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### Current conditions and trends in the development of the preschool education system in the republic of tajikistan

Preschool education is the basis for continuous learning and development of a child. The emphasis on pre-school education is important [2]. Access to quality preschool education services not only gives children a better chance of success at school, but also improves their learning outcomes in the future. If timely and sufficient investments are made in the early childhood development system, the country's human capital will grow and provide the country with an excellent and unique opportunity to improve its future economic prospects [10].

According to the Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2020, the number of children aged 1 to 6 years in the republic totaled 6.6 million people (Table 1).

Table 1 – The number of children aged 1-6 years in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2020, thousand people

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Tajikistan</i>	1336,7	1325,8	1327,4	1341,1	1367,2
<i>Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region</i>	27	27,7	29,3	30,5	30,3
<i>Khatlon region</i>	518	514,5	520,2	531,1	543,4
<i>Sogd region</i>	388,1	386,7	383,3	383,5	382,4
<i>Districts of republican subordination</i>	313,9	310,5	310,4	313,6	323
<i>Dushanbe</i>	89,7	86,4	84,2	82,4	88,1

Source: Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan [1]

More than 84% of children aged 3 to 6 years in Tajikistan do not receive basic pre-school education services, especially in rural and remote areas due to insufficient allocation of State resources, demographic dynamics with intensive population growth, dependence on external financing and lack of economic opportunity for parents. Despite the increase in investments and focus on preschool education, enrollment rates in preschool educational institutions in Tajikistan have not changed and have remained at 15.9% without significant changes since 2014. More than 70% of preschool teachers do not have the necessary qualifications to support the development and education of young children [3].

In 2016-2020, the number of kindergartens and nurseries in the Republic of Tajikistan increased by an average of 3% (Table 2).

Table 2 – Statistics of kindergartens and nurseries in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2020, units.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Tajikistan</i>	602	615	636	662	678
<i>Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region</i>	23	26	26	26	26
<i>Khatlon region</i>	132	136	142	152	156
<i>Sogd region</i>	249	252	261	272	276
<i>Districts of republican subordination</i>	73	76	75	78	84
<i>Dushanbe</i>	125	125	132	134	136

Source: Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan [1]

To achieve success in preschool education, as in any other type of education, something more than just a curriculum is required [6]. To do this, it is necessary to strive to fully unlock the potential of every child – regardless of their origin, abilities or circumstances [7].

Table 3 – The number of children in kindergartens and if in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2020, people

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Tajikistan</i>	91,1	93,1	96,6	102,2	102,2
<i>Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region</i>	1,8	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,1
<i>Khatlon region</i>	15,1	14,6	15,5	16,6	16,6
<i>Sogd region</i>	39,9	40,7	42,3	44,5	44,5
<i>Districts of republican subordination</i>	8,2	8,5	9,1	9,3	9,3
<i>Dushanbe</i>	25,9	27,3	27,6	29,6	29,6

Source: Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan [1]

According to the Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tatarstan, the situation with places in kindergartens is considered the best in Dushanbe, since at the moment 34% of children from one to six years old go to kindergartens and nurseries (Table 4).

The situation is much worse in the regions: 12% of children in Sogd region are enrolled in preschool education, 7% in Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region, and only 3% in Districts of republican subordination and Khatlon region. In Tajikistan as a whole, this figure is around 7% (table 4).

These figures differ somewhat from UNICEF data, as according to their report on preschool education (January 2021) in Tajikistan, kindergartens cover 16% of the country's children aged 3 to 6 years. That is, 84% of preschool children cannot get into kindergartens [4].

Table 4 – The share of children in kindergartens and nurseries in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2020, %

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Tajikistan</i>	7%	7%	7%	8%	7%
<i>Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region</i>	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
<i>Khatlon region</i>	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
<i>Sogd region</i>	10%	11%	11%	12%	12%
<i>Districts of republican subordination</i>	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
<i>Dushanbe</i>	29%	32%	33%	36%	34%

Source: Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan [1]

Only 3% of Khatlon region and Districts of republican subordination children are enrolled in pre-school education.

The analysis shows that one of the main problems is the insufficient funding of local executive authorities, as well as their lack of serious attention to preschool education [9].

Preschool education is the foundation for the learning and development of every child throughout their life. Access to high-quality preschool education not only gives every child a better chance of success in school, but also for better academic performance in the future [5].

UNICEF also points to insufficient funding in its report: «State allocations for pre-school education account for only 6% of the total education budget and 0.34% of GDP» [4].

The system of preschool education in private and public institutions critically depends on external financing on contributions from parents [8]. Meanwhile, in accordance with the requirement of the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030, the coverage of children aged 3 to 6 years in preschool institutions should be increased to 40%. To achieve this result – the construction of new gardens, the authorities intend to attract private business [4].

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