

# Early Childhood in India

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28 states and 7 Union Territories

6 major religions with majority (81%) being Hindus

22 officially recognised languages, plus English



**India's population: 1.15 billion**

**Population 0-6 years: 158 million children  
(16 % of the total population)**

(The State of the World's Children 2007, UNICEF )

**One out of six children in the world lives in India**

**29% of total population is below national poverty line**

(World bank, 2007)

# Infant Mortality Rate is 57/1000

(Source : SRS 2007)

# Child Sex Ratio is 927 girls/1000 Boys

(Source : 2001 census)

# Only 30.3 million Children (3-6 years) attend pre-school education

(Source : NFHS-3 2005)



## The Indian Context: Multi-tracks

<u>Item</u>	<u>Government</u>	<u>Voluntary</u>	<u>Private</u>
Goal	Policy implementation	Social benefit	Profit
Nomenclature	Anganwadi	Balwadi	Nursery /preprimary
Name of Worker	Anganwadi worker	Balwadi teacher/worker	Teacher
Objective / Scope	Comprehensive, holistic development	Childcare/development/ education & community needs	Formal education & school preparation
Approach to teaching-learning	Activity based, non-formal	Varying-informal to formal	Formal, school-like

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Source: Swaminathan, M. 2005. NCERT Curriculum Review, ECCE Focus Group draft report.

# Integrated Child Development Services ICDS

- Since 1975
- World's largest integrated service delivery program
- Covering 62.9 million children (half of the eligible children)



# Advocacy Issues

- ❖ **Effective implementation of progressive policies and programs**
- ❖ **Allocation and optimum utilization of resources**
- ❖ **Linkages between pre-school and primary education**
- ❖ **Provision of and access to quality ECCE services**
- ❖ **Establishing regulatory mechanisms for EC programs and teacher/caregiver training programs**
- ❖ **Developing and documenting contextually-relevant program**
- ❖ **Knowledge-sharing and learning from good practices / 'success stories'**



**Thank you!**