



PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS**

**THREE HUNDRED AND FORTY SIXTH REPORT
ON**

**Action Taken by the Government on the
Recommendations/Observations contained in the Three
Hundred Thirty Eighth Report on Demands for Grants 2022-23
of the Ministry of Women and Child Development**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 19th December, 2022)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 19th December, 2022)



Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
December, 2022 / Agrahayana, 1944, (Saka)

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Recommendations/Observations contained in the Three Hundred Thirty
Eighth Report on Demands for Grants 2022-23 of the
Ministry of Women and Child Development**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 19th December, 2022)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 19th December, 2022)



**Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
December, 2022/ Agrahayana, 1944(Saka)**

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To be annexed later

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(Constituted *w.e.f.* 13thSeptember, 2022)

1. Shri Vivek Thakur - Chairman

RAJYA SABHA

2. Dr. Faiyaz Ahmad
3. Shri Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya
4. Ms. Sushmita Dev
5. *Dr. K. Keshava Rao
6. Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
7. Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu
8. Dr. M. Thambidurai
9. Shri Ghanshyam Tiwari
10. Shrimati Sangeeta Yadav

LOK SABHA

11. Shri Rajendra Agrawal
12. **Dr. T.R. Paarivendhar
13. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
14. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
15. Shri Sangam Lal Kadedin Gupta
16. Shri Sri Krishna Devarayalu Lavu
17. Shri Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi
18. Shri Sadashiv Kisan Lokhande
19. Dr. Jaisiddeshwar Shivacharya Mahaswamiji
20. Shri Asit Kumar Mal
21. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
22. Shri Balak Nath
23. Shri Chandeshwar Prasad
24. Shri T. N. Prathapan
25. Shri Ratansinh Magansinh Rathod
26. Shri Jagannath Sarkar
27. Dr. Arvind Kumar Sharma
28. Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma
29. Shri Dharambir Singh
30. Shrimati Pratibha Singh
31. Shri S. Venkatesan

*Nominated *w.e.f.* 11.10.2022

**Nominated *w.e.f.* 16.11.2022

SECRETARIAT

Shri Jagdish Kumar, Additional Secretary
Smt. Nirmala Bhatt, Joint Secretary
Shri A. K. Mallick, Director
Shri Har Prateek Arya, Deputy Secretary
Shri Pritam Kumar, Deputy Secretary
Shri Vijay Kumar Rai, Under Secretary
Smt. Suman Khurana, Committee Officer
Shri Rohit Kumar Mishra, Committee Officer
Shri Agam Mittal, Assistant Committee Officer

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, do hereby present this Three Hundred and Forty Sixth Report of the Committee on the Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the Three Hundred and Thirty Eighth Report of the Committee on "Demands for Grants 2022-23 of the Ministry of Women and Child Development" which was presented to the Rajya Sabha and laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 16th March, 2022.

2. The Action Taken Notes in respect of Recommendations contained in above mentioned Report were received from the Ministry of Women and Child Development *vide* their communication dated 30th August, 2022.

3. The Committee considered the draft Report and adopted the same in its meeting held on 15th December, 2022.

NEW DELHI

15th December, 2022

Agrahayana 24, 1944 (Saka)

Shri Vivek Thakur

Chairman

*Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Education,
Women, Children, Youth and Sports*

ACRONYMS

ANM	Auxiliary Nurse-Midwife
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
AWC	Anganwadi Centre
AWH	Anganwadi Helper
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy
<i>BBBP</i>	<i>Beti Bachao Beti Padhao</i>
BE	Budget Estimates
CARA	Central Adoption Resources Authority
<i>CCI</i>	<i>Child Care Institution</i>
<i>CPS</i>	<i>Child Protection Services</i>
CSWB	Central Social Welfare Board
<i>CWC</i>	<i>Child Welfare Committee</i>
<i>CWPO</i>	<i>Child Welfare Police Officer</i>
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
<i>DCPU</i>	<i>District Child Protection Unit</i>
<i>DELNET</i>	<i>Developing Library Network</i>
<i>DLCW</i>	<i>District Level Centre for Women</i>
<i>DLSA</i>	<i>District Legal Service Authority</i>
<i>DM</i>	<i>District Magistrate</i>
<i>DWS</i>	<i>Drinking Water and Sanitation</i>
<i>EC</i>	<i>Empowered Committee</i>
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
<i>EFC</i>	<i>Expenditure Finance Committee</i>
<i>EWRs</i>	<i>Elected Women Representatives</i>
FNB	Food and Nutrition Board
FY	Financial Year
GFR	General Financial Rules
<i>IBRD</i>	<i>International Bank for Reconstruction and Development</i>
ICDS	<i>Integrated Child Development Services</i>
<i>IA</i>	<i>Implementing Agency</i>

<i>IT</i>	<i>Information Technology</i>
<i>ITPA</i>	<i>Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act</i>
<i>JJB</i>	<i>Juvenile Justice Board</i>
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MLALADS	Member of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Scheme
<i>MoU</i>	<i>Memorandum of Understanding</i>
MPLADS	Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme
MPV	Mahila Police Volunteer
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NCLP	National Child Labour Project
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NCW	National Commission for Women
NeGD	National e-Governance Division
NEP	National Education Policy
NHFS	<i>National Family Health Survey</i>
<i>NHRC</i>	<i>National Human Rights Commission</i>
<i>NICSI</i>	<i>National Informatics Centre Services Inc.</i>
<i>NIMHANS</i>	<i>National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences</i>
NIPCCD	National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
OSC	One Stop Centre
PAB	Project Approval Board
PAP	Prospective Adoptive Parents
PMMVY	Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
POCSO	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
PW&LM	Pregnant Women and Lactating Mother
RE	Revised Estimates
RMK	Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
RO	Reverse Osmosis
RWHS	Rain Water Harvesting Structures
SAG	Scheme for Adolescent Girls
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SARA	State Adoption Resources Authority
SCPCR	State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights

SCPS	State Child protection Society
SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Unit
SoE	Statement of Expenditure
<i>SRCW</i>	<i>State Resource Centre for Women</i>
UC	Utilization Certificate
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency's Fund
<i>UNODC</i>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UT	Union Territory
VHSNC	Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committee
VO	Voluntary Organization
WHL	Women Helpline
WLCWPC	Ward Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee

REPORT

The Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports deals with the action taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in its 338th Report on “Demands for Grants 2022-23 of the Ministry of Women and Child Development” which was presented to the Rajya Sabha and laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 16th March, 2022.

2. The Action Taken Notes in respect of Recommendations contained in above mentioned Report were received from the Ministry of Women and Child Development *vide* their communication dated 30th August, 2022. These have been categorized as follows.

Chapter I: Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government

Paras – 2.3.5, 2.5.1, 3.1.8, 3.2.6, 3.3.4, 3.4.3, 3.4.5, 3.5.1, 3.5.3,
3.5.5, 3.7, 3.8

Total - 12

Chapter II: Recommendations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:-

Paras – 2.2.1, 2.4.2, 3.6.2, 3.7.1, 3.9.1

Total - 5

Chapter III: Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:-

Paras- 3.1.7, 3.5.2, 3.6.1

Total - 3

Chapter-IV: Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are still awaited:-

Paras - Nil

Total - Nil

CHAPTER-I

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

ASSESSMENT OF THE DEMANDS FOR GRANTS OF THE MINISTRY

Recommendation

The Committee is constrained to observe that the actual expenditure has been showing a declining trend over the years which is not only worrisome but is also indicative that there is a need to address the issues which are proving as obstacles. The Committee understands that under each of these schemes/programmes, financial and physical targets are fixed in accordance with the Annual Action Plan, preparation of which itself is a very exhaustive exercise. However, funds remaining underutilized indicate that financial prudence is not being exercised while seeking budget allocation under these schemes or there are gaps in proper planning, implementation and monitoring which is resulting in steep decline in actual expenditure. The Committee also appreciates that for the past two years, the pandemic and the related restriction of activities has had a severe effect on the implementation of the Schemes. However, in such a situation, it is the targeted beneficiaries who are denied the benefits of the schemes/programmes. The Committee observes that if allocation is not utilized fully, the purpose of recommending increased allocation gets defeated. The Committee, accordingly, recommends the Ministry to exercise financial prudence and make endeavour to utilize the allocated funds optimally and judiciously. The Ministry may devise a framework for cent percent utilization of funds and fix responsibilities for any lapse at any level. Moreover, if there is underutilization of funds in the schemes, the Ministry may re-appropriate such funds at revised stage for other schemes where there is a shortage of funds after obtaining due approval of the Ministry of Finance.

(para 2.3.5)

Action Taken

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has informed that the actual expenditure incurred by the Ministry from the year 2016-17 is indicated below:

(₹ in Cr.)

Year	BE	Expenditure
2016-17	17408.12	16597.54
2017-18	22094.67	20020.47
2018-19	24700.00	22534.33
2019-20	29164.90	22679.90
2020-21	30007.10	18744.13
2021-22	24435.00	21283.56

From the above data, it may be seen that there has been a trend of increasing expenditure/releases by this Ministry over the past years; however this increasing trend was dampened due to the COVID-19 pandemic during FYs 2020-21 and 2021-22. It may also be seen that in FY 2021-22, there was a sharp rise in release of funds compared to the previous FY 2020-21 despite pandemic conditions. It is pertinent to inform that all the MWCD schemes are Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and are thus implemented by the States/Union Territories. The budget allocation for these schemes is finalized based on inputs received from the States/UTs regarding their requirements and the trend of expenditure over the previous years. Further, under CSS, States/STs require to contribute their corresponding share of funds and also need to incur a minimum of 75% expenditure of total available funds, submit the Statement of Expenditure (SoE)/UCs to enable this Ministry to release the central share of funds. Wherever the above conditions are not met, releases of the central share gets affected/delayed resulting in unspent balances at the fag end of the FY. Efforts are always made to re-appropriate the funds at the RE stage and to deploy them where required.

Keeping in view the recommendations of the Committee, this Ministry would make renewed efforts to further strengthen the monitoring mechanism to ensure that States/UTs seek their allocations timely. There are several initiatives in the pipeline that shall make monitoring more effective.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that in view of this flagship scheme being the mainstay with 80% of the total allocation being used through this scheme, a well-defined monitoring mechanism with inbuilt system for regular monitoring will be helpful in fund management and also in plugging the loopholes, if any, in implementation of the Scheme. The budget allocated for Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 (Umbrella ICDS - Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls) is Rs 20,263 crore, which is a small increase from Rs 20,105 crore in 2021-22. The Committee hopes that the suggested monitoring mechanism will also help the Ministry to remain more aware through continuous evaluation, so that if needed, additional funds with valid justification and rationale can be sought at the RE stage.*

(para 2.5.1)

Action Taken

The Ministry has submitted that *vide* communication dated 13.01.2021 to all States/UTs, they have issued Streamlining Guidelines on Quality Assurance, Roles and Responsibilities of Duty Holders, procedure for procurement, integrating AYUSH

* Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.

concepts and Data Management and Monitoring through 'Poshan Tracker' for transparency, efficiency and accountability in delivery of Supplementary Nutrition. Under these guidelines, the District Magistrate has been designated as the Nodal Point in the district for monitoring nutritional status and quality standards. The District Magistrate will also chair the District Nutrition Committee. Further, the utilization of funds is also monitored through Utilisation Certificates / SoEs submitted by States/UTs from time to time.

Information Technology systems are being leveraged to strengthen and bring about transparency in nutrition delivery support systems. The 'Poshan Tracker' application was rolled out by the Ministry of Women and Child Development on 1st March 2021 through National e-Governance Division (NeGD), MyGov, as an important governance tool. Technology under Poshan Tracker is being leveraged for dynamic identification of stunting, wasting, under-weight prevalence among children; and last mile tracking of nutrition service delivery.

The recommendation of the Committee to seek additional funds with valid justification and rationale at RE stage for the current financial year has been taken note of.

STATUS OF INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER AGANWADI SERVICES DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Recommendation

During the deposition by the Ministry, several queries in respect of the dilapidated state of old building housing Anganwadis, wages of Anganwadi workers and avoidance of their engagement by State Governments in other activities unrelated to their core work, were raised by the Committee. The Committee also suggests for review of the issues like using Anganwadi workers for various other duties, enhancement of their Honorarium, opening of large model Anganwadi Centres in each District, engagement of Mahila Mandals, finding avenues for CSR funds for building AWCs. The Committee is of the view that each of the issues raised needs in-depth examination as they bring to the fore the ground level issues and challenges which this flagship Scheme faces. The Committee recommends that these issues be thoroughly examined, and a status report be presented to the Committee in this regard.

(para 3.1.8)

Action Taken

A status report in respect of each of the issues raised by the Committee is as under:

- (i) Dilapidated state of old buildings housing Anganwadis:

Status of Infrastructure at AWCs (as on 01.06.2021)

(in Lakh)

AWCs in Pucca Building	12.56
AWCs with Drinking Water Supply	12.23
AWCs with Sanitation Facilities	11.02
Growth Monitoring Devices	11.94
Smartphones with States/UTs	11.03

For construction of AWCs, States would continue to tap funds from various schemes such as 15th Financial Cycle funds with Panchayats, Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADs), Members of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Scheme (MLALADS), Backward Regions Grant Fund, Rural Infrastructure Development Fund, National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, etc. States/UTs would also co-locate those Anganwadi Centres which are running on rent without sufficient infrastructure, to the nearby Primary Schools.

As regards improvement of condition of Anganwadis, it is stated that under Saksham Anganwadi, across the country 2 lakh Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) @ 40,000 AWCs per year would be strengthened, upgraded and rejuvenated for improved service delivery, for stimulating the creative, social, emotional, cognitive and intellectual development of children under 6 years of age. Under this component, provision would be made for improved infrastructure including Wi-Fi connectivity, LED screens, Reverse Osmosis (RO) machine and smart audio-visual learning aids and child-friendly learning equipment for Early Childhood Care and Education delivery. It has been approved to install Rain Water Harvesting Structures in 2 lakh Saksham Anganwadi buildings. Saksham Anganwadi will additionally have a Poshan Vatika.

(ii) Anganwadi workers for various other duties

This Ministry has issued strict instructions to States/ UTs on several occasions to avoid the engagement of AWWs/ AWHs for other duty except for Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) and other women/ child related work/ activities.

(iii) Enhancement of their Honorarium

Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) & Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs), being honorary workers, are paid a monthly honoraria as decided by the Government from time to time. The Government has enhanced the honorarium given to Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWH) w.e.f 01.10.2018. In addition to the honorarium to AWWs/AWHs, Anganwadi Workers are also eligible for an incentive

of Rs 500/- for feeding of beneficiary data, home visits and weighing and measuring on the Portal. Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) would also be eligible for performance linked incentive of Rs.250/- per month for facilitating proper cleanliness and functioning of Anganwadi Centres. In addition, States/ UTs are also paying additional monetary incentives/honorarium to these functionaries from their own resources.

In recognition of the hardwork and dedication during the COVID 19 pandemic, States/ UTs have been informed regarding the inclusion of AWWs and AWHs in Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package with Insurance Cover of Rs.50 Lakh as per the prescribed norms.

(iv) Opening of large model Anganwadi Centres in each district:

Under Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, 2 Lakh Anganwadis @ 40,000 per year have to be upgraded as Saksham Anganwadis for improved service delivery. Details have been provided in response above. For the year 2022-23, States have already been requested to select districts for upgradation of Government owned AWCs to Saksham Anganwadi Centres.

(v) Finding avenues for CSR funds for building AWCs:

Under Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, an Umbrella Mission launched by the Ministry, it is proposed that States at their own discretion may involve Individuals, Companies, Business houses and Institution of repute and CSR funds for construction of AWCs purely on pro bono basis without any obligation. Similarly, DMs may encourage/mobilize resources for this purely on pro bono basis and without any obligation. States/UTs may similarly permit funding of Anganwadi Infrastructure e.g., toilets, RWHSs , DWS etc., or any aspect of Anganwadi activity such as ECCE material, furniture, cooking utensils, kitchen infrastructure, storage facility, etc.

FINANCIAL PROGRESS OF POSHAN ABHIYAN

Recommendation

The Committee notes that to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach, and outcomes, Government had merged the Supplementary Nutrition Programme and Poshan Abhiyan to launch Mission POSHAN 2.0. The Scheme aims to provide holistic nutrition and improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The Committee observes that multiple forms of malnutrition have been rampant across all age groups in India for several decades now resulting in deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in intake of nutrients. The National Family Health Survey, December 2020 mentions that malnutrition increased significantly among children in 22 States and Union Territories between 2015-16 and 2019-20. Also, as per a Lancet study in 2019, 68% deaths of children (under five years) were due to malnutrition. With Covid-19 further exacerbating this challenge in the country, with

reduction in income and disruption of essential services making the economically disadvantaged population more vulnerable to malnutrition and food insecurities during lockdown, it is understood that the progress made must have been affected adversely. The Committee is of the view that Mission Poshan 2.0 is a critical step towards addressing the challenge of malnutrition; however, its successes will substantially depend on the way it is implemented. In this respect, the Committee recommends that special efforts be made by the Ministry to highlight and firm up clarity in roles, objectives and targets for all stakeholders involved as this will help to provide a sustained focus to the Scheme.

(para 3.2.6)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that as per the final NFHS-5 report, 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%.

However, to address various policy and systemic gaps, the ICDS and Anganwadi Services schemes were re-evaluated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in respect of programme design, implementation process, outcome and impact and for re-assessing the relevance of the programme in achieving its aims and goals.

The Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Poshan Abhiyaan have been re-aligned under 'Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0' for maximizing nutritional outcomes. A paradigm shift has been undertaken for the first time by the Ministry of Women and Child Development for improving nutritional norms and standards, quality and testing of Take-Home Ration (not raw ration), promoting greater stakeholder participation, re-enforcing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity around traditional community food habits and by improving digital infrastructure support for last-mile tracking and monitoring of nutrition delivery

Detailed *Streamlining Guidelines on Quality Assurance, Roles and Responsibilities of Duty Holders, procedure for procurement, integrating AYUSH concepts and Data Management and Monitoring through 'Poshan Tracker' for transparency, efficiency and accountability in delivery of Supplementary Nutrition* were issued on 13th January 2021. The guidelines include the need for quality testing and identify the key roles and responsibilities at various levels including at grass root levels etc. Further, the guidelines mandate that States should launch a drive for identification of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) children for referral to hospitals (if required) and AYUSH centres in accordance with the detailed action plan approved by the District Nutrition Committee to be finalized in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer.

Under the said Guidelines, District Magistrate shall be the Nodal Point in the district for monitoring nutritional and quality standards. Further, for ease of administration, SDM/Tehsildars/BDOs may be nominated as co-nodal officers

responsible for their respective Tehsil/Sub-Division/Block. Chief Secretary of the State/UT shall coordinate the activities of various departments through a State Level Steering Committee to ensure effective convergence between various schemes/programs having bearing on nutrition and review the progress made regarding nutritional indicators on regular basis.

Further, to facilitate proper monitoring and evaluation as well as proper implementation of the scheme, an Empowered Committee headed by Secretary, MoWCD shall be constituted. The Committee shall, inter alia, supervise the usage of the budget, lay down detailed cost-norms and recommend such changes in the guidelines of the scheme as deemed fit.

These roles and responsibilities as per the Guidelines will continue to be an integral part of Poshan 2.0. The roles and responsibilities at Central, State and District level upto the level of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers are clearly outlined in Mission Poshan 2.0 scheme guidelines. Further, social audit by stakeholders, such as the Poshan Panchayats, Mothers' Groups and VHSNCs are recommended for community monitoring and community ownership of the Anganwadi programme.

SCHEME FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Recommendation

The Committee observes that the Scheme recognizes the importance of the allaround development and empowerment of adolescent girls and provides a nationwide platform to address their challenges. The Committee is of the view that besides scaling the programme in all districts of the country, mechanism for keeping sustained focus on outreach and performance for improved implementation must be built. The Committee recommends for putting in place a continuous monitoring and corrective action taking review of existing systems, and the challenges noticed in implementation. In case of difficulties being noticed, possibilities may be explored for alternative efficient mechanisms for implementation of the Scheme which has the potential to facilitate a healthy and empowered female adolescent population in India.

(para 3.3.4)

Action Taken

With the introduction of Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0, the Scheme for Adolescent Girls has been revised and subsumed under Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0. The beneficiaries under the Scheme have been revised to identify Adolescent Girls in the age group of 14 to 18 years in all Aspirational Districts and the North Eastern States. The revised Scheme aims at providing nutritional support to identified adolescent girls in the age group of 14 years to 18 years in the Aspirational Districts and North Eastern States for improving their health and nutritional status under the nutrition component and providing them Iron Folic Acid (IFA)

supplementation, Health check-up and Referral Service, Nutrition & Health Education (NHE), skilling etc. under non-nutrition component of the Scheme.

For effective monitoring of Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0, the 'Poshan Tracker' application has been rolled out through National e-Governance Division (NeGD), MyGov. It is a governance tool to strengthen and bring about transparency in nutrition delivery support systems. Technology under Poshan Tracker is being leveraged for (i) dynamic identification of stunting, wasting, under-weight prevalence among children; and (ii) last mile tracking of nutrition service delivery.

Poshan Tracker management application will provide complete beneficiary management for pregnant women, lactating mothers, children and adolescent girls. The system will enable real-time monitoring and tracking of all AWCs, AWWs and beneficiaries on the defined indicators. Beneficiaries will be Aadhar seeded to ensure last mile tracking. Poshan Tracker will help in generating data, providing feedback to Program Managers and documenting the impact of scheme on nutrition indicators. The Ministry/ States/ Districts would be able to make effective timely interventions, based on the data from tracker, continuous evaluation and the progress of different components.

Recommendation

The Committee observes that as regards BE, RE and Actuals for 2021-22, out of the BE of Rs. 900 crores, which was revised to Rs. 829.65 Crores, the utilized allocation stands at Rs. 286.57 which is 34.54 % of the RE. Also BE (2022-23) is for Rs. 1472.17 crore. The Committee notes that Mission Vatsalya has a total financial implication of Rs 10916 Crore, with a Central Share of Rs 6928 crore and State share of Rs 3988 crore and during last 5 years, total allocation under Child Protection Services (CPS) Scheme was Rs 3852 crore which shows an increase of about 63.68% in allocation under Mission Vatsalya as compared to CPS scheme. The Committee is of the view that since children have been recognized by policy makers as one of the supreme national assets, and India is home to 472 million children up to the age of 18 years which comprise 39 percent of the country's population, it would be prudent for the Ministry to get an independent evaluation done of the manner of use of resources, allocations, coordination with State Governments, issues hampering effective implementation so that the objectives of Mission Vatsalya can be fully realized with the enhanced Budgetary allocation. Also, the Committee reiterates its recommendation made in its earlier Report that children who are rehabilitated should be able to integrate into the mainstream society for which it was recommended that the Ministry initiatives be undertaken in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Skill Development in formulating skill development and vocational training programmes for children rescued from begging, drug abuse, child labour and adolescent dropout girls.

(para 3.4.5)

Action Taken

The Ministry has submitted that for the year 2021-22, an amount of Rs.900.00 Crore has been allocated for “Mission Vatsalya” (Child Protection Services and Child Welfare Services) Scheme at Budget Estimate (BE) stage and Rs.829.65 Crore at Revised Estimate (RE) stage. It is submitted that an amount of Rs.761.17 Crore has been released up to 31.03.2022 under the Scheme. Further, it is submitted that an independent third party evaluation of the Scheme was done by NITI Aayog which has recommended for the continuation of Scheme with increased allocations for the scheme. Accordingly, Cabinet has approved the Mission Vatsalya Scheme subsuming Child Protection Services (CPS) Scheme up to FY 2025-26.

It has been further submitted that the Ministry has issued Mission Vatsalya guidelines, which also provide Inter-Ministerial Convergence with various Departments/ Ministries including:

Department/Ministry	Convergence
Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education	Education of Children living in CCIs under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Vocational training of children living in Child Care Institutes/ non-institutional Care under PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana & other schemes
Ministry of Labour & Employment	Under NCLP Scheme, the child labourers rescued from work, are produced before the Child Welfare Committee of Ministry of Women and Child Development.
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment	Provision of de-addiction intervention available under Drug de-addiction scheme, in CCIs funded under Mission Vatsalya including Orphan abandoned or surrendered children under scholarship scheme

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC COOPERATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (NIPCCD)

Recommendation

The Committee recalls that in its 326th Report, it has recommended that NIPCCD should create a platform for sharing their research with different Universities having gender/women studies and also use the research findings for the benefit of the general public. Also, NIPCCD should re-structure itself to provide consultation or consultancy services and make impact assessment study of various schemes, programmes relating to women and children. It has been informed that NIPCCD shares its Research Studies Reports with the database of Developing Library Network (DELNET). The Committee is

of the view that for the Institute to realize its objectives towards coordination and promotion of voluntary action in social development and emerge as an institute of global repute in child rights, child protection and child development, it should make efforts towards developing partnerships and linkages with national and international agencies and making its training and research activities in tune with the needs of its varying stakeholders, besides building up an interface with various Universities/ Departments/other Institutes working in the same area by sharing of data and development of collaborations so that the policy recommendations that come out of the evaluation and research studies by the Institute get more synergy and are in tune with the ground realities and practical challenges.

(para 3.5.1)

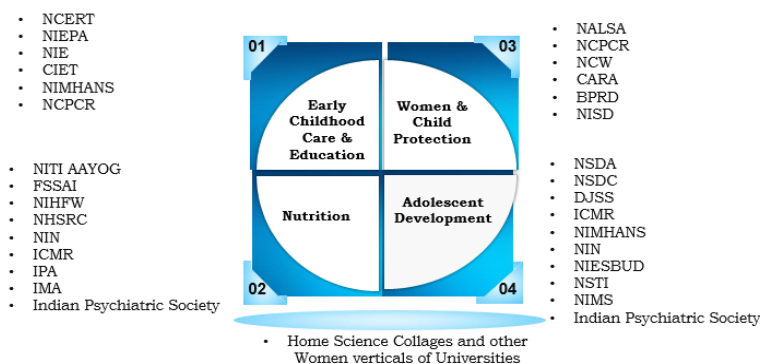
Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that NIPCCD is in the process of being restructured under the able guidance of Hon'ble Minister of Women and Child Development and in coordination with Capacity Building Commission (CBC). CBC has submitted its Organisational Strategy Note to HMWCD regarding restructuring of NIPCCD to meet the strategic priorities of Ministry of Women and Child Development. In Organizational strategy note by CBC, there is mention of formation of various Advisory and Monitoring Structures, Organizational Committees including Academic Committee and Research Advisory Committee. In the newly proposed ecosystem, the Core Delivery Team Units and their compositions as suggested by CBC include the following:

- ✓ Research and Policy Unit
- ✓ Capacity Building Unit & Content Development Unit
- ✓ Dissemination and Policy Engagement Unit
- ✓ Technology & Data Integration Unit
- ✓ Operations Unit Programme Office
- ✓ Product and Services & Quality Control

A list of Collaborating organizations on varied issues of women and child development have been identified across the country for collaborations in Training, Research and sharing best practices across the country.

NIPCCD Networking / Collaboration with National Institutes/Organization



The Institute, as a Nodal Agency, has been organizing training programmes/workshops/consultations for building a knowledge base as well as enhancing capacities of functionaries working under the Juvenile Justice System & CPS on child protection at national and regional levels, conducting research studies & documentations on the issues pertaining to child rights & protection. The Institute in collaboration with following National and International Organisations has been imparting training to various stakeholders such as functionaries of SCPS, SARA, DCPU, CWCs, JJBs, CCIs, SJPU/CWPOs, SCPCR Staff, DLSA Officials/ Para Legal Volunteers, NGOs, PRIs, Educators/Teachers of Schools, Colleges & Universities and Media Personnel, Universities, Police Academy, Judicial Academy, State Government, NGOs, CARA, NCPCR, NHRC, UNICEF and NIMHANS.

The training is conducted mainly on Child Rights, Child Protection (Child Protection Services Scheme), Laws concerning protection of children: JJ Act, POCSO Act, the Child Labour Prohibition Act, ITPA, CPCR Act, Policies : National Policy for Children, National Plan of Action, National Policy on Child Protection, Violence against Children, Child Abuse including child sexual abuse, Cyber Crimes/ Cyber Safety, Child Labour, Child trafficking, Adoption, Child marriage, Other issues: mental health interventions & psycho-social care etc. In addition, the institute takes up assessment exercises for various schemes of the Ministry, as and when directed.

Recommendation

The Committee while appreciating the training programmes recommends that the Institute should also think in terms of providing some kind of internships to research students pursuing related research projects in Universities/Bodies in the field of women and child and gender issues.

(para 3.5.3)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that the Institute has the facilities for students, namely Internship (Paid and Unpaid) and Field/ Block placements. NIPCCD has been providing Internship to research students on all the key thematic areas including women and child through its Internship programmes as well as Field Placement at Headquarters and its Regional Centres and in the past five years have collaborated with 40 Institutes across the country.

Recommendation

The Committee observes that there has been decline in the utilization of allocated funds by the NIPCCD over the last few years. The Ministry has informed that most of the training programmes were conducted online thereby reducing the expenditure substantially. The Committee is of the view that as the pandemic wanes, a planned and defined chart of activities of the Institute, both in the nature of academic research and

training outreach, may be worked out, which will prove beneficial in realization of its mandate and better utilization of allocated funds.

(para 3.5.5)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that with regards to decline in the utilization of allocated funds by the NIPCCD over the last few years as most of the training programmes were conducted online thereby reducing the expenditure substantially, it is to submit that a defined chart of activities of the Institute, both in the nature of academic research and training outreach has been worked out in the Work plan 2022-23 so as to have a mixed approach of both physical as well as online (Phygital approach) which will prove beneficial in realization of its mandate and better utilization of allocated funds.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS (NCPCR)

Recommendation

The Committee is of the view that there is a need for proactive advocacy and action on part of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) to highlight child right issues. Upon being informed during the deposition by the Ministry about illegal adoption rackets and the NCPCR working in that field, the Committee feels that since issues of child trafficking and abuse need close coordination with law enforcement authorities, the NCPCR should evolve a system to keep itself abreast of any such illegal adoptions, which can be taken up with the concerned stakeholders.

(para 3.7)

Action Taken

The Ministry in its reply has submitted that it is stated that in India, the process of adoption can be done in two ways. One, as per the procedure laid down under the provisions of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the other, under the provisions of Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956. Under Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 (HAMA) it is observed that the procedure laid down is not specific as to the terms of documenting such adoptions on record which is why the adoptions conducted under this Act remain unregulated and unaccounted for, further leaving scope of illegal adoptions of minors.

As no procedure has been laid down for adoptions under HAMA, adoptions made under the Act remains unregulated due to which monitoring of adoptions becomes impossible which further gives rise to the possibility of giving children up for adoption illegally or makes them vulnerable to child trafficking or being traded and sold in exchange of money. As per data of the Commission, since April 2021 till March 2022, the NCPCR has received a total of 30 complaints alleging illegal

adoptions. The Commission had taken cognizance of these complaints under Section 13(1) (j) of CPC Act, 2005 and asked the concerned authorities to take necessary action in the matter.

Keeping in view the number of complaints received regarding illegal adoptions, the Commission devised a portal **Baal Swaraj- Covid Care** –where the Commission is receiving information regarding children who have lost both or single parent to COVID or otherwise from the States/UTs on the directions of the Hon’ble Supreme Court in *SMWP (C) No.4/2020 In Re Care and Protection of Children due to loss of Parents during Covid-19*. This data is being regularly monitored by the Commission for ensuring suitable rehabilitation of children which also includes children who have become orphans since April 2020. The directions of the Hon’ble Supreme Court in this matter has ensured for identification and rehabilitation of children who had lost their parent(s), which in turn has contributed to an accountability of children thereby eliminating the chances of giving such children under illegal adoption. Another fact to be noted is that there has been a significant increase in institutional delivery of babies than before which is important to take into account while addressing issues of illegal adoption and sale of babies.

Due to these prevailing issues related to the implementation of procedures prescribed under law and no dedicated monitoring agency to look into the validation of Adoption deeds made under the HAMA, the Commission proposes to hold Pan India Awareness Program for doctors, nurses, medical superintendents, Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) and medical regulatory bodies. This will ensure in creating awareness regarding the process and procedure to be followed for an orphan, abandoned or surrendered child and the issues related to such children. The Commission is of the view that proper trainings and consultations should be held with doctors, medical practitioners, nurses and other medical staff etc. to apprise them regarding due procedure laid down under law.

The Commission is proposing to hold 05 zonal virtual meetings with doctors, medical superintendents, CMOs and medical regulatory bodies to sensitize them about the significant role played by them in curbing the problem of illegal adoption. Similar meetings for nurses will also be planned separately. There will also be a reporting mechanism, in terms of calling for bi-annual reports from the concerned stakeholders.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN (NCW)

Recommendation

The Committee suggests that the Commission may also consider undertaking an organized study on Women Police stations as that will bring insights into the issues that women are facing with regard to their complaints not being registered and not getting justice. The Committee is of the view that there is a need for increased outreach for awareness, especially among the uneducated women in the rural areas that such a Commission exists to address the issues concerning their rights. The Committee,

therefore, recommends that the Commission may also look into the aspect of building a network to reach out and help women who are vulnerable and prone to exploitation.

(para 3.8)

Action Taken

Women Police Station (working efficiency and effectiveness) is one of the proposed themes of research studies/Seminar to be sponsored for 2022-23 by NCW. NCW has organized legal awareness camp in association with National Legal Services Authority and two such camps were organised per district throughout India. In 2022-23, NCW has planned to take awareness programs up to Taluka and Village level and the same will be funded by NCW. A Legal Aid Clinic has been inaugurated at NCW office, New Delhi on 29.03.2022 where vulnerable victims may directly come for consultation provided by Delhi Legal Services Authority from 10 AM to 5 PM on all working days. NCW has also provided funds to all State Women Commissions to establish Legal Aid Clinics in their respective States. Legal Cell at NCW conducts law review consultations at North, South, East, West and North East Zones of the country so that suggestions can be made on the point where there is lacuna in the law and for the speedy delivery of justice up to the last mile. NCW is having office only in Delhi and it does not have any field office. As such, NCW is building network to reach out and help women at Pan India level through State Commissions for Women and the Departments of Women and Child Development in States.

CHAPTER-II

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

ASSESSMENT OF THE DEMANDS FOR GRANTS OF THE MINISTRY

Recommendation

1. *The Committee notes that the allocation of funds for the welfare of women and children in the country comes from various Ministries and as such the allocations in this respect are segregated. The Committee is of the view that since women and children together constitute about 67.7% of the country's population, as per 2011 Census, undertaking an evaluative exercise to collate the Budgetary allocations throughout the respective Ministries/ Departments on specific Schemes concentrating on welfare and improvement towards condition of women and children in the country, would not only be instructive but also be beneficial for policy makers while taking decisions in respect of allocations and also helpful in identifying overlapping areas, if any, so as to coalesce and synergize the thrust of budgetary allocations. The Committee also observes that based on such an evaluation, the Ministry of Women and Child Development being mandated with the responsibility of creating an enabling environment for both women and children so that they have access to fundamental services such as pre-school non formal education, health, nutrition and protection etc. would be able to articulate and get greater share of GOI budget so that schemes and programmes being run by them do not suffer any lags due to shortfall in resources.*

(para 2.2.1)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that for physical, social and economic development of women and children, they have introduced key verticals in mission mode namely, Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0. Mission Shakti and Mission Vastalya and launch of these Missions is about empowering India. It has been further informed that the Department of Expenditure, *vide* its O.M. dated 01.02.2022 has conveyed that the Cabinet *vide* decision dated 19.01.2022 has approved schemes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) for its continuation over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle. These Missions are being enabled through integration of programmes and efforts of key Ministries, i.e. WCD, Health & Family Welfare, Education, Agriculture, Forestry, Food & Public Distribution and Ayurveda, Yoga and

Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH). The Ministry of Women and Child Development is striving to achieve the goals mandated to it.

STATEMENT INDICATING PROJECTED DEMAND AND ACTUAL ALLOCATION FOR THE FIANNCIAL YEAR 2022-23

Recommendation

The Committee observes from the details given above, it is evident that the BE allocation to the Ministry for the year 2022-23 has registered a meagre increase of around 3 percent only over the BE allocation of 2021-22. In respect of the overall projected demand and actual allocations, the Committee is happy to note that unlike the previous year, the Projected Demand and Actual Allocation has no gaps for the F.Y. 2022-23. The Committee observes that since the allocations to the Ministry have been made as per the Projected Demand, the onus of effective implementation of the Schemes of the Ministry lies with them as the projected demand of the Ministry for each of its programmes and the actual allocations has been bridged completely. The Committee understands that when the Ministry raises a demand, they have an assessment of targets and outreach of beneficiaries and any gap means that either targets get compromised or intended beneficiaries get left out; both defeating the purpose of the schemes meant for the benefit of the most vulnerable section of the society i.e. women and children. In this background, the Committee recommends that the Ministry must now put in all efforts to meet the targets as envisaged under each of the Schemes to make visible improvements on the ground.

(para 2.4.2)

Action Taken

Ministry of Women and Child Development has informed that it is making concerted efforts to ensure that the allocated funds for 2022-23 are released timely and fully to meet the targets as envisaged under each of the Schemes to make visible improvements on the ground.

MISSION VATSALYA (CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES SCHEME)

Recommendation

The Committee observes that the outcome of such a Scheme i.e., Mission Vatsalya (Child Protection Services Scheme) is best measured not against numerical data but in the manner in which their effectiveness gets translated into the child protection/ welfare set-up in the country. The Committee also feels that it is also the responsibility of the States/UTs to effectively implement these schemes at the ground level. The Committee is of the view that although substantial progress has been made to provide a skeletal framework for rehabilitation of children in difficult circumstances, considerable ground is yet to be covered to achieve the outcome fully. The Committee also notes that there is

provision for situational analysis under the scheme, however no such analysis is reported to have been conducted in most of the States. Besides this, delay in submission of proposals by States/UTs, absence of certificate of inspection by senior Officers, lack of reconciliation of expenditure vis-à-vis funds released are some of the difficulties which have been mentioned by the Ministry. As conveyed by the Ministry, the measures that have been taken to address the identified issues are steps to streamline the process of release of grant to States/UTs so that the implementation of the Scheme does not suffer due to delay in fund release, directing States/UTs to conduct situational analysis, submission of timely Financial Proposal, provide status of Child Care Institutions(CCI) /Juvenile Justice Boards(JJBs) and status of registration of CCI under the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, 2015. It has also been noted that the Ministry has been frequently conducting National Consultations with all the States/UTs to discuss issues related to Child Protection which are also attended by Senior Police Officers of all the States/UTs. The Committee is of the view that addressing the issue of child protection requires coordination amongst various Ministries, especially with the Ministry of Home Affairs, as well as the State Governments. In view of this, the Committee recommends that a coordinating mechanism can be put in place by the Ministry with active engagement of the Ministry of Home Affairs in order to make the Child Protection Services effective and bring the desired benefits of the Scheme to the children.

(para 3.4.3)

Action Taken

The Ministry has submitted that the recommendations have been noted. It has also submitted that the Cabinet has approved the Mission Vatsalya Scheme subsuming Child Protection Services (CPS) Scheme up to FY 2025-26. The Ministry has issued Mission Vatsalya guidelines, which also provide as follows:

- i. More Emphasis on Non- Institutional Care
- ii. To extend outreach to ground level, a detailed service delivery structure has been introduced which includes State Level Monitoring Committee, State Child Welfare and Protection Committee, District Child Welfare and Protection Committee, Block/Ward Level Child Welfare & Protection Committee, Gram Panchayat Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee, and Urban Local Bodies, Ward level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (WLCWPC), Inter-Ministerial Convergence with various Departments/ Ministries, viz., Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Home Affairs has been provided under Mission Vatsalya Guidelines for prevention and protection of children from violence and

abuse; collaboration for restoration of children across States; and information convergence for tracking missing children.

CHILD ADOPTION RESOURCE AUTHORITY (CARA)

Recommendation

The Committee observes that there is a need to address the issues related to filling up vacant posts and conducting training programmes on adoption, media activities, inspection, monitoring, etc. by CARA so that surrendering of funds can be avoided and hopes that the current year allocation will find better utilization.

(para 3.6.2)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that the CARA is in the process of filling its vacant posts. CARA has prepared its inspection schedule to visit different adoption agencies in the country for monitoring their activities during the current financial year. Also CARA would organise more training and orientation programmes as well as conduct visits to adoption agencies as soon as the revised Adoption Regulations are notified.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS (NCPCR)

Recommendation

The Committee observes that BE (2022-23) allocated to NCPCR is Rs. 21.09 crore, which is a substantial increase from the previous allocations. The Committee hopes that the NCPCR would have already factored in and planned for the various activities which it will be undertaking so that the utilization and outcome levels justify the enhanced allocation.

(para 3.7.1)

Action Taken

BE allocated to NCPCR during the year 2018-19 to 2021-22 was Rs.18.00 crore annually, which has been increased to Rs.21.09 crore in the current Financial Year 2022-23. Increase in current year B.E is of Rs. 3.09 crore due to committed liabilities/expenditure such as 10% annual increase in payment of rent of 2nd& 5th floor of Chanderlok Building to NDMC. An amount of Rs. 2.82 crore towards rent has been increased since 2018-19 till the current financial year 2022-23. Further, Rs. 0.27 crore is meant for payment to NICS Cloud services and other programme activities/works.

NIRBHAYA FUND

Recommendation

The Committee recalls that in its various recommendations, it has highlighted the need for effective utilization of Nirbhaya Fund. Despite the legal frameworks and various institutions put in place, violence against women has not been reduced and outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic had worsened the situation of women in the country. The Committee reiterates its recommendation made in its 334th Report wherein it has observed that “underutilization of Nirbhaya Fund has remained a pressing issue of concern for long. At present out of the allocated funds of Rs. 9549 crores and funds released as Rs. 4241 crores, the funds utilized so far stand at around Rs. 2989 crores only. The Committee recommends that the factors which are leading to such underutilization of the Fund need to be identified. Also, State Governments need to be brought onboard in ensuring that the Projects/Schemes, in which they are stakeholders, get implemented effectively and any issues raised by the State Governments should be addressed expeditiously. The Committee also recommends that the concerned Ministries must develop a robust mechanism for constant monitoring of Projects/Schemes being handled by them. Also, guidelines may be prepared to ensure that this fund is not utilized for creating routine infrastructure, which even otherwise the relevant Departments have to undertake. The Committee also stresses that wherever there is provision under the guidelines for financial assistance/compensation to the victims, it should be ensured that the same is made available without any procedural impediments and undue delays”.

(para 3.9.1)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that the total appraised amount under Nirbhaya Fund currently stands at Rs.9176.65 crore for 35 different projects/ schemes across the country. So far, an amount of Rs.4366.90 crore has been disbursed/ released by concerned Ministries/ Departments including MWCD for the various projects/ schemes under Nirbhaya Fund.

The projects/ schemes under Nirbhaya Fund are demand driven. The projects/ schemes appraised by Empowered Committee (EC) under Framework for Nirbhaya Fund are having staggered implementation schedule. Further, some of the appraised projects are directly implemented by Central Ministries/ Departments. However, majority of the projects are implemented through State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations in which Central Government releases the funds to States/ UTs as per prescribed fund-sharing pattern of respective projects/ schemes. Thereafter, implementation on ground is done by the States/ UTs in the given timelines. Further, there are schemes, which require recurring expenditure for providing services, in respect of which, further funds are released upon receipt of Utilisation Certificates

(UCs) and Statement of Expenditure (SoE) from the Implementing Agency/ authority. The UCs are required to be submitted within twelve months of the closure of financial year, in which grant was released. Hence, it is possible that more funds have been actually utilised, but Utilisation Certificates (UCs) and Statement of Expenditure (SoE), as required, as per provisions of General Financial Rules (GFR) have not been submitted by the concerned States/ Implementing Agencies (IAs). The States/ IAs are regularly followed up to submit UCs and SoEs. Various other factors such as time taken in getting required approvals from competent authorities, procedure to be followed for award of contract, disruptions due to unforeseen reasons such as the one created by the Covid 19 etc., also affect implementation of schemes/ projects.

An Empowered Committee (EC) of Officers constituted under the Framework for Nirbhaya Fund appraises and recommends the proposals for funding under Nirbhaya Fund and also reviews the status of implementation as also status of expenditure, of approved projects from time to time, in conjunction with the concerned Ministries/ Departments/ Implementing Agencies. Further, the concerned Ministries / Departments /IAs also monitor the progress of implementation at their levels.

In so far as creating routine infrastructure is concerned, it is informed that going by the provision of Nirbhaya Framework that 'Optimum use of existing infrastructure', the EC does not consider and appraise the proposal for creating any routine infrastructure.

Ministry of Home Affairs has released an amount of Rs.200.00 Crore as a one-time grant to States/ UTs under Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCF) under Nirbhaya Fund to support and supplement the Victim Compensation schemes of respective States/ UTs.

CHAPTER-III

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

STATUS OF INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER AGANWADI SERVICES SCHEME DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Recommendation

The Committee observes that while infrastructure development and capacity building of the Anganwadi remains the key to improving the programme, the standards of all its services need to be upscaled. The economic fallout of the Covid pandemic has made necessity of quality public welfare services more pressing than ever. Thus, Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) could become agents of improved delivery of such services and need to play a much larger role in anchoring community development, more so as beneficiaries for want of services due to lack of adequate facilities at AWCs, turn to paid options, which hit the low-income families the hardest. Also, effective implementation of the Scheme rests heavily on the combined efforts of the Anganwadi workers (AWWs), ASHAs and ANMs, but a lot requires to be done to improve the career prospects and service conditions of these frontline workers. The Committee recommends that sustained efforts towards infrastructure development and capacity building of the AWCs be made besides upscaling the standards of all its services. Observing that the States have much to learn from each other's experience and good practices, the Committee recommends that the Ministry must undertake a comprehensive impact assessment through state-wise review of the status of AWCs and its services, to collate the best practices that emerge and push for their adoption in States which are lagging.

(para 3.1.7)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that it engages with the States/ UTs regularly to understand the problems being faced in the implementation of the Scheme. Recently, the Ministry has concluded Zonal Meetings in various parts of the country. The States/ UTs shared their perspectives and best practices being adopted suitable to their working conditions.

The overall objective of the zonal conferences with States/UTs was to sensitise States/UTs on the policy decisions and strategies devised by MoWCD under the Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 Umbrella Mission and other Missions, to address challenges facing women and children and for seeking States' support in implementing the Missions through active partnership for positive outcomes.

Further, from time to time the Ministry issues Advisories to States/ UTs on various policy related matters with an aim to achieve optimum efficiency in implementation of the Scheme. Advisories relate to promotion of cleanliness, timely disposal of grievances for better citizen centric engagement, policy related issues, etc.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee notes the engagements being made with States in respect of AWCs and is of the view that a blueprint, prepared in consultation with States, towards infrastructure development and capacity building of AWCs will prove to be of immense help in identification and augmentation of various services and reach of AWCs. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should take note of this and initiate appropriate action towards it.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC COOPERATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (NIPCCD)

Recommendation

The Committee also feels that time has come to consider auditing organizations on the parameter of gender, more so with the efforts towards social mainstreaming of the third gender. The Committee recommends that the assessment process through Gender Audit in which the gender equality status of the organization gets analyzed and the main gender biases are identified, be made mandatory for Organizations-public or private. The Committee feels that efforts in this regard would bring to the fore the status of gender equality in policy and decision-making structures, organizational culture and processes leading to organizations formulating and implementing Gender Equality Plans. The Committee recommends that NIPCCD can examine and take the lead in defining the parameters for such a Gender Audit, keeping in view our societal challenges.

(para 3.5.2)

Action Taken

The Ministry has stated that the recommendations have been noted.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee taking note of its recommendations in respect of NIPCCD for examination and defining the parameters for Gender Audit by the Ministry, desires to be kept abreast of the follow up action and a status of progress made in this regard.

CENTRAL ADOPTION RESOURCE AUTHORITY (CARA)

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the process of adoption needs to be simplified by taking a close relook at the various regulations guiding the procedure of adoption and the Ministry can engage with concerned experts working in this field to get feedback on the practical difficulties which prospective parents are facing. The Committee also recommends that the issue of children with special needs requires special focus in terms of highlighting and advocacy at various platforms, besides regular sensitizing of prospective parents for adoption of such children. It is also suggested that CARA can arrange special counseling / sensitization sessions in coordination with various fertility clinics/ Hospitals/ Maternity centres to encourage parents to have a positive approach to adopt children with special needs.

(para 3.6.1)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that the Adoption Regulations 2017 is under revision based on the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2021 and feedback received from stakeholders, States/UTs, the Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) and experts. CARA has been coordinating with stakeholders for expeditious placement of children having special needs. CARA would take up the matter of counselling/sensitization in coordination with various Fertility Centres/Hospitals and Maternity Centres through various State Orientation Programmes.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee while taking note of the submissions made by the Ministry is of the view that speeding up the process of adoption of children is the need of the hour and the existing process has slowed down the rate of adoption and both prospective parents and child ready for adoption are losing hope as the waiting time increases. Thus, while revising the extant regulations, the Ministry/CARA should pay attention towards making the entire procedure hassle free and also sensitizing prospective parents of the manner in which children with special needs are to be adopted, besides taking into consideration the practical problems faced in adoption. Further, the Committee would like the Ministry to keep it apprised of the progress made in this respect.

CHAPETR-IV
RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF
GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

-Nil-

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE -AT A GLANCE

The Committee notes the engagements being made with States in respect of AWCs and is of the view that a blueprint, prepared in consultation with States, towards infrastructure development and capacity building of AWCs will prove to be of immense help in identification and augmentation of various services and reach of AWCs. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should take note of this and initiate appropriate action towards it.

(para 3.1.7)

The Committee taking note of its recommendations in respect of NIPCCD for examination and defining the parameters for Gender Audit by the Ministry, desires to be kept abreast of the follow up action and a status of progress made in this regard.

(para 3.5.2)

The Committee while taking note of the submissions made by the Ministry is of the view that speeding up the process of adoption of children is the need of the hour and the existing process has slowed down the rate of adoption and both prospective parents and child ready for adoption are losing hope as the waiting time increases. Thus, while revising the extant regulations, the Ministry/CARA should pay attention towards making the entire procedure hassle free and also sensitizing prospective parents of the manner in which children with special needs are to be adopted, besides taking into consideration the practical problems faced in adoption. Further, the Committee would like the Ministry to keep it apprised of the progress made in this respect.

(para 3.6.1)