

Child Development

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INTRODUCTION

As per 1991 census, India has around 150 million children, constituting 17.5% of India's population, who are below the age of 6 years. A large number of them live in economic and social environment which impede the child's physical and mental development. These conditions include poverty, poor environmental sanitation, disease, infection, inadequate access to primary health care, inappropriate child caring and feeding practices. Government of India proclaimed a **National Policy on Children** in August 1974 declaring children as, "supremely important asset". The policy provided the required framework for assigning priority to different needs of the child. The programme of the **Integrated Child Development Services(ICDS)** was launched in 1975 seeking to provide an integrated package of services in a convergent manner for the holistic development of the child.



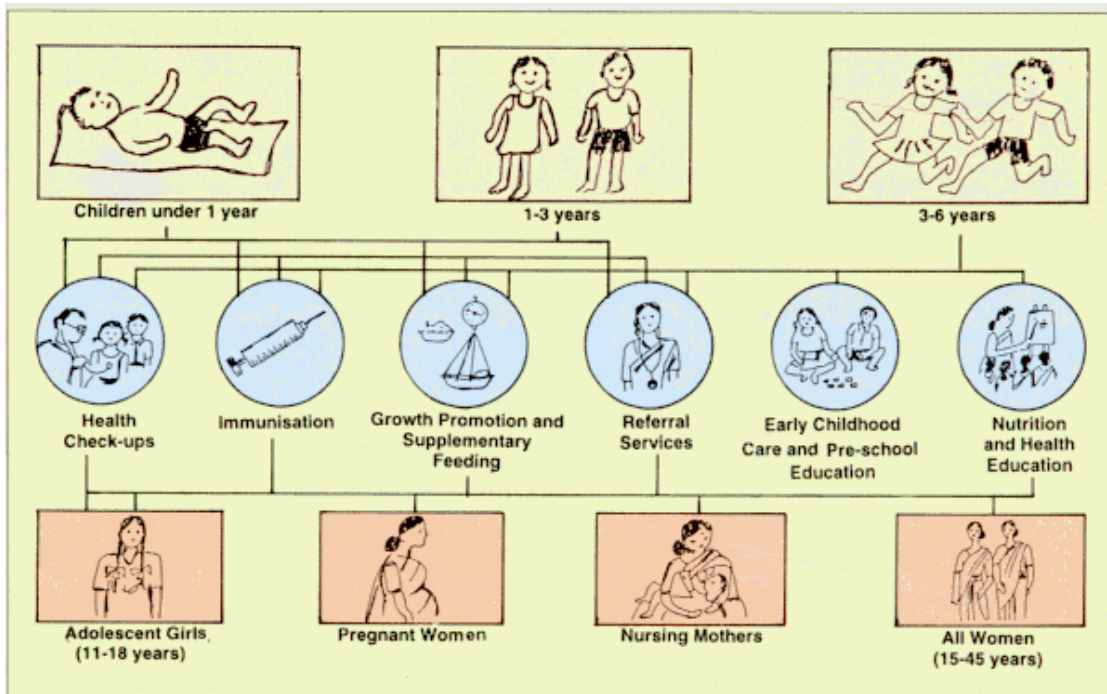
INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



SCHEME (ICDS)

ICDS symbolises the country's commitment to its children.

? ICDS promotes child survival and development through an integrated approach for converging basic services for improved child care, early stimulation and learning, improved enrolment and retention, health and nutrition, and water and environmental sanitation.



? Integrated and inter-sectoral nature, coordination mechanism, community involvement, training infrastructure and monitoring system make ICDS a unique programme.

? ICDS has the potential to achieve the major national nutrition, health and educational goals of the National Plan of Action for Children.

? ICDS provides increased opportunities for according children their rights.

? ICDS through its advocacy and social mobilisation components aims to empower the community using communication channels and media as tools for development.



The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme was conceived in 1975 with an integrated delivery package of early childhood services so that their synergistic effect can be taken full advantage of. The Scheme aims to improve the nutritional and health status of vulnerable groups including pre-school children, pregnant women and nursing mothers through providing a

package of services including supplementary nutrition, pre-school education, immunization, health check-up, referral services and nutrition & health education. In addition, the Scheme envisages effective convergence of inter-sectoral services in the anganwadi centres.

Targetted Beneficiaries

The Scheme targets the most vulnerable groups of population including children upto 6 years of age, pregnant women and nursing mothers belonging to poorest of the poor families and living in disadvantaged areas including backward rural areas, tribal areas and urban slums. The identification of beneficiaries is done through surveying the community and identifying the families living below the poverty line.

Recipients	Calories	Grams of Protein
Children upto 6 Years	300	8-10
Adolescent Girls	500	20-25
Pregnant and nursing mothers	500	20-25
Malnourished Children	Double the daily supplement provided to the other children(6000 and/or special utrients on medical recommendation)	

Objectives

The objectives of the scheme are :-

- to improve the nutritional and health status of pre-school children in the age-group of 0-6 years;

- to lay the foundation of proper psychological development of the child;

- to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school drop-out;



Training of ICDS functionaries

The programme of training of ICDS functionaries at all levels such as Anganwadi Workers (focal point of delivery of ICDS services), Supervisors and Child Development Project Officers(in-charge of ICDS project) is being concurrently run to ensure the efficient delivery of services.

NIPCCD is an apex organisation for designing training programmes for ICDS functionaries. Training is imparted to ICDS functionaries through the NIPCCD through its three **Regional Centres at Lucknow, Guwahati and Bangalore**, 18 Middle Level Training Centers and 300 Anganwadi Workers Training Centres. In addition to this, the **Central Technical Committee** (now renamed as Central Technical Committee - Integrated Mother & Child Development) also **gives training to medical and para-medical staff.**



Balsevika Training Programme

The Balsevika Training Programme was started in 1961-62 to meet the requirements of trained personnel in the institutions implementing welfare programmes for children. The training programme is being implemented by the Indian Council for Child Welfare through 25 Balsevika Training Institutes. **About 1250 Balsevikas** are trained annually.



Creches/Day Care Centres for Children

In pursuance of the **National Policy for Children**, the scheme started in 1975. Children in the vulnerable age group of 0-5 of mainly migrant, casual and agricultural labourers and construction workers are provided with day-care services. There are **12470 creches** throughout the country. The Scheme is being implemented by **Central Social Welfare Board, Bhartiya Adimjati Sewa Sangh, Indian Council for Child Welfare.**

National Creche Fund (NCF)

The National Creche Fund (NCF) was set up during 1993-94 with a corpus of Rs.19.90 crores to meet the growing demand for creches. Under this scheme, assistance is given to registered voluntary organisations/mahila mandals to open and run creches. Only the interest accruing to the fund is utilised for the purpose. **1805 creches have been set up** from the Creche Fund.



The Early Child Education (ECE)

The scheme being implemented since 1982 has been visualised as a strategy to reduce the dropout rate and to improve the rate of retention of children in schools. The scheme is being run by voluntary organisations through **4365 ECE centres** in nine educationally backward States of **Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan,**

Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.



Balwadi Nutrition Programme (BNP)

The Programme is being implemented since 1971. There are around 5641 Balwadis throughout the country benefiting 2.25 lakh children. The programme extends supplementary nutrition consisting of 300 calories and 12.15 gms. of protein every day per child in the age group of 3-5 years.



MAJOR ACTIVITIES IN RESPECT OF CW DIVISION

National Plan of Action For Children



OTHER PROGRAMMES

National Children's Fund

The National Children's Fund was created during the International Year of the Child in 1979 under the Charitable Endowment Fund Act, 1890. The Fund provides financial assistance to voluntary agencies for implementing programmes for the welfare of children including rehabilitation of destitute children.

National Plan of Action for Children

India is a signatory to the 27 survival and development goals laid down by the World Summit on children 1990. In order to implement these goals, the Department of Women & Child Development has formulated a National Plan of Action on Children. Each concerned Central Ministries/Departments, State Governments/U.Ts. and Voluntary Organisations dealing with women and children have been asked too take up appropriate measures to implement the Action Plan. These goals have been integrated into National Development Plans. **A Monitoring Committee under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (Women & Child Development)** reviews the achievement of goals set in the National Plan of Action. All concerned Central Ministries/Departments are represented on the Committee.

The Department addressed the Chief Secretaries of States to prepare State Plans of Action (SPAs) on the lines of NPA, specifying their targets for 1995 as well as for 2000 and spelling out strategies for holistic child development.

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strategies for holistic child development.

United Nations Children's Fund

Department of Women and Child Development is the nodal department for UNICEF. India is associated with UNICEF since 1949 and is now in the fifth decade of cooperation for assisting most disadvantaged children and their mothers. Traditionally, UNICEF has been supporting India in a number of sectors like child development, women's development, urban basic services, support for community based convergent services, health, education, nutrition, water & sanitation, childhood disability, children in especially difficult circumstances, information and communication, planning and programme support. India is presently a member on the UNICEF Executive Board till 31 December, 1997. The board has 3 regular sessions and one annual session in a year. Strategies and other important matters relating to UNICEF are discussed in those meetings. A meeting of Government of India and UNICEF officials was concurred on 12th November, 1997 to finalise the strategy and areas for programme of cooperation for the next Master Plan of operations 1999-2002 which is to synchronise with the Ninth Plan of Government of India.

