

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.593**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2022

**IMPACT OF CLOSURE OF ANGANWADI CENTRES**

593. SHRI RAHUL GANDHI:

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

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the impact of the pandemic on the nutritional status of women and children;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has assessed the impact of closure of Anganwadi centres on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and malnutrition, particularly in aspirational districts and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has taken initiatives to strengthen and improve the infrastructure at Anganwadi Centres in aspirational districts especially in Wayanad Parliamentary Constituency in Kerala; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (c) Anganwadi Centres are closed due to Covid-19 pandemic. No impact study/survey (to study the impact of pandemic on nutritional status of women and children and on Early Childhood Care and Education) has been planned on ground, as human interaction has been minimised to control the spread of virus. However, to ensure continuous nutritional support to Anganwadi beneficiaries, Anganwadi Workers and Helpers are distributing Supplementary Nutrition at the doorsteps of beneficiaries once in 15 days.

During Covid-19 pandemic period, Ministry sought regular reports from States/UTs to ensure uninterrupted delivery of nutrition and essential services to the beneficiaries. Further, Streamlined guidelines were issued on 13.01.2021, covering several aspects such as quality assurance, roles and responsibilities of duty holders, procedure for procurement, integrating AYUSH concepts, Data management and Monitoring through "Poshan Tracker".

(d) & (e) From time to time Government has taken many steps for improving the infrastructure of Anganwadi Centres across the country (including Aspirational districts). These include provision of construction of Anganwadi Centres under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and provision of drinking water and sanitation facilities under Swacchta Action Plan (SAP).

There have been sustained engagements with State Governments for review and improvement including recent interactions to discuss different implementation related issues such as Anganwadi Infrastructure, non-operationalisation of Anganwadi Centres, filling of vacancies of Anganwadi Services functionaries and smooth delivery of services to the beneficiaries to strengthen services.

'Poshan Tracker', a robust ICT enabled digital platform, has been launched in March, 2021 to ensure real time monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition by use of data analytics for prompt supervision and management of services. The system shall enable real-time monitoring and tracking of all AWCs, AWWs and beneficiaries on defined indicators.

The Aspirational Districts Programme aims to bring transformative changes Aspirational Districts. The programme involves real time monitoring of the performance of all the Aspirational Districts, including Wayanad, across sectors which are critical for improving quality of life or economic productivity of citizens, which includes Health and Nutrition, School Education and Basic Infrastructure, and also Agriculture and Water Resources and Financial Inclusion & Skill Development.

The Aspirational Districts Programme assists the District Magistrates in monitoring the performance of the District on key indicators, including those relating to Anganwadi Centres and the services provided therein, for instance proportion of Anganwadis with own buildings. Under the above-mentioned competitive ranking and allocation arrangement, the district of Wayanad, on the basis of its monthly performances, has been sanctioned an amount of Rs.6 crores out of which an amount of Rs.1.8 crore has been sanctioned for 2 proposals submitted by the District to improve its Anganwadi Centres.

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