

ACCESSIBILITY OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN TAJIKISTAN FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

DUSHANBE — 2024

Accessibility of preschool educational institutions in Tajikistan for children with disabilities.

Dushanbe – 2024

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List of Abbreviations

GBAO	Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region
PEI	Preschool Educational Institutions
DRS	Districts of Republican Subordination
UN	United Nations
ECE	Early Childhood Education
SDG 2030	Sustainable Development Goals until 2030
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ETF	European Training Foundation

Chapter 1: Access to Preschool Education

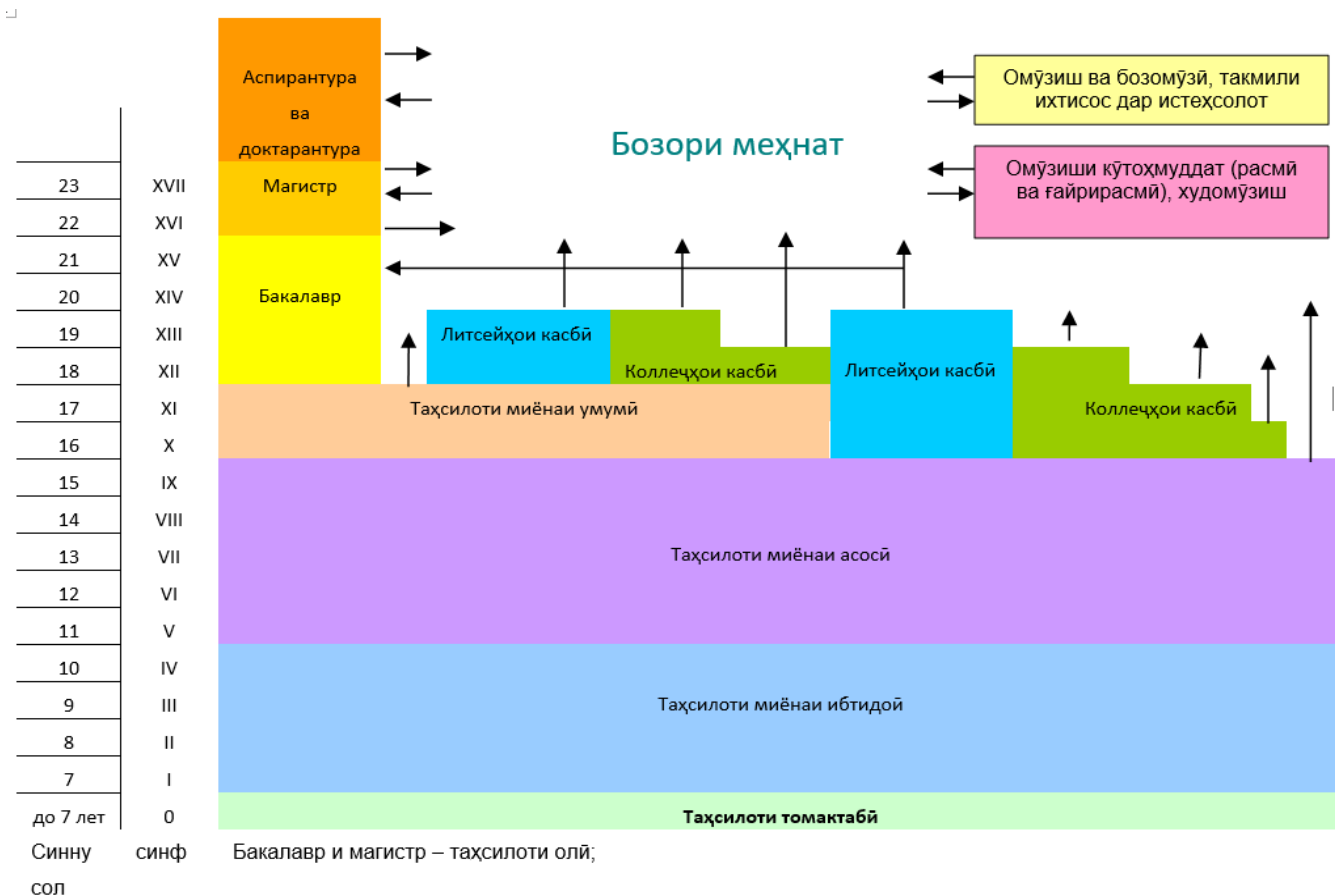
1.1. Preschool Education in the Educational System of Tajikistan

Modern Tajikistan inherited its education system from the Soviet Union. The educational process begins with preschool institutions for children aged 1.5 to 6 years, which include nurseries (for ages 1.5 to 3) and kindergartens (for ages 3 to 6). Attendance at these institutions is voluntary.

Until 1993, compulsory secondary education in Tajikistan consisted of 11 grades. Since 1993, the system has been revised to include nine years of compulsory primary education, encompassing four years of initial primary education and five years of lower secondary education. Children typically start first grade at the age of 7 and complete their compulsory schooling by 16 years old. According to the law, all students are guaranteed free access to any educational institution offering full secondary education (general or vocational). Additionally, students can pursue technical (specialized secondary) and higher education to obtain their first professional qualification, subject to admission criteria.

The education system in Tajikistan encompasses the following types and levels of education (see Diagram 1):

1. Diagram of the Education System in Tajikistan.



Source: Kuddusov, D., European Training Foundation (ETF). Labor Market Review. Tajikistan, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2010, p. 41.

Between 1991 and 2007, the number of preschool educational institutions in the Republic of Tajikistan nearly halved (from 944 to 482), and the number of children enrolled in these institutions decreased by 2.3 times. Since 2008, however, the number of preschools has been increasing.

With the support of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the number of preschool institutions and the enrollment of children in these institutions have gradually grown. By 2023, there were 717 preschool educational institutions in the country, providing education and care for over 104,921 children. This represents an increase of 102 institutions and 11,950 children compared to 2017.

In 2022, the distribution of preschool institutions and enrolled children across regions was as follows:

- Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO): 26 institutions with 2,109 children.
- Khatlon Region: 142 institutions with 15,482 children.
- Sughd Region: 261 institutions with 42,282 children.
- Dushanbe City: 132 institutions with 27,576 children.
- Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS): 75 institutions with 9,129 children.

In connection with the implementation of the State Program for the Development of Preschool Education for 2012–2016 in the Republic of Tajikistan, significant efforts have been made to establish child development centers. While in 2016 there were 1,465 such centers serving 35,211 children, by 2018, the number increased to 1,697 centers, enrolling 46,360 children.

In the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO), there are 251 child development centers serving 5,936 children; in Sughd Region, 435 centers serve 15,875 children; in Khatlon Region, 740 centers serve 17,881 children; in Dushanbe City, 3 centers serve 142 children; and in the Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS), 268 centers serve 6,526 children. Compared to 2016, this represents an increase of 232 centers and 11,149 children.

During the 2017–2018 academic year, the preschool enrollment rate for children was 14.5%. This rate varied by regions:

- GBAO: 35%
- Khatlon Region: 9%
- Sughd Region: 14.6%
- Dushanbe City: 26.2%
- DRS: 8.3%

By 2024, there are 2,381 child development centers providing services to 96,546 preschool-age children¹.

Analysis indicates that the enrollment rate of children in preschool institutions is particularly low in rural areas. To prepare children not enrolled in preschool institutions for school, the Government of Tajikistan issued Decree No. 783 on January 21, 2015, titled "On Enrolling Seven-Year-Old Children in General Secondary Education Institutions in August." Based on this directive, the Ministry of Education and Science developed a one-month preparation program for 6- to 7-year-old children to get ready for the first grade.

In August 2018, 219,530 children were enrolled in these preparatory programs across general secondary schools in the country, preparing them for school. The regional distribution of enrolled children is as follows:

- GBAO: 3,761 children
- Khatlon Region: 97,309 children
- Sughd Region: 59,101 children
- Dushanbe City: 19,601 children
- DRS: 39,758 children

¹ <https://www.maorif.tj/page/preschool-education>

According to the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period until 2030, the number of children aged 3 to 6 years is expected to reach 1,137,400, an increase of 255,000 compared to 2015. The percentage of children enrolled in preschool institutions is planned to rise from 14.5% to 40%.

One of the key factors in improving the quality of education and upbringing is the provision of qualified pedagogical staff in preschool educational institutions. Currently, there are 11,682 pedagogical staff members employed in preschools across the cities and districts of the country.

Although preschools are staffed with pedagogical personnel, the level of professional training among specialists does not fully meet the required standards. Among 636 heads/directors of preschool institutions:

- 352 have higher pedagogical education,
- 192 have higher education in non-pedagogical fields,
- 31 have incomplete higher education,
- 32 have secondary vocational education in pedagogy, and
- 29 have secondary vocational education in non-pedagogical fields.

Furthermore, out of 10,186 preschool staff members (advisors, teachers, educators, and assistant educators):

- 1,897 have higher pedagogical education,
- 1,346 have higher education in non-pedagogical fields,
- 771 have incomplete higher education,
- 1,908 have secondary vocational education in pedagogy,
- 1,472 have secondary vocational education in non-pedagogical fields, and
- 2,792 have only general secondary education.

The repair, reconstruction, return, and restoration of preschool buildings in most cities and districts have not been fully implemented as planned. The responsibility for the restoration, repair, and establishment of various types of preschool educational institutions, including child development centers, has been assigned to local government executive bodies. However, the relevant authorities have not effectively completed the required tasks in this area. Nationwide, 140 cases of improper use of preschool educational facilities have been reported.

Analysis of the state of the preschool education and care in the country reveals that one of the primary challenges in the sector is the insufficient funding by local government executive bodies for early childhood education and the lack of serious attention from the sector officials in cities and districts.

Although the supply of educational materials to preschool institutions in the country has improved in recent years, the situation, especially in rural areas, still requires significant enhancement. Preschool educational institutions face shortages of furniture, tables and chairs, beds, sports equipment, children's literature, toys, and visual teaching aids.

The funds allocated from city and district budgets for purchasing soft and hard equipment are insufficient to meet current needs, highlighting the necessity for a revision of the sector's funding mechanisms.

The strategic and programmatic documents of the education sector in Tajikistan outline specific standards for achieving Target 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, adopted by the United Nations (UN), which Tajikistan has committed to. This target states: “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.” Children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations or with special statuses, should have access to inclusive, equitable, quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.

Currently, 201,467 preschool-aged children are enrolled in early education programs, constituting 20.2% of the total number of preschool-aged children².

National Early Childhood Education (ECE) Goals:

- 30% of children aged 3-6 years is to be covered by 2025 (Mid-Term Development Program 2021–2025).
- 50% of 6-year-old children is to be covered by 2030 (National Education Development Strategy 2030).

Given limited government resources, sustained demographic growth, reliance on external funding, and financial inaccessibility of ECE services, achieving the national target of increasing ECE enrollment for children aged 3-6 remains challenging:

- The preschool education system provides limited services through state, alternative, and private institutions. These are heavily reliant on external financing, primarily from parental contributions. Public funding for ECE is insufficient, comprising only 6% of the total education budget and 0.34% of GDP.
- Over 70% of ECE educators lack the necessary qualifications to support early childhood development and learning.
- Poor coordination among different sectors responsible for early childhood services leads to the absence of a unified vision for comprehensive child development³.

According to the analysis, data on the inclusion of children with disabilities in preschool education institutions (PEIs) remains unavailable, hindering the development of targeted strategies.

² www.maorif.tj/page/preschool-education

³ <https://www.unicef.org/tajikistan/ru/>

1.2. POLICY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

By Resolution No. 316 of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated June 22, 2019, the State Program for the Development of Preschool Education in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2020–2025 was approved⁴. According to this program, the priority areas for the development of preschool education include:

- Increasing the number of state-run preschool institutions;
- Constructing new buildings for preschool institutions;
- Renovating, upgrading, and expanding the capacity of existing preschool institutions;
- Restoring preschool institutions that are not currently used for their intended purpose;
- Ensuring preschool institutions operating in old buildings are relocated to new facilities.

However, the program does not focus on the inclusion of children with disabilities in preschool institutions, nor does it envision the implementation of inclusive education principles.

Preschool educational institutions operate in accordance with the following laws and regulations of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Law “On Education”;
- Law “On Preschool Education and Upbringing”;
- Law “On the Responsibility of Parents in the Education and Upbringing of Children”⁵;
- The Charter of the Educational Institution;
- Other normative legal acts.

In the Republic of Tajikistan, with the aim of supporting families and creating favorable conditions for the upbringing and education of preschool-aged children based on the preferences and needs of parents (or their substitutes), the following types of institutions are established:

- Nurseries and kindergartens;
- Children’s homes (for orphaned and vulnerable children);
- Short-term, daytime, boarding, and family-based preschool institutions;
- Child Development Centers and equivalent state and non-state institutions.

⁴ www.maorif.tj

⁵ In June 2024, this Law was adopted in a new edition under the title “On Responsibility for the Education and Upbringing of Children” and is available on the website: <https://mmk.tj/>

According to the provisions of the Model Regulation of Preschool Educational Institutions in Tajikistan (approved by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on April 29, 2015, No. 256)⁶, the main objectives of preschool educational institutions are:

- Ensuring the comprehensive development of the child's personality at early and preschool age, considering age and individual capabilities, abilities, and needs, forming moral standards, and assisting in the acquisition of social experience;
- Implementing preschool education programs;
- Creating conditions for the upbringing, education, development of children at early and preschool age, and their socialization;
- Creating conditions for the formation of a sense of patriotism, national self-awareness, and respect for universal human values;
- Creating conditions for physical development and a healthy lifestyle;
- Providing social and pedagogical support to the learners and delivering psychological assistance to them;
- Ensuring the quality of educational and upbringing services, including paid services.
- Providing **necessary corrections to the physical and mental development issues of the learners**;
- Offering **advisory and methodological assistance to parents** (or their substitutes) on matters of upbringing, education, development, and maintaining the health of the child;
- Ensuring successful transition to the next level of education.

Preschool educational institutions include the following types:

- Nursery – for children up to 3 years old;
- Nursery-kindergarten – for children aged from 1 year and 6 months to 7 years;
- Kindergarten – for children aged from 3 to 7 years;
- Kindergarten – primary school – for children aged from 3 to 10 years;
- Orphanage – for children aged from 2 months to 7 years;
- Boarding school (preschool group) – for children aged from 1 to 7 years;
- Specialized boarding school (preschool group) – for children aged from 6 to 7 years;

⁶ www.maorif.tj

- Educational institution with pre-school preparation classes – for children aged from 5 to 7 years;
- Child Development Center – for children aged from 4 to 7 years;
- Private kindergarten – for children up to 7 years old;
- Family kindergarten – for children up to 7 years old;
- **Rehabilitation kindergarten** – preschool educational institution for children aged from 2 to 7 years who need physical therapy or mental development, treatment, and rehabilitation;
- Orphanage (internat) for children – preschool educational institution where care, upbringing, education, and social assistance are provided for orphaned and abandoned children of preschool and school age by the state;
- Orphanage – a preschool educational institution in the health protection system for medical and social care of orphaned children and children with physical or mental disabilities from birth, children who have been rejected by parents or their substitutes, and children whose parents or substitutes are temporarily unable to raise them or are deprived of parental rights.

Chapter 2: Results of Evaluation and Monitoring of Preschool Educational Institutions

Research Methodology

The research methodology involves the analysis of available materials (legislation, strategic and program documents, statistics, studies, and website materials) and direct surveys of preschool educational institutions (based on three types of questionnaires – attached in the appendix).

For a representative survey of preschool educational institutions, statistical data on these institutions available on the website of the Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan⁷ was used.

According to statistical data, at the end of 2023, there were 717 preschool educational institutions (PEIs) operating in the country, of which 473 were located in cities, and 244 were situated in rural areas. 17% of the institutions were private. Distribution of PEIs across regions:

- 41% in Sughd Province;
- 24% in Khatlon Province;
- 11.5% in the Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS);
- 19.5% in Dushanbe City;
- 4% in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO).

The distribution of PEIs for the survey was carried out based on their regional distribution. For the analysis, a survey of 5% of PEIs was sufficient. Thus, a survey was conducted at 40 PEIs across all regions of Tajikistan (excluding GBAO).

Table 1. Coverage of PEIs with Survey, by Regional Distribution

Region	Total Surveyed	Including:	Including:	Private	Public
		Urban	Rural		
Dushanbe	7	7	0	1	6
Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS)	3	2	1	1	2
Sughd region	20	10	10	3	17
Khatlon region	10	5	5	1	9
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	24	16	6	34

⁷ <https://www.stat.tj/jadvalhoi-tahlili/>

2.1. Pilot Survey of Preschool Educational Institutions in 2023.

Goal: To ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities in 12 preschool institutions in Dushanbe city (Preschool Institutions No. 52, No. 151, No. 117, No. 123), Vahdat district (Preschool Institutions No. 1, No. 4, No. 7, No. 10), and Rudaki district (Preschool Institutions No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4).

The 2023 research shows that most preschool institutions lack stairs at their entrances, as the entrance level is at ground level. The buildings are located on the ground floor, which makes access easier for people with disabilities. Due to the lack of stairs at the entrance and the ground-level entry, there is no need for ramps.

In most cases, door frames are equipped with handrails, but in general, there are no special handrails in other rooms of the buildings.

The institution's restrooms are not adapted for children with disabilities. The size of the restrooms is very limited, with a total area of only 0.65 meters (the standard is at least 0.8 meters), which makes it impossible for children with disabilities in wheelchairs to enter.

In the hallways of most preschool institutions, yellow lines have not been painted, and there are no signage symbols in large letters or Braille.

There is a two-year action plan in the classrooms for working with children with disabilities in the groups. Development materials are available, such as Lego building toys, traffic rules, pyramids, colorful flashcards, and others.

However, the groups are not provided with entry/exit indicators and Braille literature. Large print books are available (alphabet, animal pictures, etc.).

During the work, caregivers report a shortage of visual aids and developmental teaching materials for children with disabilities. Caregivers are familiar with inclusive education principles, as they equate them to the integration of people with disabilities into society. Close collaboration with parents is essential for working with children with disabilities. Caregivers should be provided with special literature and methodological guidelines, and it is necessary to establish links for professional development and on-the-job training for caregivers.

2.2. Comprehensive Survey of Preschool Educational Institutions in 2024.

The Comprehensive Survey covered 40 preschool educational institutions.

Table 2. List of preschools that participated in the 2024 survey.

№	Name of the PEI
Dushanbe	
1.	PEI №77 Dushanbe
2.	PEI №81 Dushanbe
3.	PEI №137 Dushanbe
4.	PEI №110 Dushanbe
5.	PEI №157 Dushanbe
6.	PEI №90 Dushanbe
7.	Private PEI “Tabasumi Oftobak” Dushanbe
DRS	
8.	PEI № 3 Vahdat
9.	PEI № 5 Vahdat
10.	PEI Oftobak, Rudaki District
Khatlon Region	
11.	PEI № 2 Parvin Kulob
12.	PEI № 1 Bahoriston, Vose
13.	PEI № 2 Oftobak, Vose
14.	PEI № 5 Dahana, Kulob
15.	Private PEI Mehrona, Kulob
16.	PEI № 6 Balkhi
17.	PEI № 5 Bokhtar
18.	PEI № 12 Bokhtar
19.	PEI № 1 Kushoniyon
20.	PEI № 7 Kushoniyon
Sughd Region	
21.	PEI Vorisoni Ilm, Buston
22.	PEI №11, Unji, Gafurov
23.	PEI Guli Navruzi, Buston
24.	PEI № 2 Isfara
25.	PEI № 2 Konibodom
26.	PEI № 9 Khujand
27.	PEI № 18 Khujand
28.	PEI № 35 Khujand
29.	PEI № 40 Khujand
30.	PEI № 1 Gafurov
31.	PEI № 21 Isfara
32.	PEI № 1 Devashtich
33.	PEI № 3 Devashtich
34.	PEI № 7 Devashtich
35.	PEI № 8 Devashtich

36.	PEI № Konibodom
37.	PEI № 1 Panjakent
38.	PEI № 8 Panjakent
39.	PEI № 9 Panjakent
40.	Private PEI named after A. Rudaki, Panjakent

The accessibility of preschools (PEIs) for the admission and education of children with various disabilities, as of 2023, has been assessed according to three criteria:

- Accessibility of PEI infrastructure (Appendix 1);
- Accessibility of infrastructure in the groups of an PEI (Appendix 2);
- Questionnaire for educators (Appendix 3).

In general, the comprehensive survey confirmed the issues identified in the 2023 test survey.

Accessibility of PEI infrastructure.



The evaluation of preschool educational institutions (PEIs) infrastructure showed that, overall, the accessibility of PEIs for children with physical disabilities (using wheelchairs), who cannot walk independently, is relatively limited. One-third of the institutions have thresholds that make wheelchair access difficult. The width of the pathways also varies, ranging from 35 cm to 3 meters. A standard width for pathways is not applied. The presence of iron gates with higher barriers for wheelchairs was also observed in all PEIs.

Only 5.6% of PEIs have tactile indicators at the start and end of stairs to warn of approaching staircases. In 8.3% of PEIs, contrast lines are present on the stairs. These essential features are mainly observed in private PEIs or those that are relatively new or recently renovated. Only 13.9% of PEIs have stair railings on both sides at their entrances.

75% of PEIs have smooth and unobstructed entry pathways. In 27.8% of PEIs, the width of hallways is less than 1.8 meters. Only 11% of PEIs have directional signs at their entrances.



Additionally, 58.3% of PEI buildings are located on the ground floor.

Every fifth PEI (22.2%) has a ramp (depending on the height of the entrance threshold). Only 16.7% of ramps are equipped with handrails, and most of them have a width of 1.2 meters. It is very difficult, and in most cases impossible, to independently navigate a ramp without handrails using a wheelchair. The ramps are generally smooth, with surfaces made of



either concrete or paving tiles. Most ramps are 4-6 meters long, with only one institution featuring a 12-meter ramp.

These existing issues and barriers can be independently addressed by the administration of PEIs.

Although two-thirds of institutions have entrances level with the ground, small thresholds at door frames often prevent wheelchair access. However, there are positive examples of barrier-free entrances in PEIs.

Inside 25% of buildings, special handrails are available. In 36.1% of PEIs, accessible restrooms for children with disabilities are present. Only 41.7% of PEI restrooms have doors with a width of 0.8 meters, and 52.8% are equipped with handrails. Furthermore, only 50% of restrooms have a 2x2 meter area, allowing wheelchair users to move freely.

The presence of special indicators inside buildings was also assessed. Only 2.8% of PEIs have yellow guiding lines in hallways or directional arrows on walls, and only 8.3% of PEIs have large-letter signs. There are no Braille signs (for the visually impaired) at all.

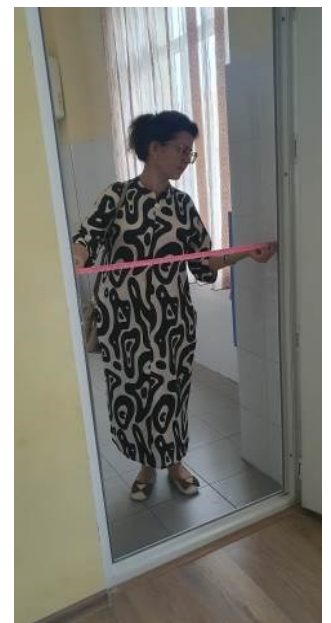
The interiors of PEI buildings are not equipped with special lifting devices.

Overall, the analysis shows that most PEI buildings, regardless of their location, are partially adapted for children with mobility disabilities. However, they are entirely unsuitable for visually impaired children

Accessibility of infrastructure in the groups of an PEI.

In most PEIs (79.2%), the group entrance doors have thresholds. Only in one-third of PEIs (32.9%) the width of the group door is more than 0.9 meters. The majority of these doors (85.3%) have handrails. Only in one-third of the groups (35.3%) there are directional signs with large letters.

In 32.4% of PEIs, specialists for working with children with special needs are available. In 76.5% of PEIs, work plans are present, and in 79.4% of groups, developmental materials are accessible for use - such as balls, geometric shapes, pyramids, mosaics, large letters, books, various toys, constructors, posters, and various visual aids. In each PEI, educators have gathered their own visual aids, but a unified system for providing aids for children with disabilities is not evident.



In 82.5% of PEIs, a work schedule board for children is available. Only in 11.2% of groups there are exit door signaling towers. In 17.6% of PEIs, literature in Braille, four types in good condition, is available. However, this literature is general and not specific to any particular subject.

In most groups (67.6%), there are 6 to 12 types of literature with large letters. Primarily, this literature consists of children's books, fairy tales, road safety rules, etc. All of this literature

varies across different institutions, and a unified system for providing literature, similar to that of secondary schools, is not evident. Only 38.2% of the literature is in good condition, with the majority being outdated and old.

The group leaders recommended that the groups and their teaching materials be adapted to the needs of children with disabilities, considering all types of disabilities. It is necessary to adapt the group's infrastructure (toilets, corridors, special signs) accordingly. Implementing these recommendations could contribute to better inclusion of children with disabilities in PEIs.



Opinions of the Educators

Most educators in PEIs have work experience ranging from 3 to 25 years. A total of 48.5% of the educators have undergone professional development in the last three years (2022-2024).

Only 42.9% of the educators have received trainings specifically for working with children with disabilities. This type of trainings primarily take place through professional development courses or international projects organized by non-governmental organizations. Most of these training sessions are short-term, lasting from 1 day to 2 weeks.

The number of children with disabilities in the groups is generally low, typically 1-3 children, though some PEIs have as many as 7 children. All these children have physical disabilities. There are no children with intellectual, visual, speech, or hearing impairments.

Educators apply the knowledge and skills they acquire with consideration of each child's individual characteristics. Over 37% of educators noted challenges such as a lack of visual aids and specialized teaching materials, outdated resources, insufficient assistive devices, and the absence of qualified assistants. To address these challenges, educators often spend additional time working individually with children, collaborate with parents, and receive support from PEI management.

Only one-third of the educators (31.4%) have storage for teaching materials. Educational programs are adapted to meet the needs of the children with the involvement of parents, PEI management, and specialized professionals. In most cases (82.9%), children are given homework, and parents are actively involved, participating in lessons and assisting with homework completion.

Educators need access to modern teaching materials and methodologies. To expand the coverage of children with disabilities in early childhood education, there needs to be more informational and awareness-raising activities for parents, as well as a favorable educational environment. The professional development of educators is also necessary. It is essential to reduce tuition fees, as most families of children with disabilities are

financially disadvantaged. In this regard, government support for financing the education of children with disabilities is needed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The analysis shows that in Tajikistan, the legislation, strategic documents, and programs defining the state's policy in the field of early childhood education have been adopted. Year by year, the number of such institutions is increasing; however, the enrollment rate of children in early childhood institutions in rural areas remains low. Additionally, preparatory courses for preschool-aged children are organized annually by secondary schools to prepare them for primary education.

There is, however, no provision for incentives for entrepreneurs to establish preschool institutions in the legislation and strategic documents. Sector-specific statistics are also limited, and there is no data available on the number of children with disabilities enrolled in preschool institutions.

The analysis reveals that the principles of inclusion for children with disabilities have not yet been fully integrated into the policies of early childhood education in Tajikistan. In the strategic and sectoral documents, no specific provisions are found regarding the implementation of Goal 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 (SDG-2030), which aims to "ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education."

According to the provisions of the Model Regulation of Preschool Educational Institutions in Tajikistan (approved by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on April 29, 2015, No. 256), one of the main goals of preschool institutions is to ensure the **necessary corrections in the physical and psychological development of children and to provide advisory and methodological assistance to parents** (or their substitutes) on issues related to education, development, and maintaining the health of the child. However, the full implementation of these goals has not been achieved in all institutions.

The aforementioned educational institutions are not fully prepared to accept children with disabilities in terms of building accessibility, as there are issues related to infrastructure accessibility. Nevertheless, educators make efforts to provide comprehensive support to children with disabilities. Educators are in need of methodological and didactic resources and are confident that with the creation of appropriate conditions, the number of children with disabilities in preschool institutions will increase. The buildings of these institutions require renovation.

Recommendations Based on the Analysis:

- It is necessary to develop a programmatic document within the framework of the National Education Development Strategy until 2030, specifically aimed at implementing inclusive education principles in preschool educational institutions.
- Continuous training and professional development of preschool educators should be organized to work with children with disabilities. Educators need to be supplied with specialized teaching materials to effectively support these children.

- Specific measures to incentivize entrepreneurs for the establishment of preschool institutions should be introduced in tax legislation to encourage private sector involvement in preschool education.
- The Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Tajikistan until 2030 should include indicators for assessing the inclusion of children with disabilities in preschool education (as per Goal 4 of the SDGs 2030). Additionally, sector-specific statistics must be improved.
- A unified standard for the renovation and modification of preschool institutions, ensuring their capacity to accept children with disabilities, should be established.
- Families with children with disabilities require state support to ensure access to quality education. Providing professional assistance for these families should be prioritized to help them manage educational and financial needs.

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4. National Center for Legislation: <https://mmk.tj/>
5. UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund: <https://www.unicef.org/tajikistan/ru/>

ACCESSIBILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

OBSERVERS:

DATE: “ ____ ” _____ 202_
City: _____ District: _____ Preschool
Institution No: _____

1. Access to Preschool Educational Institution

- Is the entrance accessible, level with the ground?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Is there a threshold?
 - Yes ____ . Height of threshold ____ m
 - No ____
- Are there stairs?
 - Yes ____ . Number of steps ____
 - No ____
- Is the width of the staircase less than 1 meter?
 - Yes ____ . Number of steps ____
 - No ____
- Are the steps of equal height?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Are there tactile surfaces at the beginning and end of the staircase to signal the presence of steps?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Are the first and last steps of the staircase highlighted with a 5 cm contrasting stripe?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Do the stairs have guardrails on both sides?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____

2. Premises of the Preschool Educational Institution

- Is there an obstacle-free path or walkway to the main entrance?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Is the width of the path less than 1.80 m?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Are directional signs for the main entrance present?

- Yes ____
- No ____

3. Is the institution located on the ground floor?

- Yes ____
- No ____

4. Does the building have a ramp?

- Yes ____
- No ____
- If yes, does the ramp have handrails?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- If yes, is the width of the ramp less than 1.2 m?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Does the ramp have raised edges (curbs) at least 0.10 m high?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Are the handrails of the ramp at two heights: 0.70 m and 0.90 m from the ground?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- What material is the ramp surface made of? _____
- Is the ramp straight?
 - Yes ____ Length (in meters): _____
 - No ____
- If yes, does the ramp have a width of 1.5 m for every 6 meters of length for wheelchair access?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____

5. Does the entrance door have a threshold?

- Yes ____
- No ____
- Is the width of the door more than 0.90 m?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Does the door have a handle?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____

6. Are there handrails inside the building?

- Yes ____
- No ____

7. Are the toilets accessible for children with disabilities?

- Yes ____
- No ____
- Is the width of the door 0.80 m or more?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Does the toilet have handrails?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____
- Is the size of the toilet room 2x2 m?
 - Yes ____
 - No ____

8. Are there yellow tactile lines on the floor throughout the building corridor?

- Yes ____
- No ____

9. Are there signs with large letters inside the building?

- Yes ____
- No ____

10. Are there signs with Braille inside the building?

- Yes ____
- No ____

11. Are the signs positioned at eye level?

- Yes ____
- No ____

12. Are there markers on the walls inside the building indicating entry and exit points?

- Yes ____
- No ____

13. Is there a lift (elevator) inside the building?

- Yes ____
- No ____
- If yes, what is its capacity? ____ kg
- Is the lift for general use or specifically for children with disabilities?

- Does the lift have a service attendant?
 - Yes ____

Appendix 2.

ACCESSIBILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE GROUPS OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

OBSERVER: _____

DATE OF OBSERVATION: “____” _____ 202__

City: _____ District: _____

Preschool Institution No: _____

1. Does the group entrance door have a threshold?

- Yes _____
- No _____
- Is the width of the door more than 0.90 m?
 - Yes _____
 - No _____
- Does the door have a handle?
 - Yes _____
 - No _____

2. Are there handrails in the group area?

- Yes _____
- No _____

3. Are there signs with large letters in the group area?

- Yes _____
- No _____

4. Are there specialists in the group who work with children with special educational needs?

- Yes _____, Who are they? _____
- No _____
- Is there a work plan for children in the group?
 - Yes _____. How many? _____
 - No _____
- Are there developmental materials in the group?
 - Yes _____. What are they? _____
 - No _____

5. Is there a work schedule posted in the corner of the group?

- Yes _____
- No _____

6. Are there indicator signs in the corners of the group showing the directions of exit and entrance?

- Yes _____
- No _____

7. Is there Braille literature in the group?

- Yes ____ How many? _____
 - What subjects are covered?
-

- What is the condition of the literature?

- Good ____
- Satisfactory ____
- Unsatisfactory ____

8. Is there literature with large print in the group?

- Yes ____ How many? _____ What are they?
-

- No ____

- What is the condition of the literature?

- Good ____
- Satisfactory ____
- Unsatisfactory ____

Recommendations:

Survey of Preschool Educators

INTERVIEWEE: _____

DATE OF INTERVIEW: “ ____ ” _____ 202_

City: _____ District: _____

Preschool Institution No: _____

1. What type of disability does the child you work with have (if you work with more than one child with disabilities, please specify each)?

2. What is your work experience?

3. When was the last time you participated in professional development training?

4. Are you included in the staff schedule of the institution?

5. How long have you been working at this preschool institution?

6. Have you received training on working with children with disabilities?

- Yes ____ Where? _____

- No ____

7. How long did the training course take?

8. How many children with disabilities are there in your group?

9. What types of disabilities do the children have?

- Physical ____
- Hearing ____
- Speech ____
- Visual ____
- Intellectual ____
- Other (specify): _____

10. How do you apply the knowledge you gained on working with children with disabilities?

11. What challenges do you face when working with children?

12. How do you address these challenges?

13. Do you have a work plan for each child with disabilities?

- Yes ____ How many? _____
- No ____

14. What program do you use for children with disabilities in your group?

- General ____
- Adapted ____
- Individual Plan ____

15. Who participates in creating the individual work plans for children with disabilities?

16. Are there children who follow individual learning plans?

- Yes ____ How many? _____
- No ____

17. If yes, how often is the individual plan updated?

18. Do you give children homework?

- Yes ____
- No ____

19. Do parents participate in their children's learning process?

- Yes ____ How? _____

- No ____

20. Do you know what inclusive education is? Where did you learn about inclusive education?

21. What kind of support do you need in working with children with disabilities?

22. What should be done in Tajikistan to promote inclusive education?

Interviewee's Recommendations:
