

Preschool education in Georgia – Policy and expectations

Starting Early Means Starting Well II

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Preamble

- Preschool care never was obligatory in Georgia
- Preschool sector was centralized before 2006
- In 2006 sector decentralized and all the functions were given to local governments
- Education was never mentioned in legal and official documents as an important service of preschool sector
- From 2012 In the Ministry of Education and Science Preschool Education Development Division was established

It should be underlined that international donor and some local nongovernmental organizations had interventions in preschool sector, but that experience was not institutionalized by the government

Challenges

- **Availability of infrastructure and buildings** - After the decentralization many buildings were privatized, especially in big cities, so the sector lacks appropriate and available infrastructure
- **Accessibility** - Due to the lack of available infrastructure many children in big cities as well as villages are not involved in preschool institutions; in some institutions the classes are overloaded as well
- **Quality of Education** - After the Soviet Union the united reform in preschool sector has not been even thought. This means that country had no education concept for pre-school, there was no standard and curriculum, caregivers lack modern knowledge in methodologies, administrations lack modern approach in management and so on.
- **Lack of Human Resources** – teachers, caregivers; also low salary scales do not motivate new people to come in the sector

Ongoing changes

- Draft Law on Early and Preschool Care and Education has been prepared and now under discussion in Parliament.
- School Readiness State Educational Standards approved in 2015 and in almost 800 classes will be used this year. Additionally Teachers' guideline and activities book elaborated , printed, distributed, as well as TOT conducted to train teachers further
- Draft Strategy and Action Plan on Early and Preschool Care and Education has been elaborated
- Lists of educational resources, environmental requirements have been elaborated

The Draft Law:

- Defines actors of early and preschool care and education sector; also defines preschool education as part of the sector
- Defines functions between actors. Local government is remaining the major player and manager in the sector, but standards and monitoring are defined as the responsibility of central government
- Declares inclusive approach to early and preschool education, including special educational needs children, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups. This means that every by-law and action should take inclusive approach to all children

The Draft Law:

- Defines sizes of the classes according to age groups
- Defines the ratio: teacher and caregiver/group of children
- Creates new profession: preschool teacher
- Defines the main principles of authorization of institutions
- Defines necessity of unified data for all municipalities

Challenge: proper implementation of the Law and standards by all actors

To do:

- Adopt law, strategy and action plan
- Adopt monitoring framework
- Train existing preschool teachers and administration
- Support Pre and in-service teacher trainings
- Prepare and adopt early and preschool education state standards (except school readiness)
- Monitor the implementation of school readiness standards

Challenge: insufficient infrastructure not available to all children

Partners:

- UNICEF
- Open Society Georgia Foundation
- World Vision
- Parliament of Georgia
- Non-governmental organizations
- Universities

Thank you!

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