

## **Suggestions given by The Supervisors of Udaipur Division For Strengthening ICDS Scheme**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The present study was conducted to know the suggestions for strengthening Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme. The present study was conducted in purposively selected Udaipur division of Rajasthan state. The questionnaire technique was used for collecting data from the respondents. A number of viable and useful suggestions were made by the respondents to strengthen the ICDS scheme. The suggestions were number of AWCs allotment must be as per rule (64.58%), provision of vehicle (63.84%), reduce the extra work load (62.73%), provision for education of illiterate AWWs (60.1%), providing electricity, water, toilet and furniture (58.67%) at AWC, fill the vacant position (51.66%) and supplementary food preparation by AWWs (50.92%).*

**Key words:** Supervisors, suggestions, strengthening and ICDS scheme.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The ICDS scheme launched on 2nd October, 1975, is one of the flagship programme of the Government of India and represents one of the world's largest and unique programme for early childhood care and development. The beneficiaries under the scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers [1]. Supervisors play a very important role in ICDS, and their job performance is a very crucial for successful implementation of the scheme. In Rajasthan also 297 projects are operational with 1,640 Supervisors and in Udaipur division there are 54 projects covered by 368 Supervisors [2]. Thus Government is spending a lot on implementation of the ICDS scheme with a great network of functionaries to secure the future of our nation. Supervisors with vast experience of ICDS scheme can surely give fruitful suggestions for better implementation of ICDS scheme.

### **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The present study was conducted in purposively selected Udaipur division of Rajasthan state which consists of 6 districts namely Banswara, Chittorgarh, Dungarpur, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand and Udaipur. All the Supervisors were included as sample in the study at the time of planning. At the time of data collection, 97 Supervisors were not available due to job shifting, therefore 271 Supervisors were finally included as sample in the study. The questionnaire technique was used for collecting data from the respondents. Therefore, Supervisors were requested to give at least five suggestions for effective implementation of ICDS scheme. Suggestions given, even by few respondents may be viable and useful.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The suggestions received were grouped under six major heads i.e. administration, Anganwadi Worker related, AWC functioning, facilities, monitoring and evaluation and general and arranged in descending order according to responses and presented in Table 1.

### Administration related suggestions

Administrative decision is important for implementation of the ICDS scheme. A number of suggestions were made to improve administrative decisions. Table 1 reveals that majority of the respondents (64.58 and 62.73%) suggested that number of AWCs allotment must be as per rules and reduce the extra work load of the Supervisors. The reason may be that as per rules, only 25 AWCs can be allotted to a Supervisor but due to scarcity of Supervisors, two to three times more AWCs were allotted to many of the Supervisors and also other responsibilities like keeping track of beneficiaries and Health department activities.

Nearly fifty per cent (51.66 – 46.12%) of the Supervisors suggested to fill the vacant posts of the Supervisors, TA bills must be passed in time and create proper policy of promotion. The reason may be that due to job shifting and transfers, scarcity of Supervisors the remaining Supervisors get overburdened with extra charges. It was found that, many a times TA bills were not passed in time hence, Supervisors experience difficulty. Proper policy of promotion is necessary for every employee but Supervisors were not promoted from the post of Supervisors even after a long service experience and good performance. Creation the post of Assistant Supervisors was also suggested by 36.90 per cent of the respondents for helping the Supervisors.

A good number of respondents i.e. 31.73 per cent suggested for increase in salary according to number of AWCs supervised and education level, TA should be given in probation period also, no extra duty of other departments, arrange training for using mobile application “Rajdhara” and 27.31 per cent of the respondents suggested online submission of monthly progress report for proper functioning of ICDS scheme. The reason may be unequal allotment of AWCs to Supervisors i.e. from 25 - 102 AWCs having variations in education level and experience but receiving same salary so, allowance for additional charge can be given to the Supervisors. Supervisors have to spend lots of money in traveling from own pocket in probation period. The Supervisors find difficulty in performing extra duties of other department. The respondents suggested for training on “Rajdhara” application because facing difficulty to run and use the application in field. In table 1 the respondents also suggested that online submission of monthly progress report must be started for timely submission of report.

Shifting/ establishment of AWCs in government school premises and an increase in salary were suggested by 22.14 per cent respondents. Supervisors should be placed according to sectors/one sector with one Supervisor and transfer the money in beneficiaries account for supplementary food was also suggested by i.e. 14.39 and 14.02 per cent of the respondents, respectively. Study supported by Patil [4] suggested that provision of regular employees, good salary along with other supplementary nutrition are essential for successful implementation of ICDS programme and job performance.

Only one respondents i.e. 0.37 suggested marksheet/ gradesheet provision for AWC children, an increase in honorarium of AWWs and practical and written exam for Supervisors promotion. The reason may be that respondents express for proper formal education marksheet / gradesheet must be give to the AWC children, and AWWs received inadequate honorarium.

### Anganwadi Worker related

Anganwadi worker is main grass root functionary for delivery of services to beneficiaries so, the suggestions related to AWWs required to achieve the goal of ICDS scheme are presented in Table 1. Majority of the respondents (60.1%) suggested to have provision for education of illiterate AWWs (Table 1). The reason may be that educated AWWs better understood and perform their job responsibility and manage the AWC.

Nearly fifty per cent (49.81%) of the respondents suggested special training on record keeping for AWWs need to be arranged because record keeping is important to monitor and showcase the activities of AWCs to higher authorities.

Nearly one fourth of the respondents (24.35 – 23.98%) suggested that illiterate AWWs should be replaced, AWW should be educated upto 12<sup>th</sup> standard and organization of AWWs trainings from time to time. The reason may be that it is difficult for Supervisor to direct,

guide and monitor the work of an illiterate AWWs so either replace the illiterate or provision and compulsion to attain education upto 12<sup>th</sup> standard. Time to time organization of trainings for AWW is required to update their knowledge. Further 3.69 per cent respondents also suggested to arrange AWWs trainings on pre and post natal care for pregnant women as it is an important mandate of ICDS scheme.

### AWC functioning

Anganwadi is a centre for providing all the facilities of ICDS scheme to the beneficiaries. In Table 1 respondents suggested some useful recommendations for proper functioning of AWCs. Majority of the respondents i.e. 50.92 per cent suggested supplementary food preparation by AWWs. The reason may be that supplementary food preparation by AWWs will serve hot. Nearly fifty per cent (46.86%) of the respondents suggested to stop the distribution of food through SHG in AWCs as they do not maintain the quality and quantity of supplementary food. Similarly 45.76 per cent of the respondents suggested for establishment AWC at the center of village to increase the enrollment of children. Further every person of village can easily reach the centre and it is easy to convey messages and also distribution of material to pregnant and lactating women so, AWC must be located at the center of village.

The Table 1 further reveal that providing proper equipment and material to AWCs will help in providing effective learning experience to children was suggested by 39.11 per cent of the respondents. AWWs with inadequate and inappropriate material not possible to providing effective learning experience.

More than three fourth (27.31%) of the respondents also suggested for packed food distribution to the AWCs because quantity is maintained in packed food. Few respondents (1.84%) suggested to give dry supplementary food at the AWC to maintain the quantity, quality and hygiene of supplementary food.

**Table 1: Suggestion given by the respondents for effective implementation of ICDS scheme [n=271]**

| S. No.                           | Suggestions   | f (%)       |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| <b>Administration</b>            |   |             |
| 1.                               | The number of AWCs allotment must be as per rule                        | 175 (64.58) |
| 2.                               | Reduce the extra work load  | 170 (62.73) |
| 3.                               | Fill the vacant position  | 140 (51.66) |
| 4.                               | TA bills must be passed in time   | 135 (49.81) |
| 5.                               | Proper policy of promotion  | 125 (46.12) |
| 6.                               | Create the post of Assistant Supervisors                                | 100 (36.90) |
| 7.                               | Salary according to number of AWCs supervised and education level       | 86 (31.73)  |
| 8.                               | TA should be given in probation period.                                 | 86 (31.73)  |
| 9.                               | No extra duty of other departments                                      | 86 (31.73)  |
| 10.                              | Arrange training for using mobile application "Rajdhara"                | 86 (31.73)  |
| 11.                              | Online submission of monthly progress report                            | 74 (27.31)  |
| 12.                              | Shifting/ establishment of AWCs in government school premises           | 60 (22.14)  |
| 13.                              | Increase salary   | 60 (22.14)  |
| 14.                              | Sector wise Supervisors should be placed/one sector with one Supervisor | 39 (14.39)  |
| 15.                              | Transfer the money in beneficiaries account for supplementary food      | 38 (14.02)  |
| 16.                              | Marksheet/ grade sheet provision for AWC children                       | 1 (0.37)    |
| 17.                              | Increase in honorarium of AWW   | 1 (0.37)    |
| 18.                              | Practical and written exam for Supervisors promotion                    | 1 (0.37)    |
| <b>Aanganwadi Worker related</b> |   |             |
| 1.                               | Provision for education of illiterate AWWs                              | 163 (60.1)  |
| 2.                               | Special training on record keeping for AWWs                             | 135 (49.81) |
| 3.                               | Illiterate AWWs should be replaced                                      | 66 (24.35)  |
| 4.                               | AWW should be educated upto 12 <sup>th</sup> standard                   | 65 (23.98)  |
| 5.                               | Organization of AWWs trainings from time to time                        | 65 (23.98)  |
| 6.                               | AWWs trainings on pre and post natal care for pregnant women            | 10 (3.69)   |
| <b>AWC functioning</b>           |   |             |
| 1.                               | Supplementary food preparation by AWWs                                  | 138 (50.92) |
| 2.                               | Stop the distribution of food from SHG in AWCs                          | 127 (46.86) |

|                                  |  |             |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 3.                               | Establishment of AWC at the center of village to increase the enrollment of children                       | 124 (45.76) |
| 4.                               | Proper and adequate equipment and material to AWCs for providing effective learning experience to children | 106 (39.11) |
| 5.                               | Packed food distribution to the AWCs   | 74 (27.31)  |
| 6.                               | Dry supplementary food given to the AWC  | 5 (1.84)    |
| 7.                               | Maintain the quality and quantity of supplementary food  | 5 (1.84)    |
| <b>Facilities</b>                |  |             |
| 1.                               | Provision of vehicle   | 173 (63.84) |
| 2.                               | Providing electricity, water, toilet and furniture at AWC  | 159 (58.67) |
| 3.                               | Proper working tablets   | 90 (33.21)  |
| 4.                               | Mobile facility as per norms   | 42 (15.5)   |
| 5.                               | Adequate facilities at headquarter   | 15 (5.53)   |
| <b>Monitoring and evaluation</b> |  |             |
| 1.                               | Supervision of AWC once in 3 months  | 55 (20.29)  |
| 2.                               | CCTV camera placed on AWCs for proper monitoring   | 1 (0.37)    |
| <b>General</b>                   |  |             |
| 1.                               | Allow for at least four working days at headquarter  | 45 (16.60)  |
| 2.                               | Uniform for AWC students by the department   | 36 (13.28)  |
| 3.                               | Information of different government scheme   | 20 (7.38)   |
| 4.                               | Regular supply and quality of supplementary nutrition programme need assessed                              | 18 (6.64)   |

### Facilities

Adequate facilities are necessary for every personnel to work effectively and efficiently. Hence respondents gave some useful suggestions about facilities is presented in Table 1. There must be provision of vehicle, was suggested by 63.84 per cent of the respondents. Supervisors monitor one or more AWCs in a day so office vehicle should be given. Table 1 also revealed that 58.67 per cent respondents suggested for providing electricity, water, toilet and furniture facilities at AWCs as these are the basic minimum facilities for normal working.

About 33.21 per cent respondents suggested proper working tablets should be given to Supervisors as Supervisors have to report the day to day activities online so, it is necessary to provide proper working tablets. A considerable number of respondents (15.5%) also suggested for giving mobile facility as per norms. Adequate facilities at headquarter needs to be established was also suggested by 5.53 per cent respondents.

Findings get support from the study of Chaturvedi [5] suggested that the Anganwadi workers for successful implementation of ICDS programme, the most important suggestions were higher honorarium along with other allowances should be given and provision of well-furnished government building. Findings are in line with Patel [3] that provision of recreation materials like charts, toys etc., good honorarium along with other allowances, arrangement of hand pumps and toilets at centre are essential for improvement of ICDS programme.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation activity is important to assess progress of any scheme. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring and evaluation work of AWWs/AWCs therefore suggestions regarding this aspect are presented in Table 1. As per considerable number of respondents (20.29%) suggested for supervision of AWC once in 3 months. As per norms Supervisors are expected to supervise each AWCs once in a month and since Supervisors allotted more number of AWCs hence, not possible to visit all the allotted centres once in month until and unless Supervisors visit and supervise more than one AWC per day. One working day per AWC is essential for proper monitoring and evaluating. One respondent (0.37%) also suggested for installation of CCTV camera at AWCs for proper monitoring.

### General

A considerable number (16.60%) of respondents suggested to allow Supervisors to work at headquarter for at least four working days in a month, as this is required for compiling

reports, planning trainings and other things for AWWs. In Table 1, 13.28 per cent respondents also suggested that department must provide uniforms for AWC students. The reason may be that AWCs need to develop acquaintance of formal education system and further uniform will give identity and equality to AWC students. The information of different government schemes and regular supply and quality of supplementary nutrition programme need to be assessed were suggested by 7.38 and 6.64 per cent respondents respectively.

It can be concluded from the suggestions made by the respondents that lot of worthwhile suggestions have emerged out and these must be considered appropriately by the management and Women and Child development department for strengthening the ICDS scheme.

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