

# Early Childhood Care & Education Policy – where are we?

## Country in focus: India



## An Introduction

The awareness of the criticality of early childhood for later development & its implications for the development of human resource of the country has increased a lot as reflected in the various policies, programmes and legislations in place.

Out of 158.7m children under 6 years (Census of India 2011), about 76.5m children (48%) are reported to be covered under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).

Of the total children under six, some 30 to 40 million do not have access to any ECCE services mostly belong to very poor and disadvantaged circumstances

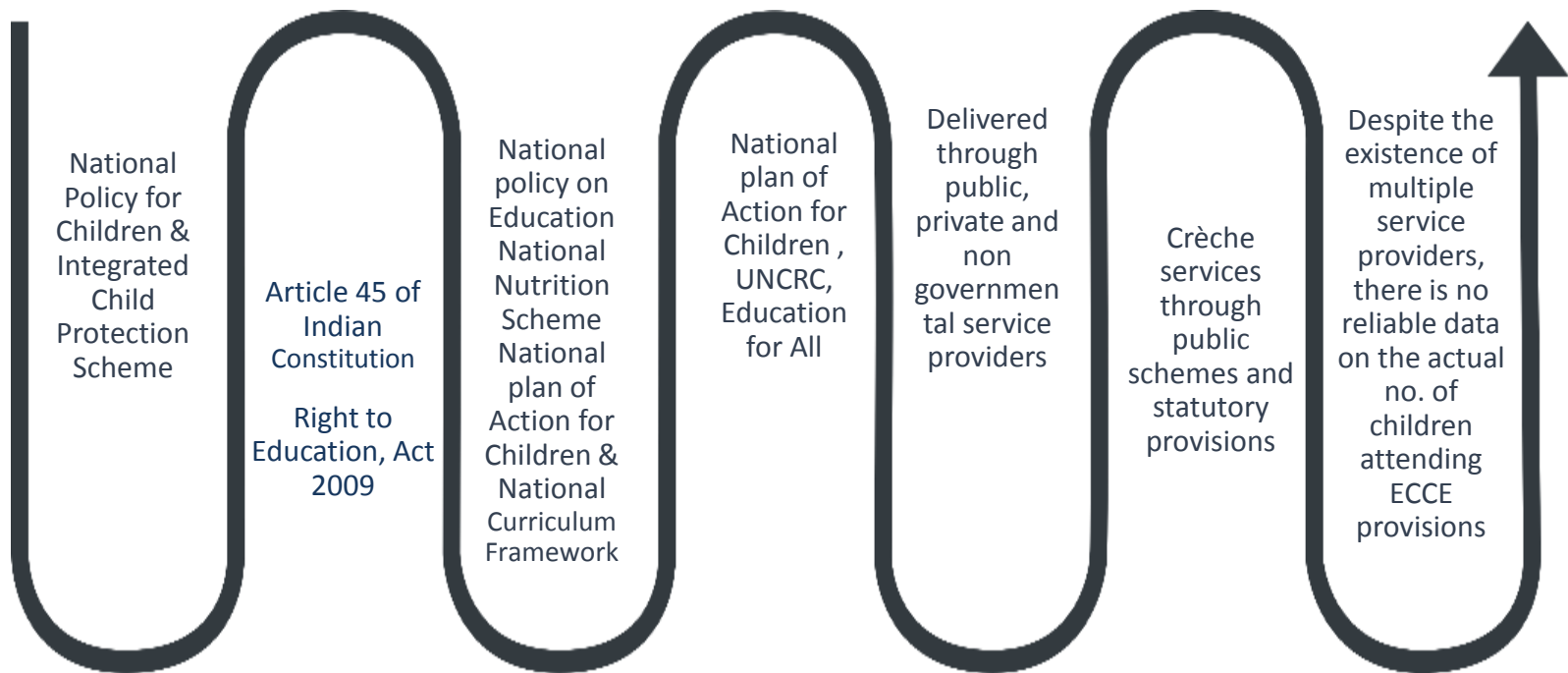
ECCE interventions for young children in low socio-economic groups compensate and prevent developmental delays

From the viewpoint of policy and advocacy, it is important that the children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are exposed to stimulating home environment as well as encouraging centre based ECCE.

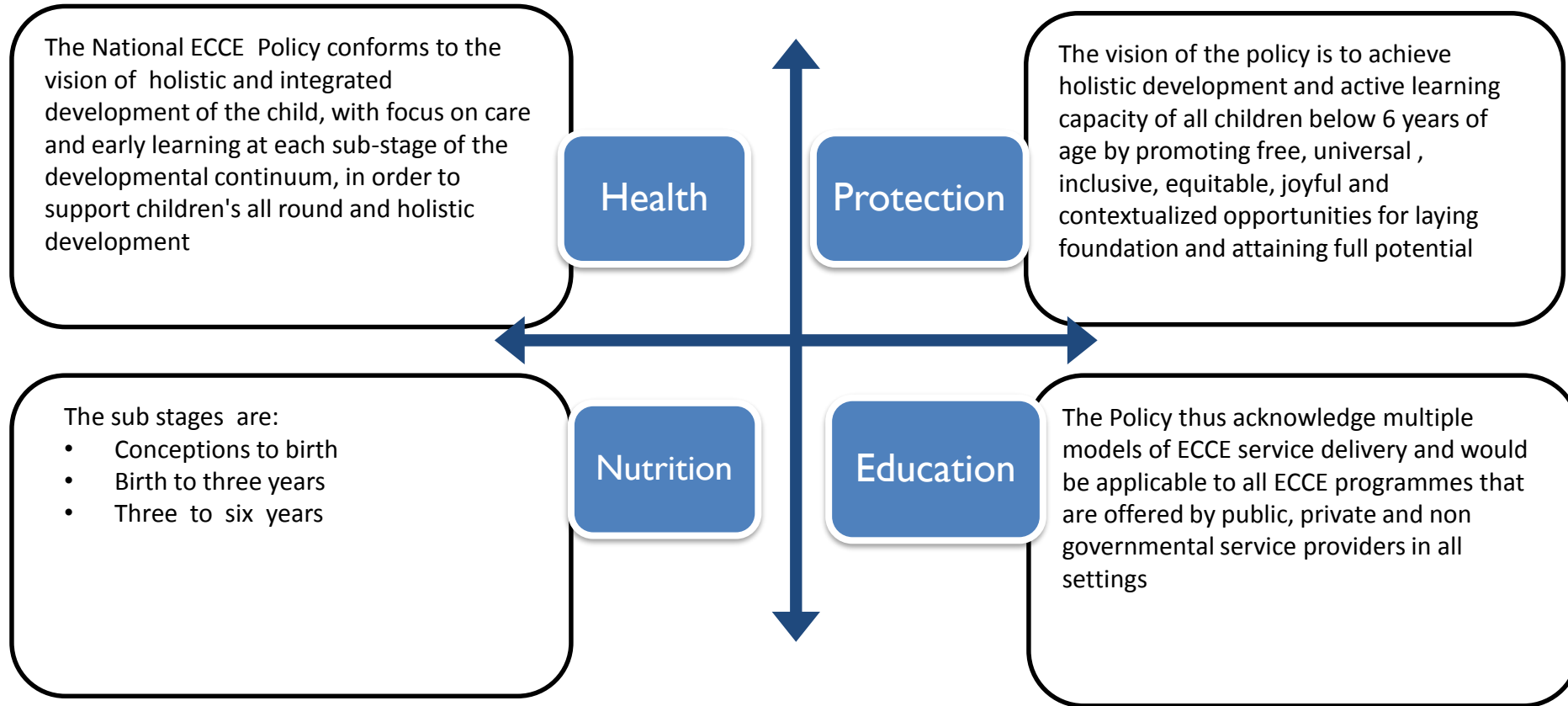
# Policy & Programme Context

The National ECCE policy reaffirms the commitment of the Government's integrated services for holistic development of all children, along the continuum, from the prenatal period up to 6 years of age.

The Policy lays down the way forward for a comprehensive approach towards ensuring a sound foundation for survival, growth & development of a child with focus on care and early learning for every child.



# The Policy



# Key Areas of the Policy

Improving quality  
(minimum specifications, quality standards, regulation, curriculum, play and learning material, programme assessment and child assessment)

Strengthening Capacity (institutions, personnel, families and communities)

Access with equity and inclusion in programmes and interventions across service providers

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements (ECCE Cell, National ECCE Council, Plans of Action) & Partnerships

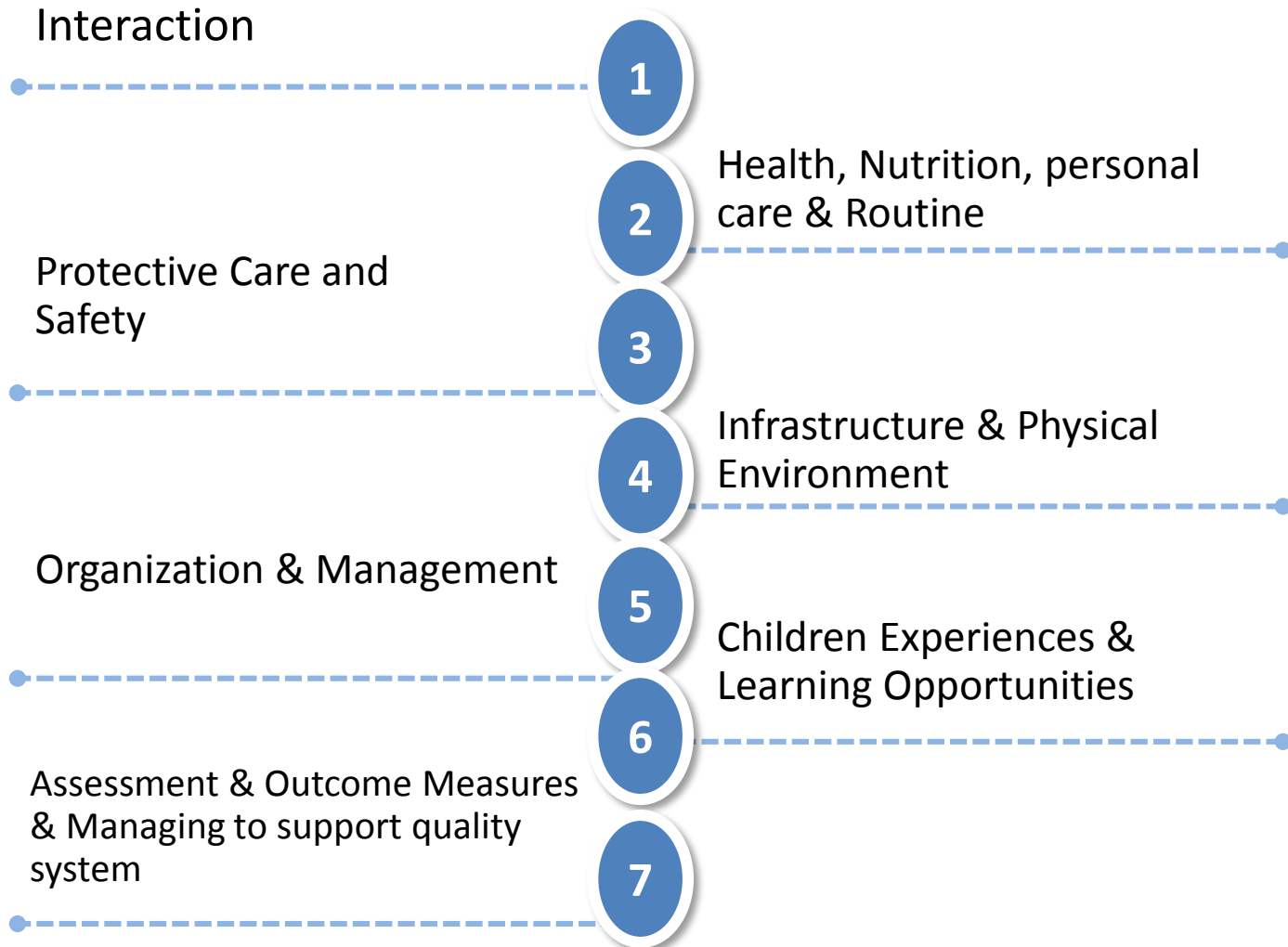
Advocacy and awareness generation  
Convergence Child Coordination among policies and programmes

Monitoring and Supervision (MIS, National ECCE Council, etc.)

Periodic Review  
Research & Documentation

Increased investment towards ECCE

# Quality Standards

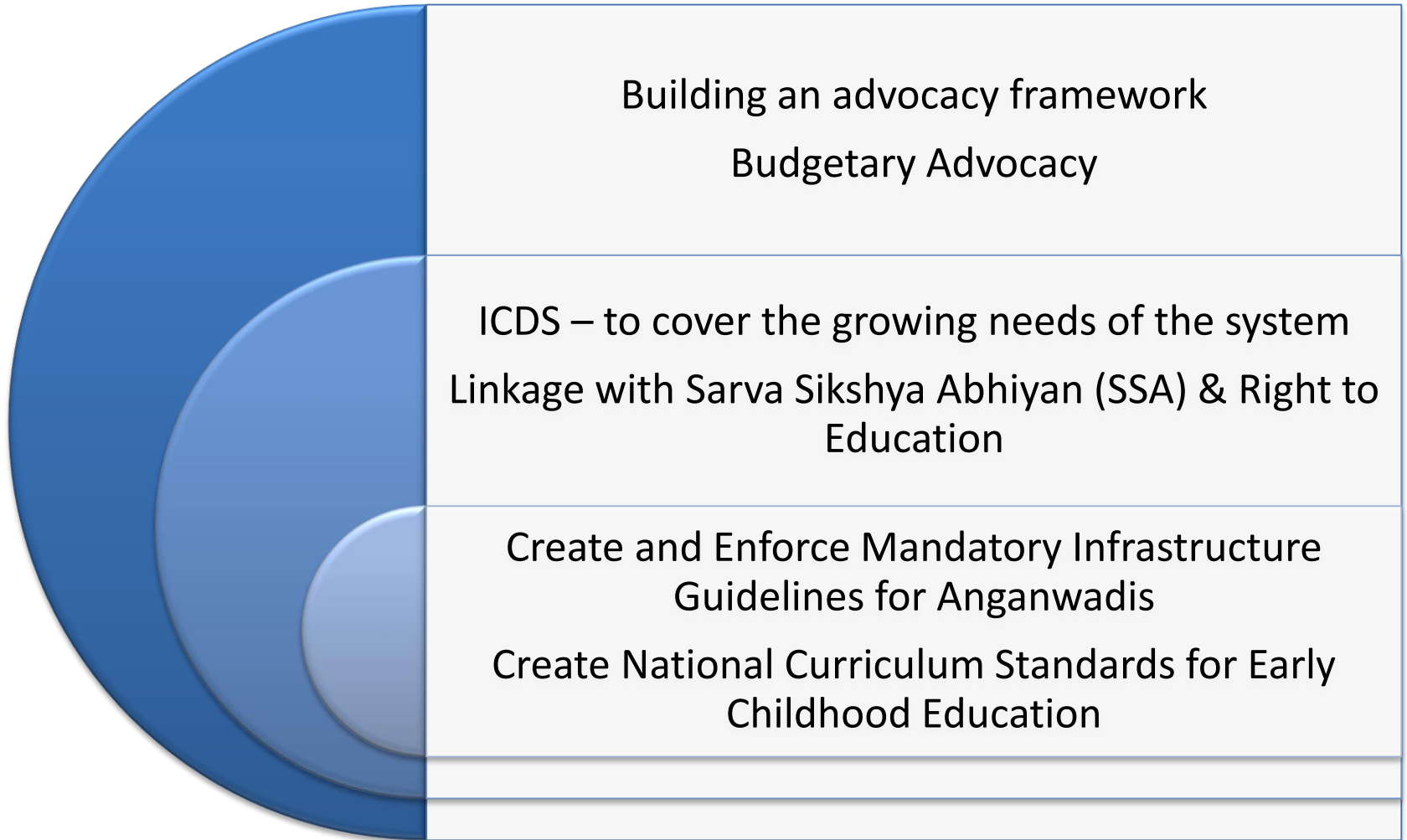


# Broad Analysis of the specific provisions

- Universalization
- Free vs Affordable Access
- Role of Private Providers
- Issue of Inclusion

- Standards
- Governance
- Costing of the Policy
- Care Element

# Way Forward

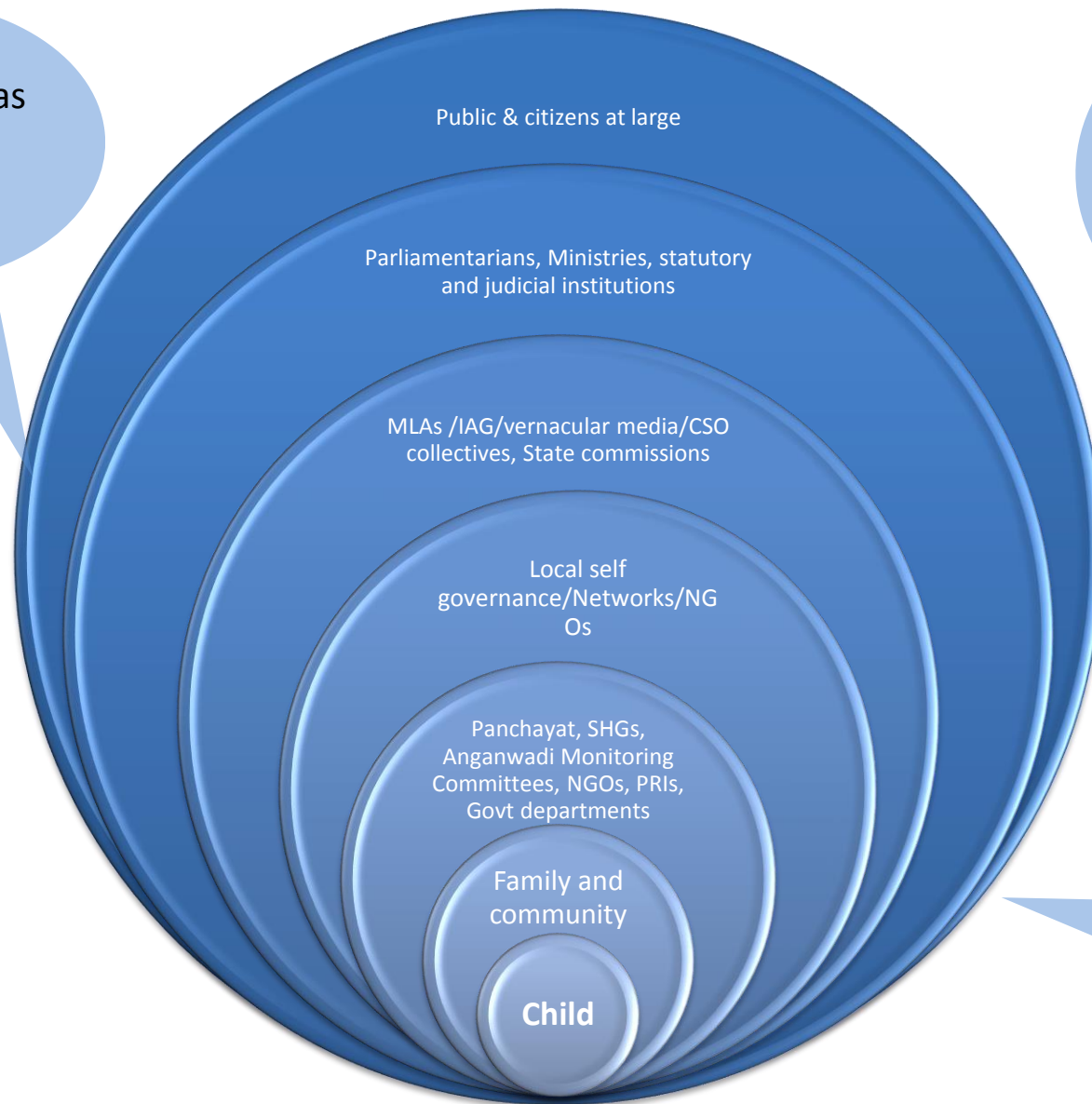




- Reaching the unreached
- More adequate programmes for children under 3 years
- Addressing quality issues in pre school education
- Need for teaching-learning and play materials
- Shift in enrolment trends
- Training & Capacity Building of ECCE Teachers Pre Service Teacher's Education
- Supervision & Monitoring
- Resource Hub for Anganwadis
- Involvement of Community & Other Stakeholders
- Advocacy at Policy Level

# Stakeholders across

Stakeholders as  
Long lasting  
Advocates



Stakeholders  
as partners &  
spokespersons

Partners  
Child  
rights

## Conclusion

The main challenge for a country like India which has a huge child population is to ensure that they get proper grounding & ample opportunities to unfold their potential and contribute to Nation's progress on all counts.

The Country now has well intentioned Policies & programmes for ECCE in place. However the huge gap between policy & implementation of these programmes is a matter for grave concern. The mere provision of services is not sufficient.

Universal access, regulation of private sector etc are some of the claims which require efficient mechanisms for delivery of services& monitoring.

Unless the quality dimensions of these programmes are ensured they are not likely to impact the situation of children.

To meet this challenge it is imperative that all concerned parents ECCE workers, policy makers & experts become informed stakeholders in the venture.

# Thank you

