

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 30.11.2009
ANSWERED ON
EXPANSION OF ICDS .

1199

Shri Vijay Jawaharlal Darda

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether her Ministry is set with its plans for expansion of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in the country;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether experts have criticized the scheme on several counts; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and corrective steps taken by government to make the scheme purposeful and result oriented?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

(SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. It is the endeavour of the government to universalize the Scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) so as to cover all the habitations, with special focus on SC/ST and minority habitations, across the country.

At the end of IX Plan, there were 6 lakh sanctioned Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) in the country. The coverage of ICDS was not universalized and covered 42% of the habitations. The process of universalisation of the Scheme commenced only in X Plan.

As a follow up, the Scheme has been expanded in three phases in the years 2005-06, 2007-08 and 2008-09. With these expansions, total number of sanctioned AWCs/Mini-AWCs increased from 6 lakh, as on 31.3.2002 to 13.56 lakh, as on 31.03.2009 (125% increase). As a part of universalisation, State Governments/UT Administrations have also been requested to submit requirements, if any, for 'Anganwadi on Demand', which can be sanctioned in case there are at least 40 children in a habitation without an AWC.

(c)&(d) There has been general debate about the efficacy of the Scheme that it has not been able to reduce the level of malnutrition significantly. Besides, there have also been some comments based on misconceptions that ICDS is running everywhere, for long and is solely responsible to achieve better nutritional indicators.

The problem of Malnutrition is, however, not only the result of a single cause but is a multifaceted problem acting singly or in combination with other complex factors, like health care, poor sanitation & safe drinking water, illiteracy, poverty, food availability etc. It, therefore, needs to be tackled through holistic coordinated interventions in areas of health care, nutrition, education, sanitation and safe drinking water, food security and poverty alleviation.

Government has recently taken various steps to increase the effectiveness of the delivery of services under the ICDS Scheme which include Universalisation of the Scheme, revision in cost norms of existing interventions including Supplementary Nutrition, revision in Nutritional and Feeding norms of Supplementary Nutrition, provision of flexi fund at Anganwadi Centre level and new World Health Organization (WHO) Growth standards for monitoring growth of children etc. Government is also conscious of the need of effective convergence and has, therefore, been constantly impressing upon the States to ensure effective convergence with health, nutrition, education, sanitation and safe drinking water services under various programmes. Besides, Nutrition Education, Awareness, Counseling and Advocacy would continue.