

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

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The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme was launched on October 2, 1975, to improve the health, nutrition and education of the targeted beneficiaries which includes children up to the age of six years, Pregnant and Lactating Mothers (P&LMs) aged 15-45 years and Adolescent Girls¹ (AGs) aged 11-18 years. As per the notification of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Government of India (GoI) (February 2009), all children below six years of age, pregnant women and lactating mothers are eligible for availing the services of the Scheme and Below Poverty Line (BPL) status is not a criterion for registration of beneficiaries under the ICDS. The Scheme is being implemented by MoWCD at the national level and the Women and Child Development (WCD) Department of the Government of Gujarat (GoG) at the State level. In 2017, the GoI also launched the National Nutritional Mission (NNM), which was later (2018) renamed as “Poshan Abhiyan”, to augment the nutritional requirements of the targeted beneficiaries in a time-bound manner.

1.1 Objectives of the ICDS Scheme

The objectives of the ICDS Scheme were to:

- Improve the nutritional and health status of children aged up to six years;
- Lay the foundation for the proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;
- Achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- Enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

1.2 Targeted beneficiaries and services provided under the ICDS Scheme

The objectives of the Scheme are to be achieved through a package of six services by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), GoI and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), GoI through the WCD Department and the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Department of the State, as given in **Table 1.1** below:

¹ Under two GOI-sponsored Schemes – (1) The Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) (introduced in 2000) and; (2) The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA) (introduced in 2010).

Table 1.1: Services, target groups and service providers under the ICDS Scheme

| Sl. No | Services | Target Groups | Service provided at the State level |
|--------|---|---|---|
| 1. | Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) | Children below the age of six years, Pregnant and Lactating Mothers (P&LMs) and Adolescent Girls (AGs) of age 11-18 years | WCD Department through Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). |
| 2. | Pre-School (non-formal) Education (PSE) | Children (aged three to six years) | WCD Department through AWCs. |
| 3. | Nutrition and Health Education (NHE) | Women (aged 15-45 years) and Adolescent Girls of age 11-18 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition Education: WCD Department through AWCs • Health Education: Department of H&FW through Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM)/Medical Officer (MO) |
| 4. | Immunisation | Children below six years and P&LMs | WCD Department through ANM/MO in coordination with AWCs. |
| 5. | Health Check-ups | Children below six years, P&LMs and Adolescent Girls of age 11-18 years | WCD Department through ANM/MO in coordination with AWCs. |
| 6. | Referral Services | Children below six years, P&LMs and Adolescent Girls of age 11-18 years | WCD Department through ANM/MO in coordination with AWCs. |

(Source: ICDS Scheme guidelines)

The latter three services – immunisation, health check-ups and referral services – are offered to Scheme beneficiaries by the H&FW Department at AWCs during the monthly organised "Mamta Divas". On Mamta Divas, Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) and Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) visit AWCs and conduct activities related to immunisation, health check-ups and referrals.

1.3 Budget allocation and expenditure

The Government of India (GoI) provides funds for the implementation of the ICDS Scheme to the State Governments under two components – ICDS (General)² and the Supplementary Nutrition Programme³ (SNP).

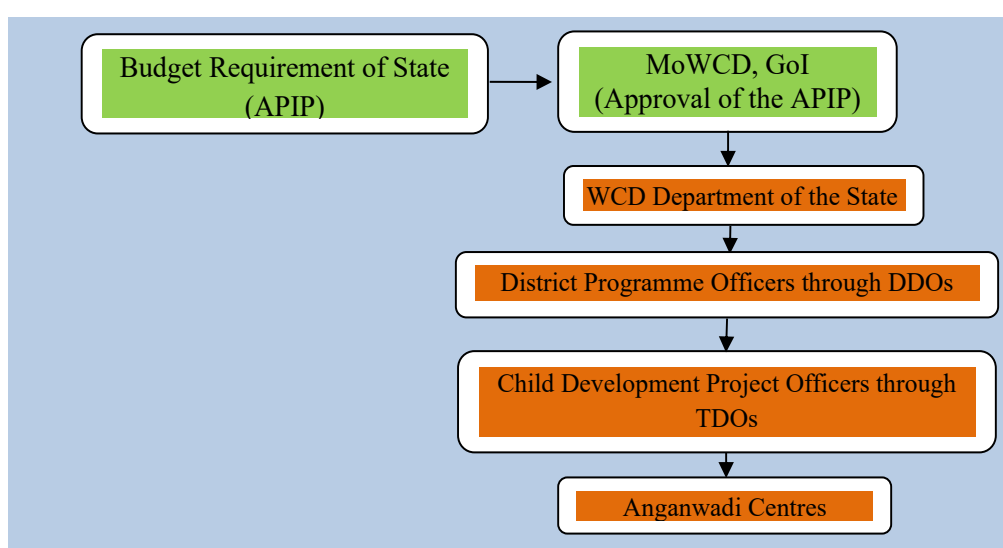
² ICDS (General) consists of the budget provisions for salary/honorarium, vehicle expenses, kits, rent for AWCs and administrative expenditures.

³ ICDS (SNP) consists of the budget provisions for Supplementary Nutrition for all eligible beneficiaries in the Scheme.

➤ *Funds-flow mechanism*

The GoI and the State Government have been sharing funds for ICDS (General) in the ratio of 60:40 and for the SNP in the ratio of 50:50. Based on the demands raised by the State in its Annual Programme Implementation Plan (APIP) and the approval accorded by the MoWCD, the GoI releases funds in four or more instalments in a year based on the Statement of Expenditure (SoE) and Utilisation Certificates (UC) furnished by the State Government. These funds, along with the State's share are then released to the Director, ICDS. Subsequently, funds are released to the Personal Ledger Account (PLA) of the District Development Officers (DDOs) and the Taluka Development Officers (TDOs) for the implementation of the Scheme at the district (by DPOs) and block (by CDPOs) levels, respectively as shown in the **Chart 1.1** below:

Chart: 1.1: Funds-flow mechanism



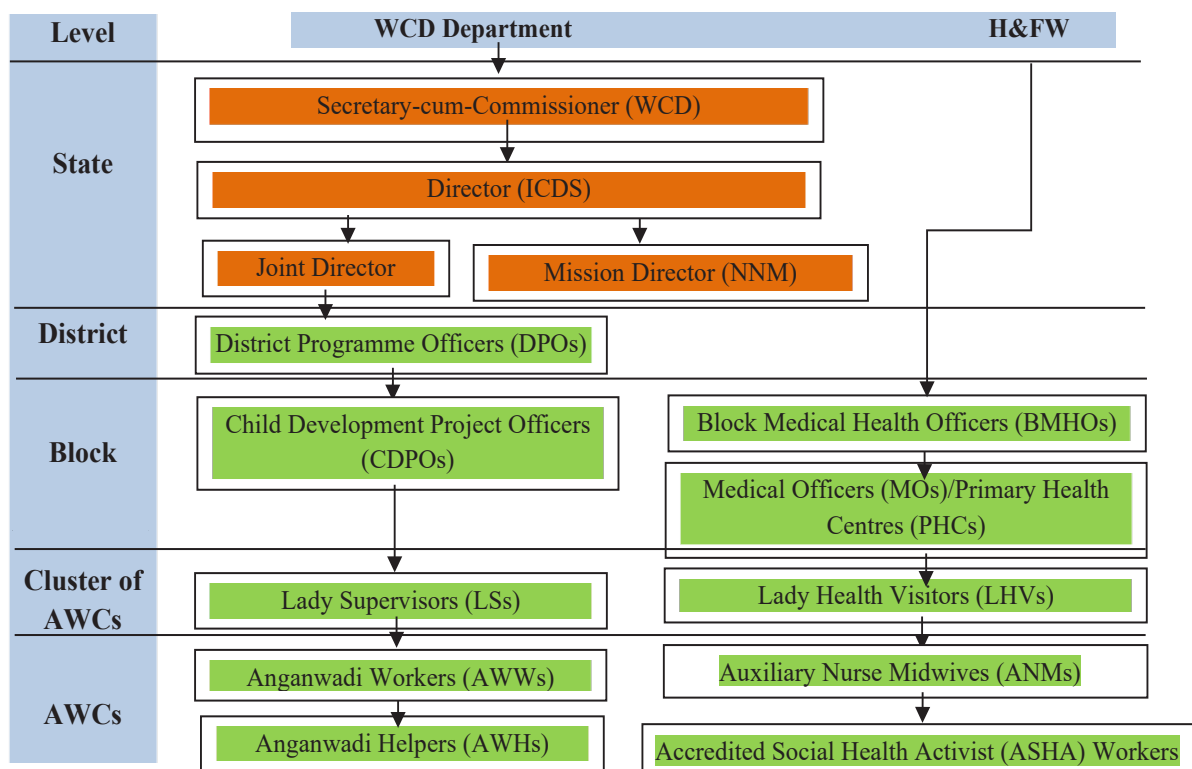
During 2015-23, as against the total allocations of funds of ₹18,649.19 crore, funds of ₹14,986.14 crore were utilised in the ICDS scheme.

1.4 Organisational set-up for implementation of the ICDS Scheme

The Secretary-cum-Commissioner of the WCD Department of the Government of Gujarat (GoG) is responsible for the overall implementation of the ICDS Scheme in the State. The Secretary, WCD Department, is assisted by the Director, ICDS, WCD Department, who is the implementing and coordinating officer of the Scheme.

The organogram of implementation of the ICDS Scheme is given in **Chart 1.2** below:

Chart 1.2: The organisational structure of the WCD Department and the H&FW Department at the various levels for the implementation of the ICDS Scheme



1.5 Audit Objectives

Performance Audit of the ICDS scheme aimed to assess whether:

- All targeted beneficiaries were covered and provided with qualitative services under the Scheme;
- Infrastructure was adequate for effective delivery of services; and
- Funds were used efficiently and the monitoring and evaluation mechanism was in place.

1.6 Audit Criteria

The implementation of various components of the ICDS Scheme was assessed with reference to the following sources of criteria:

- ICDS Mission – The Broad Framework for Implementation, 2012;
- Administrative Guidelines for the National Nutrition Mission, 2017;
- National Family Health Survey (NFHS) reports;
- National Food Security (NFS) Act, 2013;
- Operational Guidelines for Food Safety and Hygiene for Supplementary Nutrition under the ICDS, 2013;
- National Early Childhood Care and Education (NECCE) Policy, 2013;
- Census 2011 data;
- Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP), 1985;
- Various circulars and instructions issued by the GoI and the GoG; and

- General Financial Rules, 2017 and circulars, notifications, resolutions of the Government, *etc.*

1.7 Audit Sampling and Methodology

An Entry Conference was held on 30 September 2020 with the Commissioner, WCD Department, in which, the Audit Objectives, Scope of Audit, Audit Methodology and the Audit Criteria for the Performance Audit were discussed.

The Performance Audit covered the period from 2015-16 to 2022-23. At the State level, Audit scrutinised the records of the WCD Department, Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Department and the Commissionerate of the WCD Department. Eight districts⁴ (out of 33 districts) were selected by using Simple Random Sampling without Replacement (SRSWOR) method. The selected units as per the sampling methodology are shown in **Appendix-I**.

The draft report was discussed with the Secretary, WCD Department in the Exit Conference held on 17 May 2022. The views of the State Government (as of October 2024) on the report, have been incorporated appropriately in the report, wherever required.

1.8 Acknowledgement

Audit acknowledges the cooperation extended by the officials of the WCD Department and the Commissioner of the H&FW Department of the GoG in the conduct of this Performance Audit.

⁴ (1) Ahmedabad (including Corporation), (2) Gandhinagar, (3) Morbi, (4) Panchmahals, (5) Rajkot (including Corporation), (6) Sabarkantha, (7) Tapi and (8) Valsad.

