

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *324
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.08.2023

PROGRESS UNDER ICDS

*324 SHRI GHANSHYAM SINGH LODHI:
KUNWAR DANISH ALI:

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

- (a) the details of the progress report of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) during the last three years;
- (b) whether an increase in the rate of stunting and wasting is being observed among the children in assessment of the data of different phases of National Family Health Survey;
- (c) If so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the efforts being made by the Government to prevent stunting and wasting in children?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

- (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (D) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 324 FOR 11.08.2023 BY SHRI GHANSHYAM SINGH LODHI, KUNWAR DANISH ALI REGARDING PROGRESS UNDER ICDS.

(a) The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) has been re-aligned under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) for the 15th Finance commission period. Mission Poshan 2.0 includes the Anganwadi Services Scheme, Poshan Abhiyan and revised Scheme for Adolescent Girls. The Mission has been rolled out in all districts of 36 States/ UTs. Close to 13.9 lakh Anganwadi Centres are operational in the country as on date.

The progress of the scheme in the last three years, in terms of number of operational Anganwadi Centres, Functional Toilets and Drinking water is as follows:

Number of Operational Anganwadi Centers	
2020-21	13.89 lakh
2021-22	13.95 lakh
2022-23	13.96 lakh
Number of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) having drinking water facilities	
2020-21	12.23 lakh
2021-22	12.23 lakh
2022-23	12.52 lakh
Number of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) having toilet facilities	
2020-21	11.01 lakh
2021-22	11.01 lakh
2022-23	11.39 lakh

Total fund released under Anganwadi Services to States/UTs in the last three years is as follows:

Funds released under Anganwadi Services	
Financial Year	Amount Released (Rs. In lakh)
2020-21	1579754.25
2021-22	1820324.68
2022-23	1947794.25

To monitor service delivery under the Scheme, an ICT application Poshan Tracker has been launched. Technology under the Poshan Tracker is being leveraged for dynamic identification of stunting, wasting and underweight prevalence among children and last mile tracking of nutrition service delivery. Poshan Tracker enables near real-time monitoring on defined indicators.

Further, 10.33 crore beneficiaries are registered under the Mission, which includes pregnant women, lactating mothers, children under the age of 6 years and adolescent girls in the age bracket 14-18 years in North Eastern states and Aspirational districts.

Under Mission Poshan 2.0, 2 lakh AWCs will be upgraded to Saksham Anganwadis @40,000 per year up to 2025-26 for improved delivery of nutrition and Early Childhood Care and Education services. In FY 2022-23, 41,192 AWCs have been identified to be made into Saksham Anganwadis, enhanced with LED screens, smart audio-visual teaching aids, Poshan Vatikas, Rainwater Harvesting Structures etc. WiFi will be provisioned through BharatNet, wherever available.

Further, all mini AWCs are being converted into Main AWCs in consultation with State Governments which will ensure presence of the Anganwadi Helper to support the Anganwadi Worker. All States/ UTs have been requested to send proposals for conversion of Mini AWCs into Main AWCs keeping in view the importance of Early Childhood Care and Education along-with nutrition delivery.

(b) to (d) As a result of the concerted efforts by Government, the level of malnutrition has reduced in the country as is evident from the report of National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 5 conducted in 2019-21. The estimated number of underweight, malnourished and severely malnourished children under 5 years of age is obtained under National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. As per the recent report of NFHS-5 (2019-21), the nutrition indicators for children under 5 years have improved as compared with NFHS-4 (2015-16). Stunting has reduced from 38.4% to 35.5%, Wasting has reduced from 21.0% to 19.3% and Underweight prevalence has reduced from 35.8% to 32.1%. Further, as per data recorded in Poshan Tracker ICT application for Mission Poshan 2.0, close to 7 crore children were measured in the country in the month of June 2023, as per which, 7% were wasted and 19% underweight, which is significantly lower than NFHS indicators.

Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) that includes key schemes such as POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anganwadi Services and Scheme for Adolescent Girls as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country. The beneficiaries under the Anganwadi Services scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Under POSHAN Abhiyan, for the first time, a digital revolution was ushered when the Anganwadi worker was empowered with mobile devices. The application offered counselling videos on key behaviours and services which helped disseminate messages on birth preparedness, delivery, post-natal care, breastfeeding and complementary feeding. Since the launch of the Abhiyaan, the Anganwadi workers have been provided with close to **11 lakh smart phones**. Besides, to promote regular growth monitoring **12.5 lakh Growth Monitoring Devices**, such as Infantometer, Stadiometer, Weighing Scale for Mother and Infant, Weighing Scale for Child, have been procured by States/UTs under the Abhiyaan. Further Anganwadi Workers are given an incentive of Rs 500 for completing monthly growth measurement of children and targeted home visits.

Further, under Poshan Abhiyan, an important focus has been on 'Behaviour Change Communication' or BCC through Community Based Events (CBEs) and Jan Andolans in the form of Rashtriya Poshan Maahs and Poshan Pakhwadas. The CBEs serve as a platform for disseminating essential messages and to counsel pregnant and lactating women, and their influencers (husbands/mothers-in-law) on appropriate nutrition and health behaviour. Close to 3.70 crore CBEs have been conducted under the Abhiyaan, in the last four years. Further, since the launch of the Abhiyan, more than 60 crore Jan Andolan activities have been carried out which include involvement of local level communities, panchayats and convergence with key Ministries and departments upto grassroot. Over the years, themes have included overall nutrition, hygiene, water and sanitation, anemia prevention, prevention of diarrhoea, importance of breast-feeding, growth monitoring, role of Poshan Panchayats, AYUSH for Well-being, Yoga for Health, importance of Poshan Vatikas for cultivation of local vegetables and medicinal plants/herbs at the community level, etc

Supplementary nutrition is provided to pregnant women, lactating mothers and children upto the age of 6 years at Anganwadi Centres as per nutritional norms to bridge the gap in the dietary intake as compared with recommended intake. Recently, these nutrition norms have been revised and notified on 25th January, 2023. The revised nutritional norms are more comprehensive in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity to provide quality protein, healthy fats and 7 essential micro nutrients (calcium, zinc, iron, dietary folate, Vitamin A, Vitamin B6 and Vitamin B12. Under Poshan 2.0, greater emphasis is being given on the use of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations (not raw ration) at Anganwadi centres for Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Children below 6 years of age, in view of their high nutrient content to address anaemia and micro-nutrient deficiencies in women and children. Under Supplementary Nutrition Programme, it is mandatory to provide millet based diet at least once a week. Further, under Mission Poshan 2.0, only fortified rice is allocated to States/UTs.

Steps have been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing in accredited labs, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under Poshan Tracker to improve governance. To ensure last mile tracking of service delivery SMS alerts to beneficiaries has been introduced for delivery of Take Home Ration.

States/UTs have been advised to promote use of AYUSH systems for prevention of malnutrition and related diseases. The Guidelines of the Mission support development of Poshan Vatikas at Anganwadi Centres to meet dietary diversity gap leveraging traditional knowledge in nutritional practices has also been taken up. Further, guidelines were issued for transparency and accountability in delivery of supplementary nutrition and to track nutritional outcomes on 13.01.2021.
