identify how these complement national ECE services and policies;
- Identify crisis coordination entities (i.e., national coordination bodies or humanitarian coordination bodies part of the cluster system) with which the national ministerial anchor for ECE should coordinate and communicate with (the national ministerial anchor for ECE may identify the feasibility to join such crisis coordination entities, or with whom to coordinate and communicate ECE needs where a sector lead is already part of such entities);
- Identify how national ECE indicators and questions may be integrated into crisis monitoring systems and protocol, reported, and provided to the ministerial anchor for ECE;
- Identify if and how – through a consultative process - the national policies and plans may be revised to be more inclusive of special populations' right to receive ECE services. For example, Colombia's National ECD Law (*De Cero a Siempre*) offers all children the right to holistic ECD services independent of origin, and these services include ECE.

QUESTION 12: In your country, is there currently an entity (ministry, department, office) responsible for monitoring and reporting on implementation of ECE in terms of its parameters (for example, do the target age groups for different ECE services stipulated in the policy receive the appropriate service, such as home-based stimulation and child care services for children aged 0-3 and school readiness programs for children aged 4-5)? Y N

If yes, in which entity or entities does this occur? _____

If yes, are monitoring mechanisms inclusive of and report disaggregated data on special groups (i.e. ethnically and linguistically diverse groups, children in emergency settings such as refugee camps, immigrants, children with disabilities, etc.)? Y N

If No, consider how available monitoring mechanisms may be strengthened to monitor policy implementation.

For example, if different service provision models are provided by government and non-government actors, is there a need to include all service delivery models in the government's monitoring system, and disaggregate access and enrollment data by age, model, institution type, and other vulnerability characteristics (i.e. minority groups, disability status, etc.)?

Subsector's Programmatic Emphasis

QUESTION 13: In your country, what is emphasized in the subsector's programs? What is the main emphasis? (Please check all the emphases and circle the main emphasis.)

- Academic school readiness (mainly literacy and math skills)
- Comprehensive school readiness (holistic, all areas of play, social, physical, and cognitive development, and learning)
- Nutrition, health, and safety outside of the home
- Support for families in stimulating their children's early learning through play and activities at home
- Provision of childcare, without elements of education
- Information on pre-primary education
- Other (please specify): _____

QUESTION 14: Is this emphasis formally defined (for example, in an Education Policy Framework?) Y N

If N: Different stakeholders providing ECE may have a different emphasis. It may be useful to engage in a process to determine the collective vision and programmatic emphasis of ECE (with various sub-emphases as relevant).

This may support with identifying a national, consensus-driven programmatic emphasis for ECE based on priorities and service delivery models of all the ECE providers in your context. See the section "[Using this Worksheet to Identify Possible Next Steps](#)" for further ideas.

Subsector's Linkages with ECD and Education

Question 17: Does your country's PPE/ECE definition make clear that the subsector has unique, important linkages with both Early Childhood Development (ECD) and with the Education sector? Y N

If Y, where is there an explanation or clarification of these linkages? _____

If N: If the PPE/ECE definition does not explain how the subsector is connected with broader multisectoral ECD (Early Childhood Development) efforts, as well as with the Education sector, perhaps:

- Propose in your subsector plan strategies to emphasize these connections in the continuum of development (such as graphic representations);
- Convene stakeholders from ECD and Education to reflect on the linkages with PPE/ECE and the benefits of such linkages for children's holistic development and learning. Such a convening might include high- and technical level stakeholders from multisectoral ECD groups and/or coordinating bodies and the Education Sector. The convening may help showcase how PPE/ECE fits within multisectoral and education sector efforts and priorities yet also requires an ECE-specific technical working group (TWG) part of the broader ECD group with a distinct mandate and with the goal to expand quality, accessible, and equitable PPE/ECE.

If Y, what are the mechanisms to support communication and collaboration across these areas?

If there are no mechanisms to support communication and collaboration across the Education sector and other sectors, you may wish to:

- Propose in your subsector plan strategies to facilitate such communication and collaboration (for example, establishing directives across education levels on what is required for ensuring collaboration and communication). These could include:
- Identifying coordinating bodies across sectors, including the humanitarian sector, where ECE stakeholders should coordinate.
- Identify if and how ECE coordination responsibilities may be added to existing ECE staff job descriptions, such as an ECE focal point from government or partner agencies to promote coordination and communication,
- Identifying the frequency of communication that ECE staff should have with sector leads that are part of inter-sectoral or sector-specific coordination entities (in cases where an ECE focal point may not be appropriate to ensure that ECE is understood, reflected and acted upon in these groups).

Crisis settings

Question 18: If your country is a crisis/emergency setting, how is PPE/ECE defined or represented in national and regional response plans?

Answer: _____

Overall Understanding and Clarity around PPE/ECE Subsector

Question 19: Are the scope and characteristics of the PPE/ECE subsector well understood by all relevant stakeholders across all system levels (ex. government officials, teachers, families, communities, all types of service providers, academia, etc.)? Y N

If there seem to be groups that currently lack understanding of the subsector's scope and characteristics, perhaps:

- Consider including in your plan targeted communication and advocacy strategies about the definition of ECE, services included, and importance of the subsector as defined, using state-of-the-art international and national evidence.
- Also include strategies to expand understanding of how the ECE subsector coordinates within the education sector, across sectors, and across governance levels (national – community level).

Question 20: Are there discrepancies between the definition of the subsector (including services) and subsector implementation? Y N

If there are discrepancies between the definition of the subsector (including services) and subsector implementation, perhaps use the information gathered from this worksheet to shape aspects of your situation analysis and plan (for example, to ensure that the full age range as defined in government policy will be covered in civil society, or that special populations currently overlooked are included).

Using This Worksheet to Identify Possible Next Steps

Using this worksheet for reflection may lead to ideas for next steps in clarifying your subsector's definition, scope of services, and implementation as defined. These will vary, of course, depending on the results of your reflection. In addition to recommendations based on using the worksheet, for example, you may reflect on the broad contextual considerations and suggestions below:

If your country has several different definitions of the subsector, perhaps:

- Make one responsibility of the ECE TWG to discuss varying definitions and attempt consensus. The definition(s) could be validated through a consultative process across levels of the education system (national to school level), across partner types (development partners, civil society, academia), and across sectors that coordinate with the education sector and ECE subsector.
- Make recommendations in your ESA and in the corresponding ESP and subsector plan to address inconsistent or conflicting definitions through government policy/legislation/directives.

If there are discrepancies between the definition of the subsector (including services) and subsector implementation, perhaps:

- Use this information to shape aspects of your situation analysis and plan's strategies and activities:
- For example, to ensure that the full age range as defined in government policy will be covered by both government and civil society providers, or that special populations currently overlooked are included in reformed national policy and normative documents.
- Additionally, use this to identify if monitoring and accountability mechanisms need to be strengthened to report disaggregated data per service type, age receiving the service, service provider, and data on vulnerability characteristics, such as ethnic or linguistically diverse groups, immigrants, refugees, and children with disabilities.

If there seem to be groups that currently lack understanding of the subsector's scope and characteristics, perhaps:

- Consider including in your plan targeted communication and advocacy strategies about the definition of ECE, services included, and importance of the subsector as defined, using state-of-the-art international and national evidence.
- Also include strategies to expand understanding of how the ECE subsector coordinates within the education sector, across sectors (e.g. protection, health) and actors (i.e. humanitarian or disaster coordination bodies), across governance levels (national - community level),

If the PPE/ECE definition does not explain how the subsector is connected with broader multisectoral ECD (Early Childhood Development) efforts, as well as with the Education sector, perhaps:

- Propose in your subsector plan strategies to emphasize these connections in the continuum of development (such as graphic representations)
- Convene stakeholders from ECD and Education to reflect on the linkages with PPE/ECE and the benefits of such linkages for children's holistic development and learning. Such a convening might include high- and technical level stakeholders from multisectoral ECD groups and/or coordinating bodies and the Education Sector. The convening may help showcase how PPE/ECE fits within multisectoral and education sector efforts and priorities yet also requires an ECE-specific technical working group (TWG) part of the broader ECD group with a distinct mandate and with the goal to expand quality, accessible, and equitable PPE/ECE.