

Is Early Childhood Care and Education Promoting Equity?

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Terminologies –ECD/ ECCE/ Early Learning

‘The term ‘early childhood care and education’ (ECCE) refers to a range of processes and mechanisms that sustain, support and aid the holistic development of children, from birth to age 8 years.’

(UNESCO et al., 2012)

Global Evidence

- Despite progress in ECCE enrolment figures, 200 million children under age five will fail to reach their developmental potential (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007)
- There is ample worldwide evidence that the most disadvantaged children - whether because of poverty, ethnicity, gender, rural isolation, or disability – experience the most dramatic development gains from ECCE.

Global Facts

- Up to 22,000 children die every day due to poverty and preventable disease (every 4 seconds 1 child dies)
- 162 million children under 5 were moderately or severely stunted – that is, short for their age in 2012, a robust indicator of long-term malnutrition.
- Based on current trends, by 2015, one in four children under the age 5 will suffer from stunting
- 57% of young children in developing countries have NO ACCESS to preschool – 83% in Sub-Saharan Africa and 78% in the Arab region
- Children living in the poorest households are up to 10 times less likely to attend early childhood education programmes than the richest

Global Burden of Malnutrition

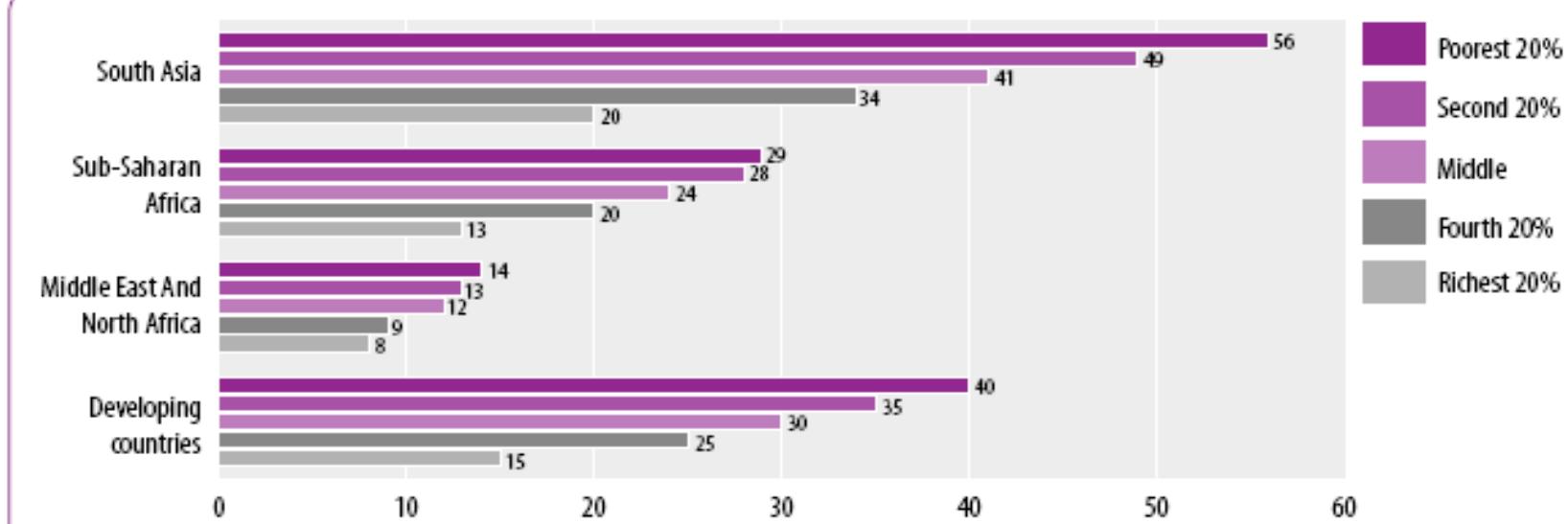
- The proportion of children who were malnourished reduced from 40% in 1990 to 25% in 2012 (UNICEF et al., 2013)
- This means the annual rate of reduction needs to increase from 2% to 3.6% if the global target adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2012, to reduce the number of stunted children to 100 million (equivalent to a stunting rate of 15%), is to be achieved by 2025.

Percentage of children younger than 5 years who are stunted, by region, 2009



Source: WHO data, cited in UNICEF, 2009.

Percentage of children 0-59 months old who are underweight, by household wealth quintile, 2003-2009

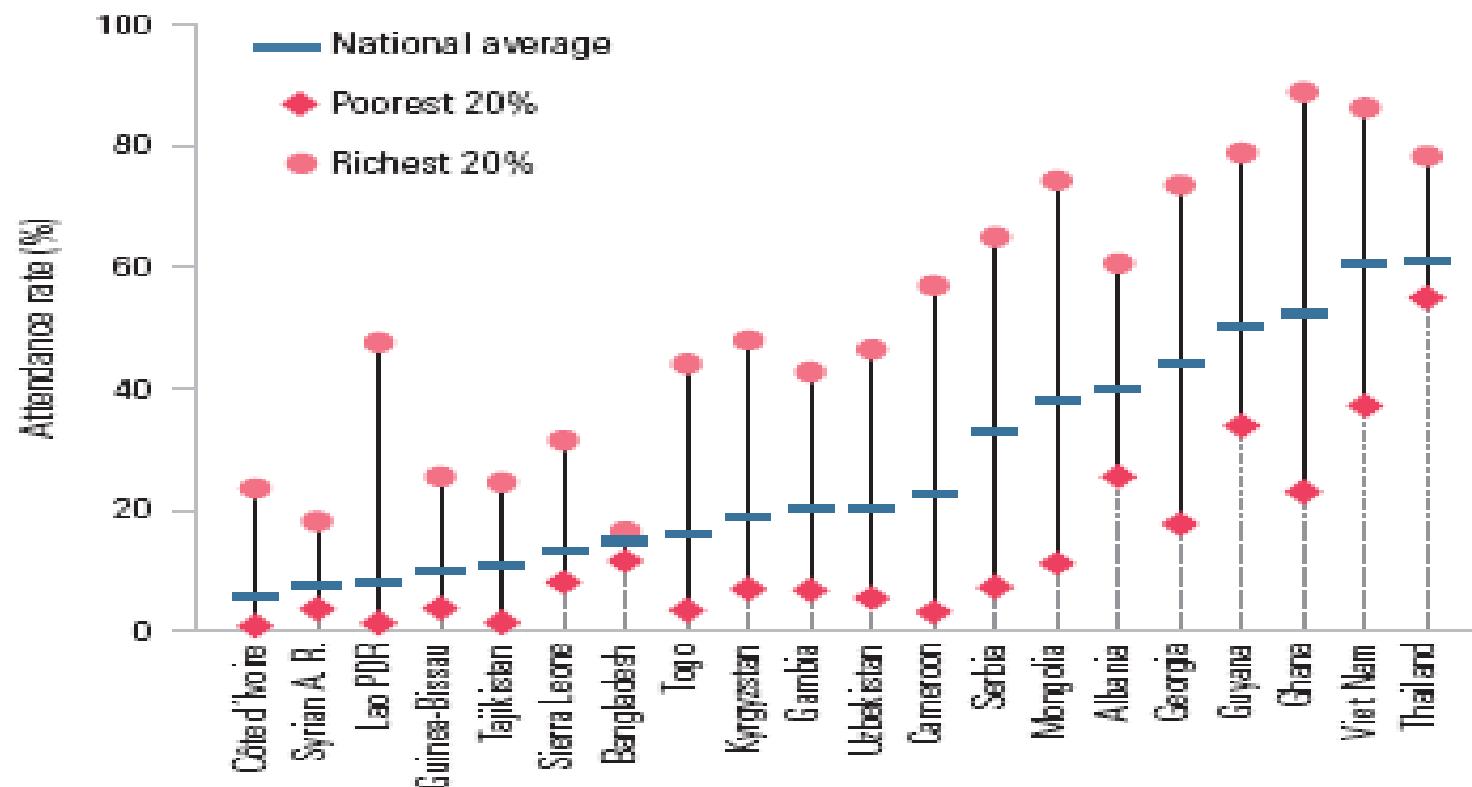


Source: MICS, DHS and other national surveys, 2003–2009

Inequities In Access to Early Childhood Programmes

Children in rich households are more likely to attend early learning programmes

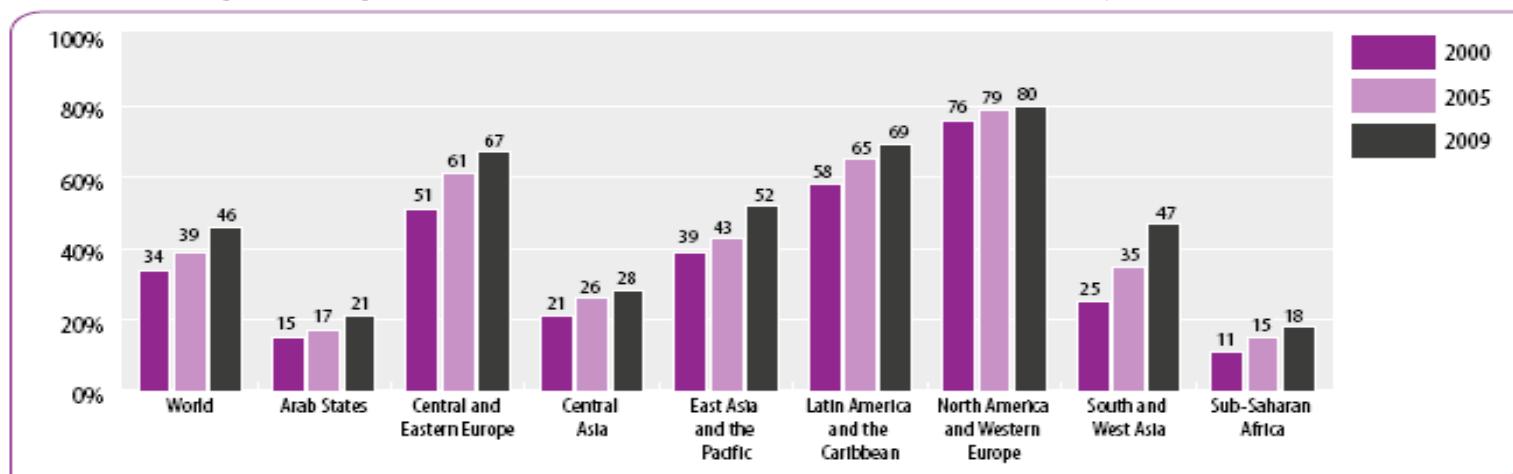
Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds attending early learning programmes, by wealth, selected countries, 2005–2007



Note: Data are for the most recent year available during the period specified.
Source: 2011 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* (UNESCO, 2011).

Regional Variation Persists

Regional averages of gross enrollment ratios in pre-primary education 2000, 2005 and 2009



Source: Statistical Annex, UIS, 2011.

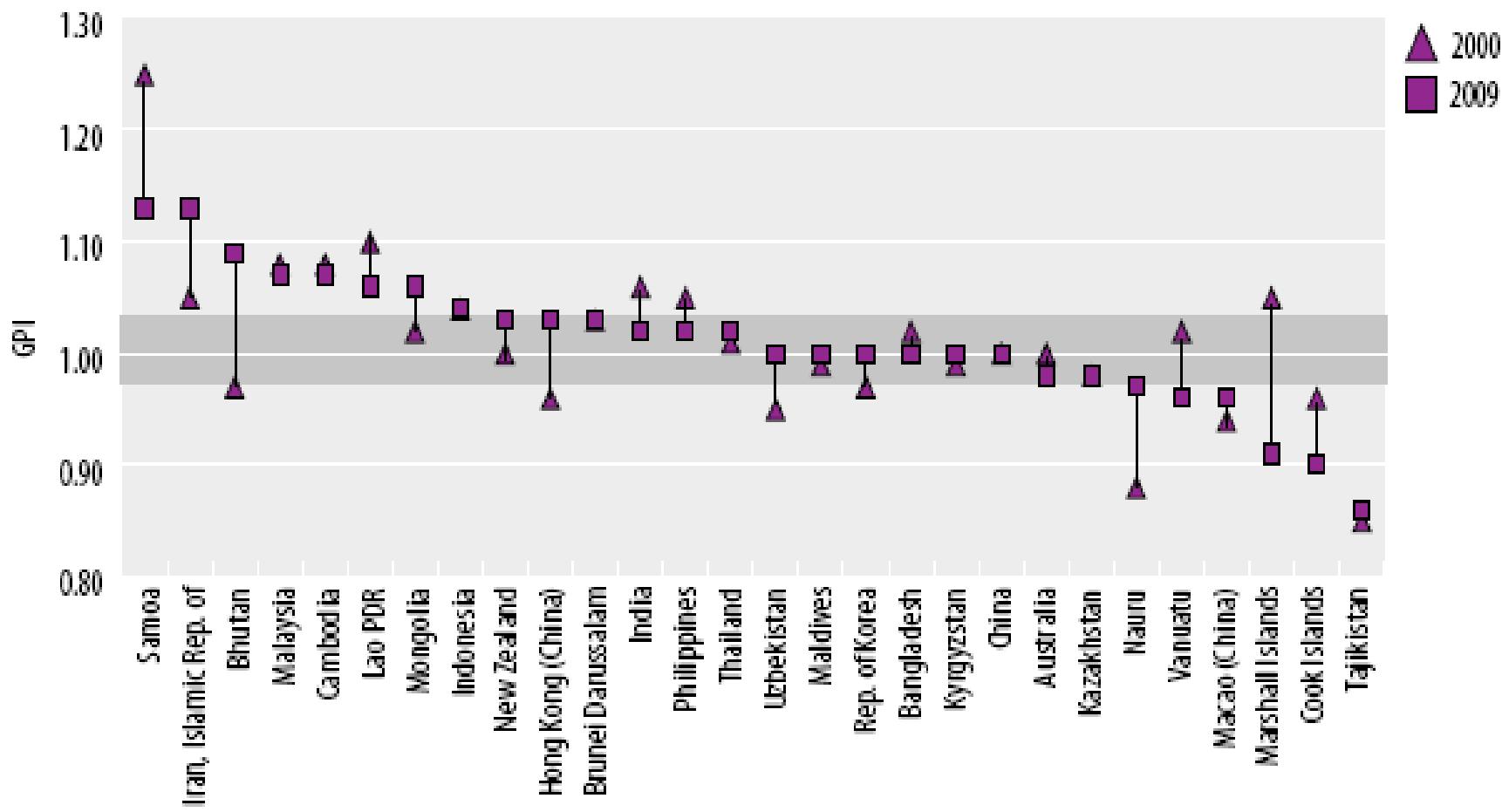
Gross enrollment ratios in pre-primary education: 1990, 2000 2009



Note: Ranked by data for 2009.

Source: Statistical Annex, UIS, 2011.

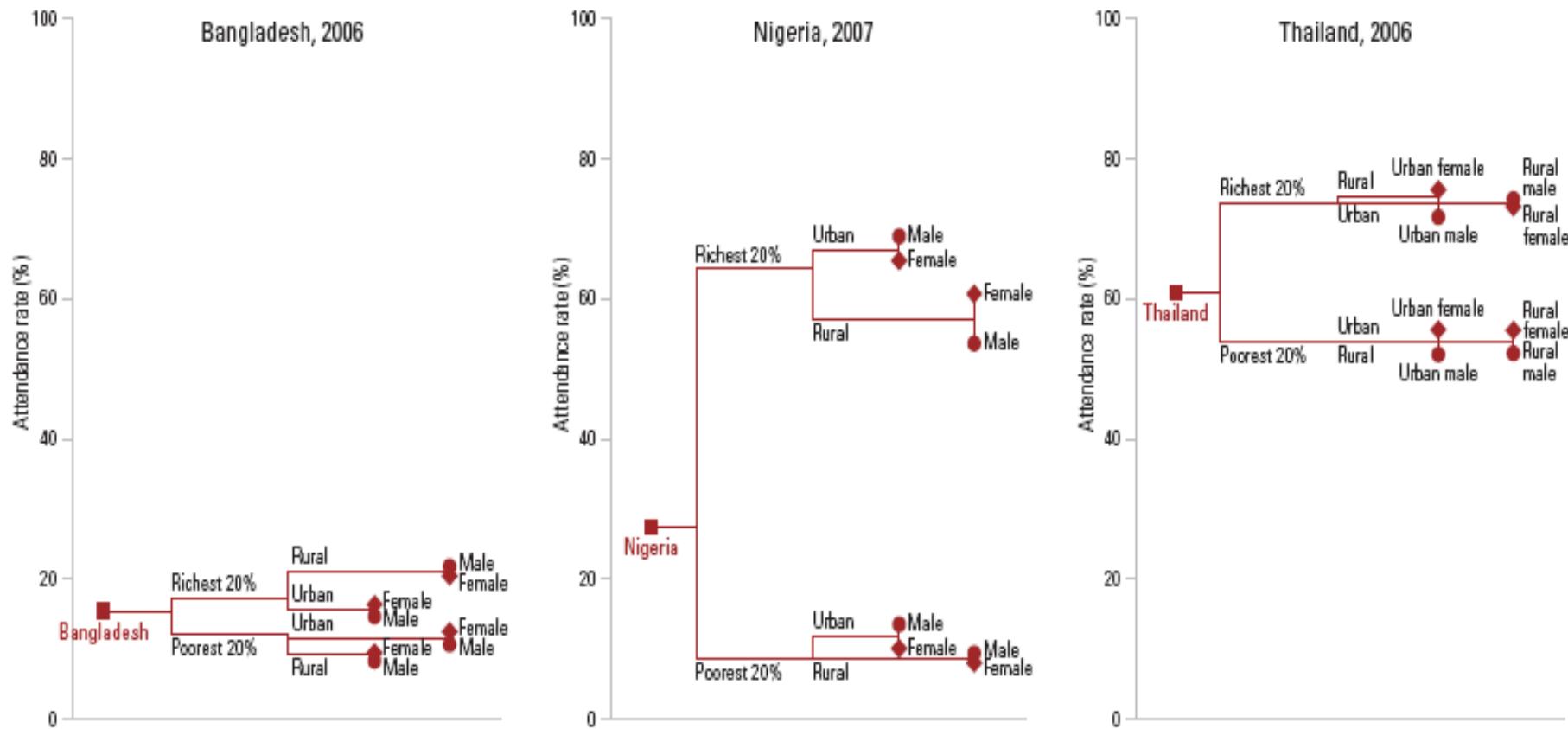
Gender Parity Index in Pre-Primary Education 2000 & 2009



Source: Statistical Annex, UIS, 2011.

Disparities Within Countries By Wealth & Location

Pre-school attendance rate of children aged 36-59 months, by wealth, location and gender



Notes: The official age for pre-primary education is 3-5 years in the three countries. In Nigeria, the poorest 40% are shown in the urban areas.

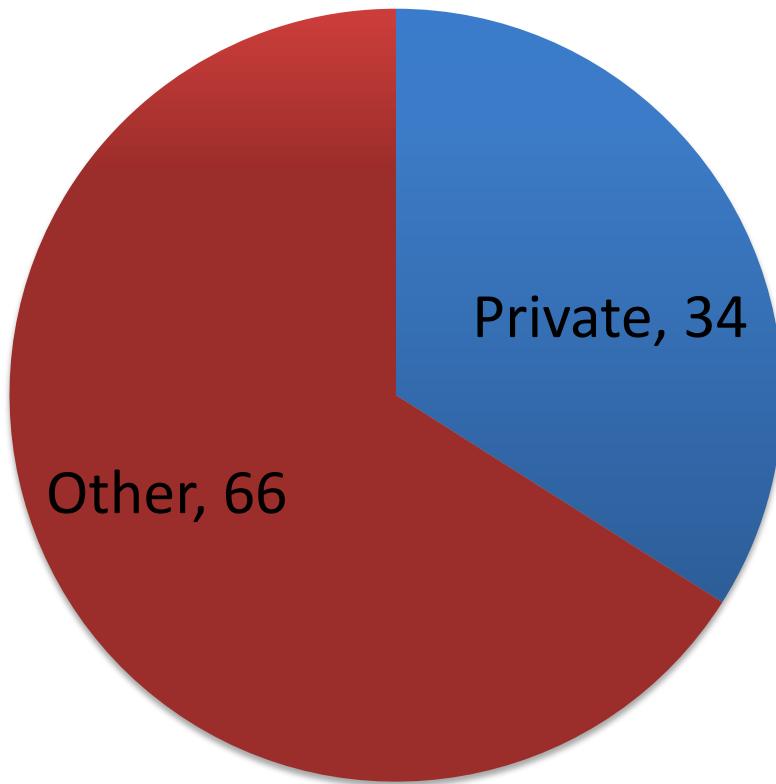
Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report team calculations based on MICS3 surveys.

Exclusion of Children with Disabilities

Countries	Attendance in Early Childhood Education %(2005-2011)					Father's Support for Learning 2005-2011
	Total	Male	Female	Poorest 20%	Richest 20%	
Afghanistan	1	1	1	0	4	62
Bangladesh	15	14	15	11	16	53
Ghana	68	65	72	42	97	30
Myanmar	23	23	23	8	46	44
Somalia	2	2	2	1	6	48
Syrian Arab Republic	8	8	7	4	18	62
Thailand	61	60	61	55	78	57

Source: The State of the World's Children 2013: Children with Disabilities, UNICEF

Increasing Presence of Private Sector

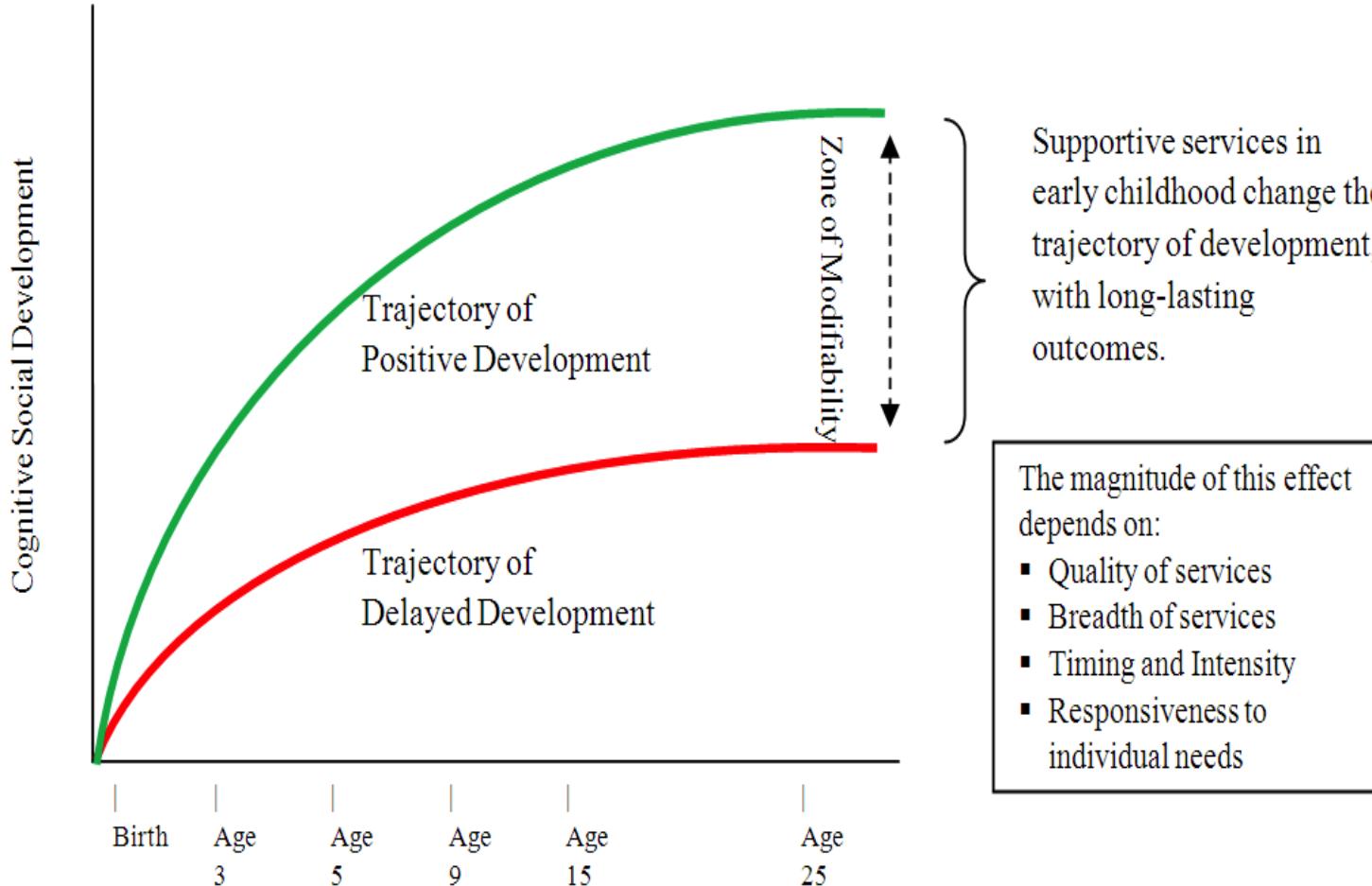


Source: Global Partnership for Education Results Learning Report 2013

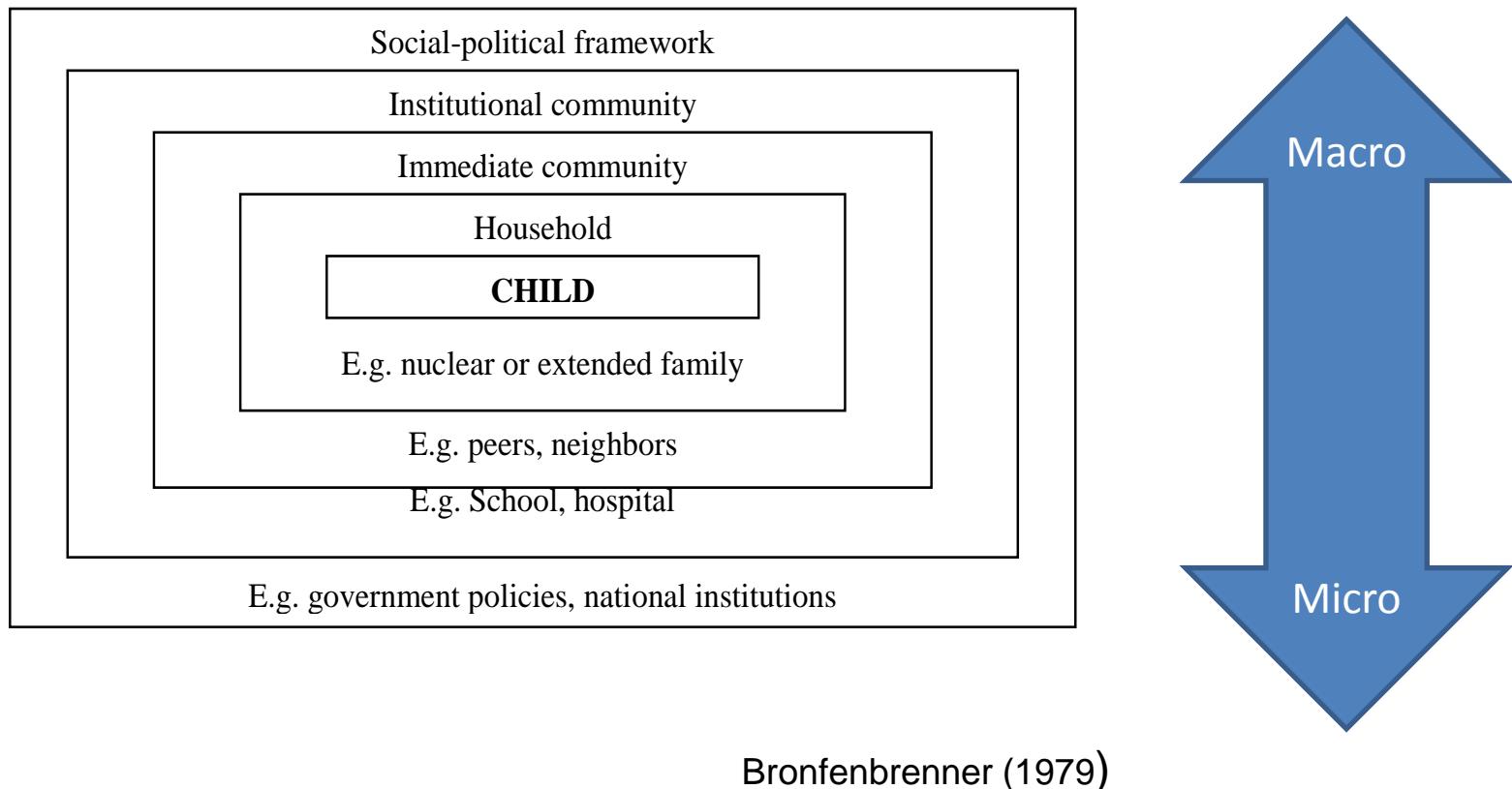
ECCE- Multiple Perspectives

- ECCE as a mechanism for promoting equality of access to the workforce for women and as such, a support for economic development;
- Economic return on Investment
- ECCE as an essential support to children's well-being and optimal development
- ECCE can contribute to breaking the poverty cycle
- ECCE as a mechanism for combating educational disadvantage or social exclusion

What ECCE Intervention is Most Effective for the Most Disadvantaged Children?



Ecological Framework- Equity & Inclusion



Universal Definition of Quality ?

- Balance international, national and local contexts and the inevitable tension between respect for diversity and a desire for coherence.
- Comparison across nations-uncontested “standards” and forced unity rather than plurality
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices cannot be generalised
- Perspective of minority stakeholders overlooked

Daunting Challenges for ECCE with equity

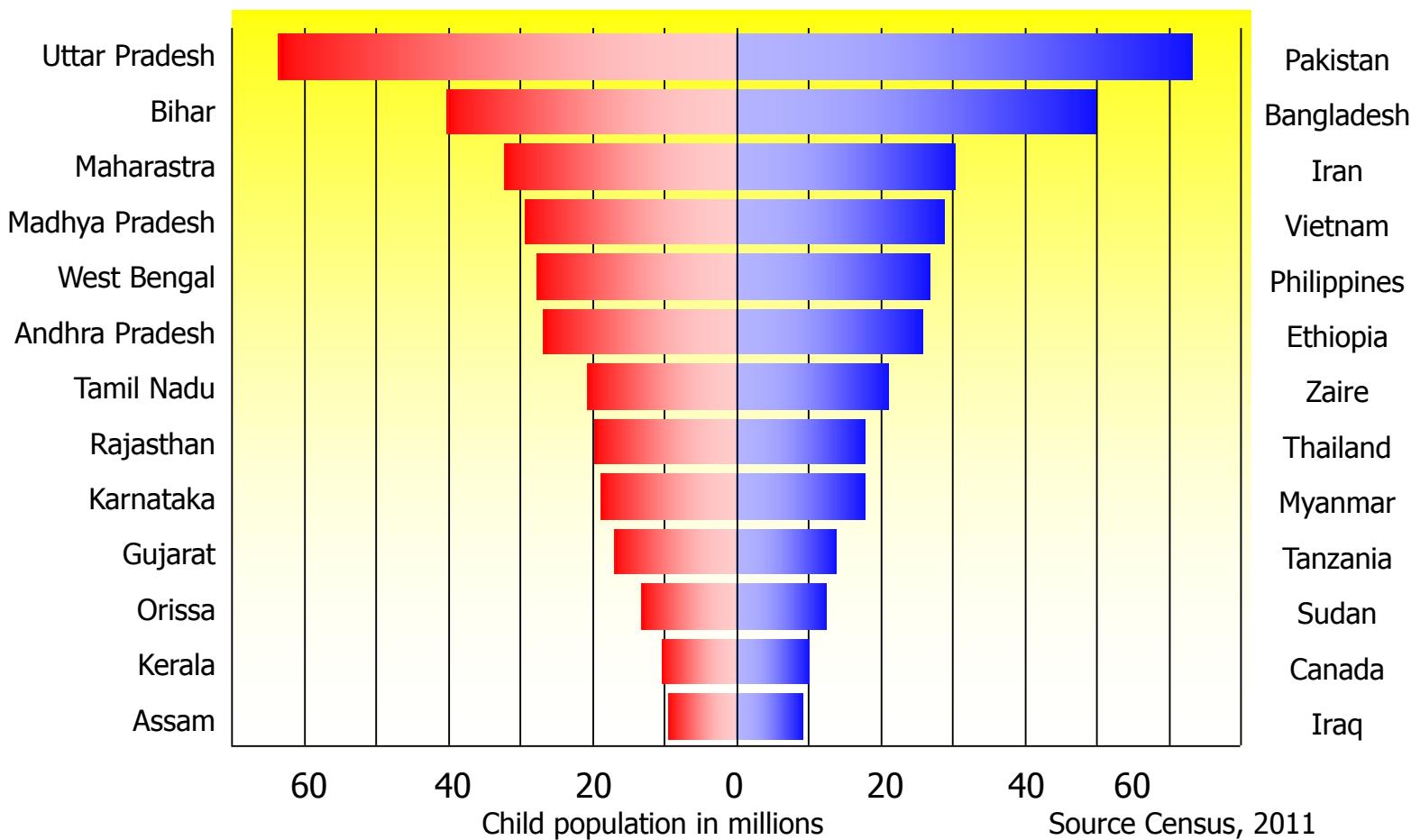
- Public funding for ECCE remains negligible
- Adequate training, certification and incentives for ECCE practitioners
- Attention to marginalized and disadvantaged groups (those in remote areas, minorities and indigenous communities) is limited.
- Coordination between sectors is weak (especially for services for children aged 0–3 years). Holistic ECCE must include the mother, a parent and/or the family.
- There is an urgent need for relevant data; frequently, available information is also scattered across ministries and agencies.

India : The scale of things...

Population: 1.21 billion

Children 0-6 yrs: 158.8 million (13.1%)
0-18 yrs: 380 million (37%)

Many states have child populations similar to large countries



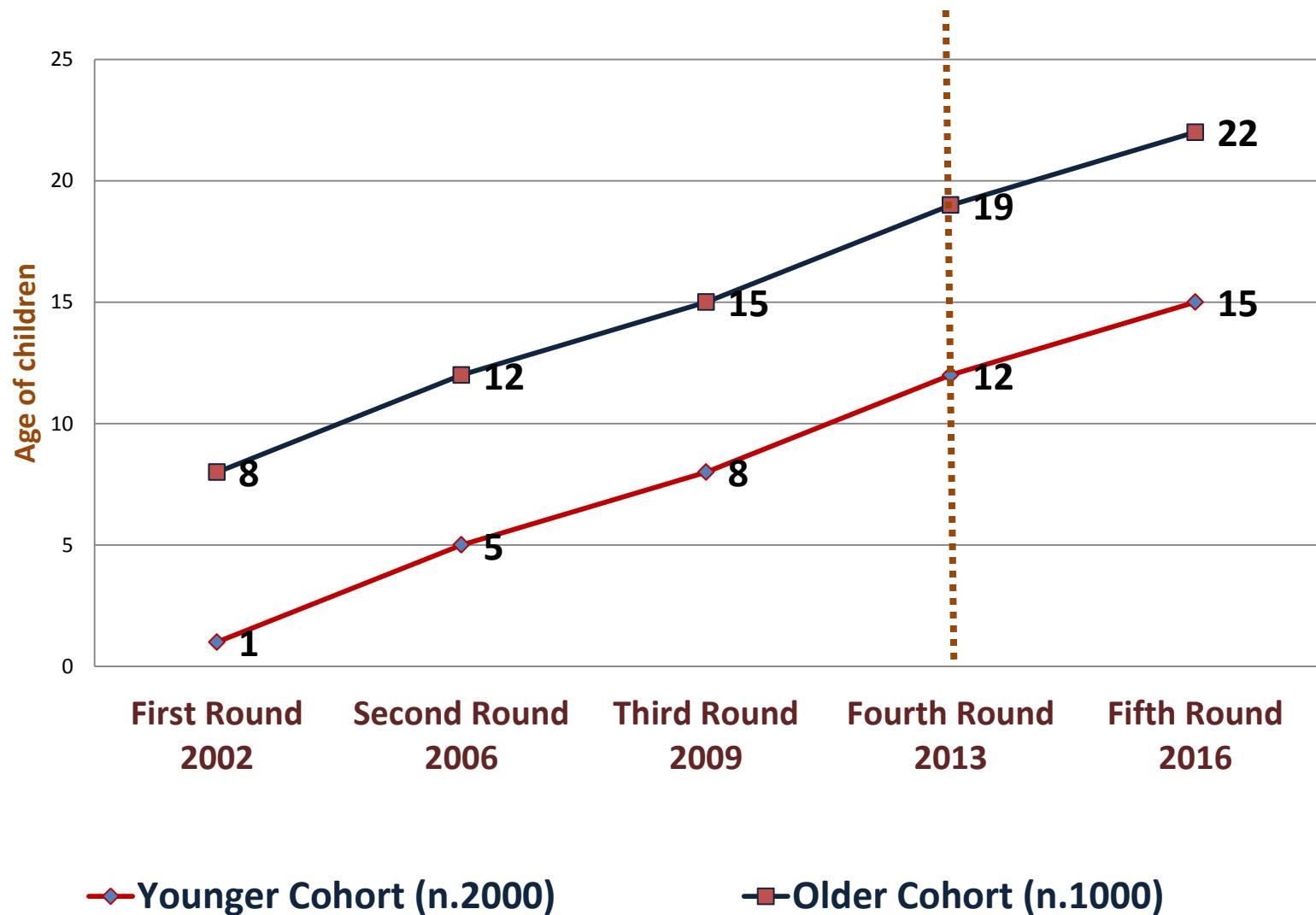
'Universalization with Quality' still a distant Goal

- ICDS largest provider of ECCE services with 1.18 million AWCs
- Of the 158.8 million children in 0-6 years category (Census 2011), about 75.7 million children i.e. **48 percent** are reported to be covered under the ICDS (MWCD, 2011)
- **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** :
 - 73,860 ECCE centers
 - 2,54,179 primary schools have pre-schools
- **Private sector**, both organised and unorganized, is catering to approximately 35-40 % of the users

Huge Variation In Services in ICDS and Private Sector



Young Lives- Panel Data



Younger Cohort (n.2000)

Older Cohort (n.1000)

Inter-Cohort Comparison – Persisting Inequities

Percentage of children who are underweight* and stunted at age 8

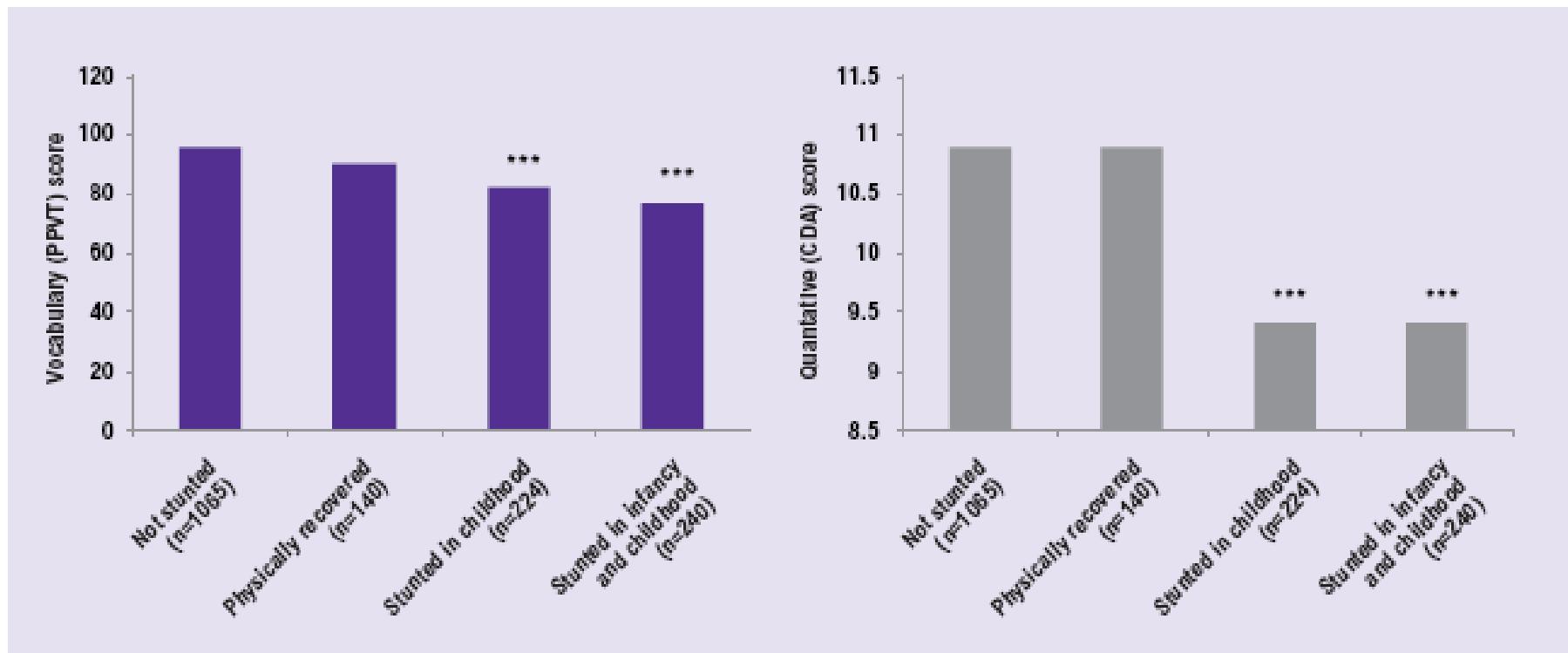
	Underweight		Stunted			OC R1(8 years)
	OC R1(8 years old)	YC R3(8 years old)	YC R1	YC R2	YC R3(8 years)	
Male	32.08	29.5	33.3	37.68	31.14	33.47
Female	19.88	24.61	27.05	33.52	27.11	32.59
Urban	23.73	21.63	20.95	23.41	16.47	21.19
Rural	26.59	29.21	33.45	39.93	33.83	36.81
Scheduled Castes	25.37	28.37	34.59	39.19	34.18	35.61
Scheduled Tribes	20.75	22.46	45.52	41.63	41.7	33.02
Backward Classes	29.14	30.38	28.82	38.03	29.07	35.38
Other Castes	22.01	21.39	19.44	23.81	17.78	25.36
Total per Round	25.9	27.23	30.39	35.73	29.28	33.03

- underweight refers to BMI more than 2SD below WHO reference norms for age

Source: Young Lives

Evidence for Going Beyond the First 1000 Days

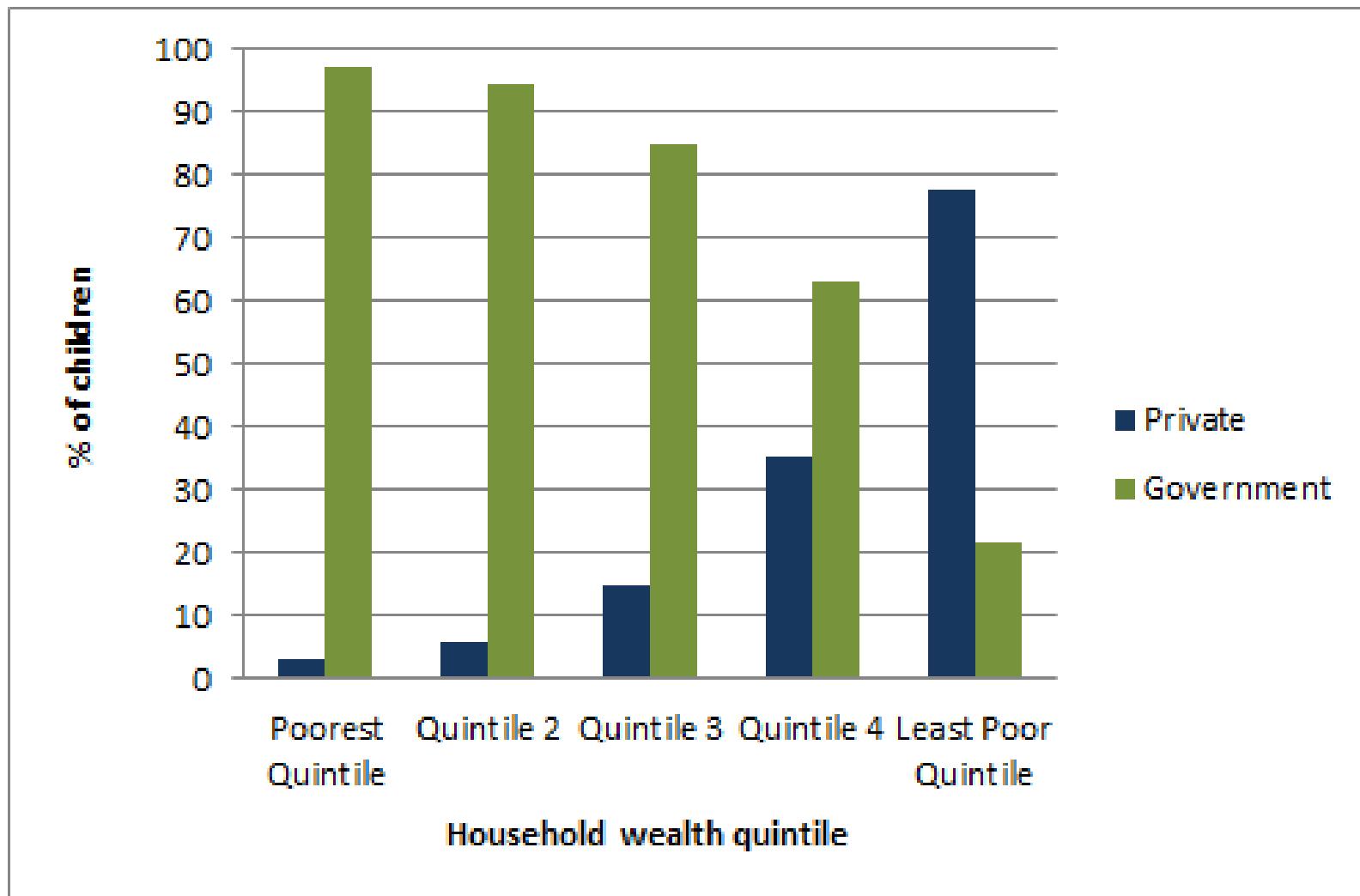
Children who are stunted at age 1 but physically recovered by age 5 have similar test results as children who were never stunted, Younger Cohort, Age 5 (2006)



Source: Data from Crookston et al. 2010

*** Is significantly different from the reference group (not stunted) at 99.9% level.

Percentage of children (age 4.5 and 5 years) enrolled in private and government pre-schools



Parental Perspectives

One parent explaining the role of the ICDS Centre shares:

'In our village the Anganwadi teachers are not good. We just send them (children), so that they get used to the routine of going to school'

Vishnu is a 7 year old boy who studied in the local Anganwadi before moving to a government primary school in the village. His parents are daily wage earners and the mother shares that she would prefer to send their son to a private boarding school and describe the quality of education in both the Anganwadi and village primary school as '*mediocre.. not much is taught there.. few things like singing they only feed (the children)and send them back.. that is why we want to shift him*'



Loan Burden Associated with Private Schooling

The mother of Supraja (OC, urban location) shares that her daughter has changed three private pre-school/ schools at age of eight. She shares :

“We have to raise money somehow and pay her school fees and later on try to clear the incurred loans. ... This is very burdensome. We will not have any savings as we spend everything on education. Strictly speaking, even people of our status cannot afford these schools. Now we have to send our child to even lower rung [private] schools ... the difference in the fees between [the] two types of schools and the quality of education offered is very different. There is a lot of disparity.”



On the Ground....

An Anganwadi teacher in a tribal village has been working for ICDS for past ten years and has studied upto Grade 6. Out of 56 children enrolled only 7 attend pre-school, while the rest only take rations. She shares '*In the harvesting season more number of children will come here. If their parents go to work in (the) fields, they will leave their children here. If the children want to sleep, we will make them sleep here... We will teach Telugu and English Alphabets and words and (to) count the beets (seeds).... We need more materials .. Previously they have given cloth toys but the children have torn them, so it is better to give toys made of wood.*'

Young Lives Qualitative Study



Aspirations

Supraja's mother echoes the aspirations of millions of poor parents:

- *“People are not worried about their economic background or financial position ... they are only bothered about their children’s education. They are prepared to give up anything for the sake of their children’s education. They want to give their children whatever they missed in their childhood and they want their children to attain that position which they failed to get.”*

Achieving Equity in ECCE

- Will
- Capacity

‘One- Size Fits All’ Cannot Work

- Children are subject to ‘multiple disadvantage’
- Multiple responses and multi-stakeholder interaction required to promote child development and to tackle the longstanding ‘upstream’ family and community challenges that contribute to disparities in early life outcomes
- Effective child care strategies may require a broader service orientation and include the family and the local community as an important element in program design and delivery
- Targetted Social Policies for vulnerable families and decentralised interventions and innovations



“We have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to all the world’s people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs”

Millennium Declaration, 2000

Genuine Partnerships- South-South

- Building an enabling policy environment with associated equity-based allocations and interventions are key to realising rights of every young child and in turn the future of nation-states
- It is imperative that all stakeholders collaborate to make ECCE part of the global post-2015 agenda.