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Exploring Early Education Programs in Peri-urban Settings in Africa

Johannesburg Report

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Johannesburg ECD Report

The government has not historically been a major actor in the preprimary sector, but over the last decade this has changed substantially; the Office of the President declared Early Childhood Development (ECD) a national priority in 2004, and the government has both increased funding for private not-for-profit preschools and allowed for a large scale expansion (predominantly in public schools) of a reception year for 5 to 6 year-old children immediately before they start at primary school. Considerable progress has been made towards universal attendance of this Reception (or “grade R”) across the country. This has led to the development of a two level preprimary system consisting of smaller private preschools (largely non-profits by status) aimed at 3-5 year olds, and predominantly public grade Rs.

In July and August 2013, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) conducted a data collection exercise in Soweto, Johannesburg. Sampling was designed such that the study is representative of the 8 poorest of Soweto (comprising about 15% of the overall area). The data collection consisted of 238 household surveys, 30 headmaster surveys and 26 classroom observations conducted with the aim of discovering the scale,

cost and quality and preschool education in this area. This paper gives details of this research and its findings.
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