

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2945

ANSWERED ON:30.03.2012

RESTRUCTURING OF ICDS SCHEME

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

- (a) whether the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme has failed to address the problem of malnutrition among children in the age group of 0-6 years;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to restructure the ICDS Scheme in the Twelfth Five Year Plan;
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the funds earmarked under the said scheme for the said Plan; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for the effective implementation of the Scheme during the Twelfth Five-Year Plan?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) & (b): The problem of malnutrition is complex, multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature which needs to be tackled through focused and coordinated interventions in areas of food security, sanitation and safe- drinking water, nutrition, health, family welfare and poverty alleviation and income generation. Besides, early marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies, inadequate purchasing power, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children also aggravate malnutrition among children.

Since there are multiple determinants of malnutrition, this cannot be addressed by single sector scheme or intervention alone. This requires multi sectoral, direct and indirect interventions. Among the various schemes/programmes of different Ministries, one of the programmes being implemented by the Government is the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Scheme.

ICDS is primarily a Child Development Scheme. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme which provides a package of six services to children below 6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers in which supplementary nutrition is one of them. It is not a full nutrition programme. The supplementary nutrition is meant to bridge the gap between the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) and the Actual Dietary Intake (ADI).

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is a self selecting scheme. It is open to all children below six years of age and pregnant and lactating mothers. As on 31.12.2011, 786.30 lakh children and 181.10 lakh Pregnant and lactating mothers are registered for availing the benefit of nutrition at Anganwadi Centres under ICDS.

As per the National Family Health Survey, the prevalence of underweight children below 3 years of age has declined from 42.7% in 1998-99 (NFHS-2) to 40.4% in 2005-06 (NFHS-3).

Further, Government has accorded priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through State Governments/UT Administrations which directly or indirectly have an impact on the nutritional status of the children. Several of the schemes namely, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojna have been expanded in recent years to provide for increased coverage and improved services to the people and these would further improve the nutrition status of the children.

(c)to(e): To address various programmatic, administrative and operational challenges like inadequate infrastructure and facilities, poor focus on under 3s and Early Childhood Education, poor convergence of programmes/services, management of SNP and cost indexation, slow pace of universalisation, coordination & convergence with health, water & sanitation etc., a proposal to strengthen and restructure the ICDS with inter-alia (a) special focus on pregnant and lactating mothers and children under 3 years, (b) forging strong institutional convergence with National Rural Health Mission and Total Sanitation Campaign, particularly, at the district and village levels (c) models providing flexibility at local levels for community participation (d) strengthening package of service and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) (e) improving Supplementary Nutrition Programme including cost indexation (f) care and nutrition counseling services (g) adequate care of severely underweight children (h) allocating adequate financial resource and to put ICDS in a mission mode etc. has been taken up by the Government in the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

The budgetary allocation will be subject to availability of funds. The proposed restructuring is one of the steps being taken by the Government for effective implementation of ICDS Scheme during the Twelfth Five-Year Plan.