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Relevant government ministries, departments, and private development agencies and foundations have been involved in these endeavours, which have produced encouraging results. However, much more needs to be done, as the challenge ahead is to sustain this momentum and instill the importance of holistic ECD in our national development policies and programmes. | | |  | | --- | |  | | | https://fhgvhy.stripocdn.email/content/guids/CABINET_e1cfa55a83ce077330cee22719099953/images/78271574236315885.JPG | | |  | | --- | |  | | | The specific purpose of the International Conference, ‘Investing in the Early Years’ was to foster and further consolidate the growing collaboration among national stakeholders and international partners. This collaboration seeks to promote, mainstream and institutionalise holistic ECD in Pakistan as a key cross-cutting theme and develop it as a critical missing link in national education, health, nutrition, childcare and protection and human development strategies. | | Contributing to this Conference were a series of national and provincial level initiatives and events, including two national conferences, a two-day seminar on ECD at KIU and consultative sessions on ECD organised by the above organisations at different locations in the country. These initiatives have created a momentum for promoting holistic ECD in Pakistan through devising an independent ECD policy from 0 to age 8, backed by necessary legislation. | | As the previous conferences organised on ECCE in Pakistan, this Conference also had full support of the government, especially by the relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Ministry of Planning, Development & Reforms and the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination. The Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Honourable Shafqat Mehmood and Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Muhammad Azam Khan Swati attended the inaugural session while Dr. Zafar Mirza, State Minister for National Health Services only visited the ECD Expo due to another important engagement and could not participate in the Conference. | | The inaugural session was addressed, among other distinguished participants, by the Vice Chancellor AIOU, Professor Dr. Zia-Ul-Qayyum and chairman, Rupani Foundation, Mr. Nasruddin Rupani, besides educationists, researchers and practitioners in the field of ECD from across the country and abroad. | | |  | | --- | |  | | | https://fhgvhy.stripocdn.email/content/guids/CABINET_e1cfa55a83ce077330cee22719099953/images/14921574236464475.JPG | | |  | | --- | |  | | | The two-day International Conference featured an opening session, plenaries with ten international speakers (eight face to face and two online presentations), and a closing session, as well as an exhibition of workable ECD Models focusing on a multi-sector approach to promoting holistic ECD from conception to 8 years in the country. | | The Conference brought together over 580 participants, including legislators and policy-makers responsible for health, nutrition, child protection, education and social welfare. ECD experts from national and international bodies, practitioners, researchers, donors, academicians and parent representatives, deliberated and shared their ideas on the theme and sub-themes of the Conference to evolve an integrated, multi-sector approach, and how to operationalise it to promote holistic ECD in the country from conception to 8 years. | | The Conference brought together over 580 participants, including legislators and policy-makers responsible for health, nutrition, child protection, education and social welfare. 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The Expo was the first of its kind in Pakistan which featured early learning products, facilities, educational materials (digital & printed), branding and franchise services from different parts of the world. This Expo brought a wide array of companies, manufacturers, distributors, suppliers, ECD practitioners and franchises working on Early Childhood Development on a common platform. The Expo provided a perfect platform for building brand awareness, disseminating and exchanging information related to Early Childhood Development products, trends and facilities. The Expo provided an opportunity for learning, interacting and growing network and business products through exchanging ideas and sharing experiences. | | |  | | --- | |  | | | RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE   * Finalise the National Policy Framework (NPF) which is in the process of development * Adopt a multi-sector and integrated approach for mainstreaming ECD in policy making, budgeting and implementation * Institutionalise for sustainability and scalability – political will for investing in the early years * Allocate adequate budget and finance for ECD especially from 0 -5 years of age * Develop knowledgeable workforce (caregivers, ECD experts, researchers, ECD managers, practitioners etc.) * Awareness for parents for early screening and referral services * Broaden data and evidence system through monitoring and evaluation * Create behavior change communication strategy and initiate advocacy * Target programme delivery to specific population subgroups * Inclusive Education for disadvantaged and children with special needs * Parental education on the upbringing of children – both mother and father * Build upon current practices (document the existing models and scale –up the most effective ones) | | |