

## INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE: A TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND ITS WORKING IN AURANGABAD DISTRICT IN MAHARASHTRA

PRATIBHA R. GIRBANE

**Abstract:** Health and nutrition is very important in life of every human being. Without addressing these basic issues human development could not be achieved. Among all human beings additional attention is required to be given towards women because of role they play which is different from men. Nutrition plays different roles during different stages of a woman's life. During childhood it's important for proper growth. During pregnancy diet plays a role in a healthy pregnancy and prevention of chronic disease. During lactation its imp for health of herself and also of the child. In older year nutrition can help to keep minds sharp and bodies strong. Constitution of India under Art.47 imposes obligation on the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties. In furtherance of it government has implemented number of policies for strengthening health of women. Attempt is made in this paper to focus on one of such policy namely Integrated Child Development Service (hereinafter termed as ICDS) under which various services are provided to women in respect of nutrition etc and thereby empowerment of women is sought to be achieved.

**Introduction: Object And Justification:** Main object of this paper is to study functioning and progress of ICDS and to observe how it is an effective tool for empowerment of women. Apart from the theoretical provisions of service attempt is made to cover the actual schemes implemented under this service. For that purpose I have selected Aurangabad District. There are two reasons for selecting Aurangabad District. One as I am resident of this district it will be convenient for me to get relevant information and second this district has done incredible work in this field in State of Maharashtra and also in India.

**What Is Icds?:** It is a centrally sponsored programme implemented by the Department of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Human Resource Development of Government of India. It is a programme to ensure development of children. It was initiated in 1975 and only 33 blocks were selected for this purpose[1]. Initially the criterion for providing service was below poverty line. In 2005 this service was expanded throughout country[2]. It is one of the largest childcare programmes in the world and is in operation for more than three decades. The objectives of the service were to improve the nutritional and health status of children less than six years, to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical, and social development of the child, to reduce the incidences of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropouts and to enhance the capability of mother to look after the normal health and nutritional health of the child through proper nutrition and health education. Beneficiaries under the scheme are pregnant women, nursing mothers, children less than 6 yrs and adolescent girls. These objectives are sought to be achieved through package of six services. Supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up, referral services, preschool non formal education and nutrition and health education. As aim of paper is to focus on women empowerment hence provision in respect of women are only dealt in detail further

**Supplementary Service:** All families in community are surveyed to identify pregnant and nursing mothers.

They are provided with supplementary feeding support for 300 days in a year.

**Immunization:** Under this service pregnant women and lactating mother are provided with TT and other vaccinations to protect them from future problems.

**Health Check-Up:** This includes antenatal care of expectant mother and postnatal care of nursing mother by way of regular health check-ups recording of weight, immunization, to deal with anemia, iron deficiency etc.

**Nutrition And Health Education:** It aims at providing health education to women especially in the age group of 15-45 years so that they can look after their own health, nutrition and development needs as well as of their children and families.

The task of providing these services is done by ICDS team consisting of anganwadi workers, anganwadi helpers, supervisors, child development project officers, and district programme officers.

**Various Schemes Implemented Under Icds In Aurangabad Dist:** There are 553 projects in Maharashtra out of which 364 projects are in rural areas, 85 projects in Tribal areas, 104 projects in Urban Slum areas. There are 88,272 Anganwadi functioning Under ICDS scheme in Maharashtra[3]. Aurangabad is one of 35 dist in Maharashtra. It is capital of marathwada region. In Aurangabad district I visited department of women and child in Zillah Parishad. Following particulars are explained on basis of information and details provided by the concerned officers of the department working under ICDS. There are total 8 project officers, 90 superintendents are working. This service is provided to the beneficiaries mainly through anganwadis and there are total 2700 big anganwadis and 440 mini anganwadis working. The criterion for establishment of anganwadi is the number of population residing in particular area. For population of 800 big anganwadi is constituted and for population of 400 mini anganwadi is constituted. Anganwadi works through anganwadi workers who are women and are also trained for efficient working by the concerned department. Further details explained hereinafter are also as per the

information given by the concerned department.

**Rajmata Jijau Health And Nutrition Campaign:** ICDS district unit Aurangabad carried out this campaign introduced by state of Maharashtra and implemented different programmes in campaign. The programmes in respect of women were as follows:

- Checking BMI, HB, HEIGHT, WT of adolescent girls and providing solutions if they have any problem.
- Checking Weight and HB of pregnant women and if they have any deficiency providing them use of IFA tablets and guidance about balance diet a onetime additional supplementary nutrition is provided to pregnant women.
- Special unit was arranged for training and Exhibition of recepies, celebration of Village health and nutrition Day for emphasizing importance of nutritious food
- Participation of Government organisation, colleges, NGOS, all MPs. MLAs and member of local bodies is taken for efficient working.
- Educating the women on milk bank for feeding the child in absence of mother.
- Establishment of Hirkani kaksh which is mobile van for women working in farm or in any enterprise so that they can easily feed their child.
- Counseling and capacity building of mothers at the time of Home visits.
- Counseling of new married couples, Mother in laws and families on importance of nutritious food.
- Thus under this campaign different activities were done for safeguarding health of women without which empowerment cannot be achieved

**Mother Care Centre:** It is an innovative step taken in Aurangabad district for providing more attention towards mothers who are either expectant or nursing. There are total 293 mother care centre working in Aurangabad out of which 40 in Aurangabad city, 37 in Paithan, 10 in Vaijapur, 49 in Gangapur, 34 in Sillod, 9 in Soygaon, 24 in Khultabad, 60 in Kannad, and 30 in Fulambri are constituted. This centre works through anganwadi workers and anganwadi helpers. Through this centre following activities are carried out:

- Finding the health related problem of women after detail study of age, weight, financial position, HB, BMI, and family background and attempting to cure it.
- Explaining pregnant women importance of breast feeding within one hour after birth of child.
- Motivating women to read good literature and arranging for indoor and sitting games for women.
- Arranging visits of anganwadi workers, anganwadi helpers and superintendent in mother care centre so that they can interact with women and satisfy their problem
- Demonstrating importance of nutritious food to pregnant women and practically making arrangements for eating together for providing variety of food to them Special attention under

Centre is given towards certain categories of mother namely who are:

Less than 18 yrs or more than 30 yrs, having height less than 145 cm, weight less than 45 kg, HB less than 7.5, BMI less than 18.5, swelling on legs, first time pregnant, earlier had repeated abortions, have bleeding during pregnancy, low or high BP, economically backward, having family problem, is suffering from sugar or any other serious disease, have more than 2 children. All these mothers are provided with nutritional aid, supplementary services and other necessary services. Hence under Centre attempt is made to tackle the problem of women health by employing available means and thereby to safeguard their empowerment.

**Iso Anganwadi:** Anganwadi is the primary institution which play important role in implementation of ICDS .In Aurangabad from last several years attempt is made to improve the standard of anganwadi. Anganwadi at Abdimandi was the first to get ISO certificate and today near about 300 anganwadis in Aurangabad get ISO certification. Which in itself is evidence of standard of services provided through anganwadi. Upgradation in services and infrastructure is done through active community participation. Village community take ownership of its anganwadi and donate in cash and also donate resources like furniture, uniforms, books, TVs, DVDs, foot wear, water filters, mirrors, toys food grains etc. No government funds were used for this purpose. Public contribution of more than Rs 10 crore was collected. Funds were used for up gradation of anganwadis and for providing additional facilities which include 100% institutional deliveries, early initiation of breast feeding within 1 hr of birth, mother care centre, hirkani kakshas etc Aurangabad is the only dist in Maharashtra to get ISO certificate to such large number of aw. It is important to mention here that teams ICDS functionaries from many other districts and even from other states have been regularly visiting Aurangabad dist to learn and get inspiration from it.

**Kuposhan Nirmulan Trust:** It was set up through voluntary donations of one day's salary of all ZP employees. An amount of at least 2 crore Rs was collected in this trust and is being used to improve the nutritional status of children and services under ICDS.

**High-Tech Anganwadi:** High tech anganwadi is one step ahead in maintenance of standard. One of anganwadi in village Bharadi in Sillod tq of Aurangabad dist get ISO 9001 certification and thereby became first high-tech aw in Maharashtra state and also first in country as contended by Chief CEO ZP Aurangabad. This was also achieved by participation of village community. High-tech aw have computers, colour TV, air conditioners, internet connection, biometric system. This aw which was under ICDS was adopted by Shri Aniskha Pathan who shouldered the responsibility of providing all facilities to anganwadi.

**Vrikshkanya Scheme:** It was tree plantation scheme which was again different idea for encouraging the girl child birth and prevention of female feticide. Under this

scheme parents having girl child were to plant a tree which was given their daughters name. They were required to preserve the tree and take care of it as like their daughter. It satisfied two purposes, one prevention of female feticide and second preservation of environment.

**Conclusion:** As quoted by Diane Mariechild, "A woman is full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform". Women play different role in different

stages of her life where everybody expects her to be perfect. This perfectness is not possible if she does not possess good health. Only healthy women can maintain health of family members and thereby she is indirectly helping in building the nation. By way of implementation of ICDS step is taken to protect the health of women. And different innovative schemes introduced by Aurangabad unit are worth mentioning and ideal for others also to follow.

**References:**

1. file:///G:/icds/Rajmata%20Jijau%20Mother%20-20Child%20Health%20and%20Nutrition%20Mission.htm
2. file:///G:/icds/Dept.%20of%20Women%20&%20Child%20Development.htm
3. file:///G:/icds/ICDS%20General%20%20Women%20Empowerment%20&%20Child%20Development,%20Government%20Of%20Uttarakhand,%20India.htm
4. file:///G:/icds/ICDS.htm#
5. file:///G:/icds/National%20Informatics%20Centre,%20Aurangabad.htm
6. www.zpaurangabad.com
7. www.nutritionmissionmah.gov.in
8. www.righttofoodindia.org
9. M.P.Singh –The Constitution of India, Delhi Law House , 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2009
10. Details provided by Women and Child Development Department of Zillah Parishad Aurangabad Working as Asst. Prof. in Law at M. P. Law College, Aurangabad
11. file:///G:/icds/Dept.%20of%20Women%20&%20Child%20Development.htm visited on 12/01/2014
12. Peoples Union for Civil Liberties vs Union of India Writ Petition civil 196 of 2001
13. file:///G:/icds/ICDS.htm#visited on 16/01/14

\*\*\*

Asst Prof In Law, M.P College,Aurangabad