Turkey: Expanding Opportunities for the Next Generation

Early Childhood Development Conference
Ankara, October 12-13, 2010
Outline

1. Motivation
2. Inequality of Opportunities
   - Life outcomes
   - Child development outcomes today
3. Early Childhood Development
4. Reflections
Social outcomes have improved markedly in Turkey over the last few decades.

Under Five Mortality Rate Over Time (1960-2006)
But Turkey’s income inequality remains high by European standards, and “middling” by international standards.
Still, Turks appear to be unusually inequality-averse

The share of the population that strongly agrees that "the gap between rich and poor should be reduced in the country"

Source data: Life in Transition Survey, 2006
What is the main reason why there are people in need in Turkey today?

- Injustice, 65%
- Laziness, 25%
- Unluckiness, 8%
- Inevitable part of life, 3%

Source data: Life in Transition Survey, 2006
• **Inequality of opportunity**: personal efforts should determine success in life, not pre-determined circumstances

  – Concept emphasizes on *opportunities*, than on *outcomes*
Inequality of Opportunity for Wealth

Decomposition of wealth inequality in Turkey

- Efforts, luck and circumstances not measured (68%)
- Circumstances: Lower-bound estimation for inequality in wealth asset index attributable to opportunities (32%)

Partial shares of opportunities contributing to inequality:

- Birth Area (Urban/Rural): 39%
- Father’s education: 23%
- Mother’s education: 18%
- Language: 10%
- Number of siblings: 9%
- Birth region: 1%
Circumstances and Wealth Outcomes

by Birth Place

- Rural
- Urban

by Birth Region

- East
- Central
- West

by Mother’s Education

- No diploma
- Primary
- Secondary
- Higher

by Father’s Education

- No diploma
- Primary
- Secondary
- Higher

by Mother Tongue

- Turkish
- Non-Turkish

by Number of Siblings

- Less than 5
- More than 5
Inequality of Opportunity for Education Achievement

- PISA results (2006):
  - Between a quarter and a third of overall educational achievement variation due to circumstances
  - Mostly explained by differences in socio-economic background. Spatial variables are also important, particularly along the rural/urban divide.
  - While gender emerges as a key correlate of enrollment it is not a significant determinant of achievement.
The intergenerational transmission of opportunity continues to shape children's life chances today.

**Intergenerational Opportunity Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Intergenerational Opportunity Group</th>
<th>Birth place of Mother</th>
<th>Education of maternal grandparents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural East</td>
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<td>Less than primary completed</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Intergenerational Opportunity Group</th>
<th>Birth place of Mother</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban West/Center</td>
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Relative Risk of Child Poverty, Stunting and Iodine deficiency by Intergenerational Opportunity Group, 2004

Note: Risk relative to average incidence for all children aged 5 and younger (poverty rate is 36.2%, stunting rate is 12% and iodine deficiency rate is 50%).
Source: Turkey Demographic and Health Survey
Cognitive Development Inputs at Household Level for 36-47 month old children in Turkey

Responsivity score (of mother towards the child)
Language stimulation score (of mother for the child)
Learning materials score (available to child at home)
Enrollment Age Profiles by Opportunity Group and Gender, (2004)

Enrollment-age profiles by opportunity group

Enrollment-age profiles within low opportunity group

- low opportunity: grandparents did not go to school and mother born in a rural area of the East region
- high opportunity: grandparents did go to school and mother born in an urban area of another region
Early Childhood Development

- development of child begins pre-natally
- learning begins directly after birth
- all basic brain development takes place in early years
  - Stunting (low height for age) in early ages reduces intelligence
  - Iodine deficiency leads to mental retardation
  - Insufficient cognitive stimulation reduces learning abilities
Benefit Simulations of ECD: Pre-School Education

- Expanding education of the 20-39 year olds today by one year (equal to measured impact of pre-school education)

- Two channels: increased education on earnings occupational distribution

- Impacts: 8 percent increase of mean earnings of all individuals 20-39 years of age 14 percent increase in female labor force participation rate 5 percent reduction of poverty
A. Inequality of opportunity is important and travels across generations

B. Child development diverges across 'opportunity' groups and poverty at very early ages, especially for girls. Traditional solidarity system – as strong as it may be – does not compensate for this disadvantage.

C. Pro-equity policies would weaken the link between circumstances and outcomes in early ages - early childhood development policies can have a huge impact on economic growth and poverty reduction, particularly when targeted to disadvantaged children