

Financial interpretation of integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) on nutrition for children

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Children's experiences of poverty and vulnerability are multidimensional and differ from those of others. Around 170 million or 40% of children in India are vulnerable to or experiencing difficult circumstances (Udayan Care & UNICEF). Children undergo complex physical, psychological and intellectual development as they grow, and are also often more vulnerable to malnutrition, disease, abuse and exploitation (UNICEF). The Government of India recognises all the vulnerable children as "Children in difficult circumstances; characterised by their specific social, economic and geo-political situation". In addition to providing a safe environment for these children, it is vital to ensure that all other children also remain protected. Child protection is integrally linked to every other right of the child, and failure to ensure children's right to protection adversely affects all other rights of the child (MWCD), and failure to protect children has serious consequences on the physical, mental, emotional and social development of a child. These development indicators are also directly linked to the nutritional intake of a child. Under-nutrition of children is a major public health problem and children under five years of age are more vulnerable than others. Children residing in Social Welfare Hostels/orphanages are more prone to malnutrition compared to children staying at home with their parents. This could lead to more morbidity among these children (Bhat & Bangera, 2017). Hence, a proper surveillance of their nutrition status is required to ensure optimum health and nutrition care. Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is based on the principles of 'protection of child rights' and 'best interests of the child' and aims to institutionalize services for emergency outreach, family and community based care, counselling and support. ICPS sensitizes functionaries in the system towards child protection and raise public awareness. It seeks to put in place both preventive and curative mechanisms for a child needing protection from exploitation, harassment, health hazards etc. The model adopts Government-Civil Society partnership to ensure child protection and create a safe and healthy environment for the children of India. It was found that due to lack of regular supervision and commitment to implement and monitor standards of child care institutions, lack of maintaining standard care (food, accommodation, sanitation, leisure) in all institutions due to lower funding, staff etc, children do not get adequate food and nutrition, environment for the development of health both physically and psychologically (NIPCCD, 2011; NIPCCD, 2001; MWCD, 2007; IRMED, 2009-10). Though ICPS is a flagship child protection scheme for the development of health and nutrition of children through institutional settings in India where large numbers of children live, hardly any study was found to focus on budget to maintain their health and nutritional needs. Even disaggregated data is also not available about the number of children of different age groups who are staying in institutions due to their vulnerabilities and number of children homes that are running in India. So it is difficult to calculate the amount provided for food and nutrition to normal and sick children. Therefore, this scheme needs to be more focussed, as ICDS scheme is also for better child health and nutrition. We must also pay attention to the food and nutrition impact of this programme particularly towards enhancing better health of the children.

Keywords: child protection scheme, food, nutrition, children

The early years are the most valuable and vulnerable period when there are paramount risks to survival, healthy growth, development and susceptibility to a vicious cycle of under-nutrition and disease/infections of an infant. These early years are also crucial for cumulative lifelong learning and human development through physical, cognitive, emotional, social and linguistic development (MWCD, Working group on child rights for the 12th five year plan). The Ministry of Women and Child development has been

continuously taking initiatives in context of nutrition through different flagship schemes and programmes for women and children in the country. There are a number of schemes and programmes affecting directly or indirectly to the nutritional status of children (0-6 years age). In spite of these, levels of malnutrition and related health problems in the country are genuinely high. It is also therefore necessary to assess the child budget in context of nutrition among children. Here, this paper analyses the budgetary commitment of ICPS towards child protection and discusses about initiatives of this scheme for providing nutrition to children those staying in institutional settings (Children Homes).

Nineteen percent of world's children live in India. India is home to more than one billion people, of which 42 percent are children,

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defined as people under-18 years of age. There are about 43 crore children in the age group of 0-18 years, of which about 16 crore are represented by the young child under 6 years of age (MWCD, Working group on child rights for the 12th five year plan, P.8). It is estimated that around 170 million or 40% of children in India are vulnerable to or experiencing difficult circumstances. Around 11 million children live on the streets in India (UNICEF). They are exposed to health hazards, harassment and exploitation and around 90 million are child labourers (5-14 ages) in India (NSSO). The UN Convention on the Rights of the child, to which India is a signatory, guarantees every child's right to protection. Article (6) of the Constitution of India also mentions survival and development of the child in India.

Child-sensitive social protection is an evidence-based approach that aims to maximum opportunities and developmental outcomes for children by considering different dimensions of children's well-being. It focuses on addressing the inherent social disadvantages, risks and vulnerabilities, children may be born into, as well as those acquired later in childhood due to external shocks. It is thus best achieved through ICPS. ICPS is aimed at bringing much-needed convergence across various sectors in the Government as well as society at large to ensure that all children come under the protective umbrella of the State and the community.

Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is one of the major flagship Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) for child protection in our country which was introduced in 2009 and is the only instrument to implement Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act). This broadening of concern of ICPS ensures that problems of child vulnerability and child protection are best approached through prevention; community oriented family based, non-institutional alternatives (Mehta & Carenhas). ICPS is based on the principles of 'protection of child rights' and 'best interests of the child' and aims to institutionalize services for emergency outreach, family

and community based care, counselling and support. ICPS sensitizes functionaries in the system towards child protection and raise public awareness. It seeks to put in place both preventive and curative mechanisms for a child needing protection from exploitation, harassment, health hazards etc. The model adopts Government-Civil Society partnership to ensure child protection and create a safe and healthy environment for the children of India.

The objective of ICPS scheme is to contribute to improvement in the well-being of children in difficult circumstances, as well as to the reduction of vulnerabilities to situations and actions that lead to abuse, exploitation, abandonment and separation of children from their families (MWCD, 2015-16). In the initial three years, the ICPS was with Department of Social Justice and later on it was transferred to Department of Women and Child Development. It is estimated that 40 percent of children are in difficult circumstances or are vulnerable. To promote deinstitutionalization of children without parental care, the Ministry is facilitating adoption of such children by loving families through specialized adoption agencies set up under the JJ Act and provides financial assistance under ICPS. The JJ Act also requires all children's homes to develop linkages with adoption agencies for adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children. The ICPS provides preventive, statutory care & rehabilitation services to any other vulnerable child including, but not limited, to: children of potentially vulnerable families and families at risk, children of migrant families, families living in extreme condition, poverty, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes, families affected by discrimination, minorities, children infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans, child drug abusers and substance abusers, child beggars, trafficked or sexually exploited children, children of prisoners, and street and working children (EPW, 2017). Child protection has seen an overall increase from 1.21% (2013-14) to 1.49% (2017-18) of the child budget (CBGA, 2017-18).

Table 1: Status of implementation of ICPS (Rs. in crore)

Year	No. of States that have signed MOUs	BE	RE	No of beneficiaries
2009-10	17	60.00	50.00	36,780
2010-11	34	300.00	100.00	92,379
2011-12	34	270.00	180.00	50,118
2012-13	34	400.00	273.00	75,052
2013-14	35	300.00	270.00	74,983
2014-15	36	400.00	450.00	91,769
2015-16	36	402.23	498.57	78,463
2016-17	36	397.00	597.50	77,508 (as on 31.12.16)
2017-18	-	648.00	-	-

Source: MWCD, Annual reports

The data shows that a very low level of fund utilization rate in ICPS has been found over the period of three years (2010-11 to 2012-13). The percentage of fund utilization accounts for 4.69, 34.58 and 0.09 percent respectively during 2010-11 to 2012-13. The level of utilization is found to be higher in 2011-12 due to filling some of the

vacant posts at district and state level (CBGA & Samarthan-centre). Data is not available on Actual Estimate (AE) of consecutive years.

During the financial year 2016-17 till 31.12.2016, the Ministry assisted 1479 homes, 281 specialized agencies and 301 open shelters through State Governments/UT administrations. These care;

protection and rehabilitation services provide various types of facilities like food, nutrition, shelter, clothes, medical care etc. for the welfare and development of children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with the law. From the above table, data reflects that 77,508 children (who have not completed eighteen years of age as per the JJ Act) were benefitted through ICPS as on 31.12.16 but the budget allocation and expenditure for nutritional aspect of children, for the child care institutions was not found in any document. Data is not available in terms of how many children up to five years of age has been benefitted in nutritional aspect for normal children, special nutritional diet for infants and sick children and children with special needs under ICPS. So it is difficult to calculate the budget allocation and expenditure in terms of nutrition for the children and how it impacts their health.

Highlighting points on nutrition of children

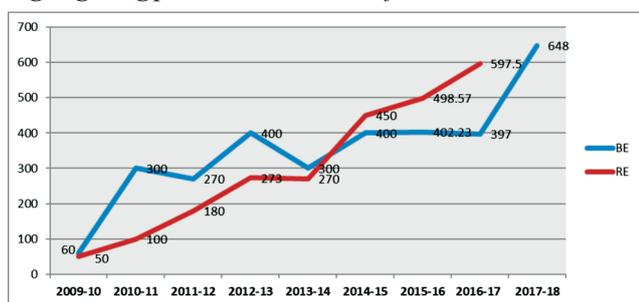


Figure 1: Year wise Budget Estimate (BE) & Revised Estimate (RE) on ICPS (Rs. In Crore)

Child protection received more attention with a 55% increase since 2016-17. Despite this, the share in the union budget has increased from a meagre 0.03% to 0.05%. It received Rs. 648 crores in 2017-18, an increase of 63% from 2016-17's Rs. 397 crores and 61 % from 2015-16. However, the focus needs to be on the implementation of the scheme at ground level and monitoring of the outcomes. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) emphasizes of child rights and focuses on protection of all children in the 0-18 years of age group. NCPCR has been allocated a total amount of Rs.19 crores in the union budget 2017-18, an equal amount as in previous year's budget.

Overview of standards of care and key procedures

Institutional services: As provided by the JJ (Care and protection of children) Act 2000, the scheme supported the creation of new institutional facilities and maintenance of existing institutional facilities both for children in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection. These are shelter homes, children's homes and observation homes, special homes, place of safety etc. In addition,

the scheme provides for institutional care of children with special needs by supporting a specialized unit within the existing homes or by setting up a specialized shelter home for children with special needs prescribed under standards of care for children. There are standards of care which should be followed as prescribed under the JJ (Care & protection of children) model rules, 2016; viz-physical infrastructure, clothing, bedding and toilets, sanitation and hygiene, daily routine, nutrition and diet scale (Rule 33), medical care (Rule 34), mental health, education, vocational training, recreational facilities. ICPS facilitates setting up of open shelters particularly in the urban areas. Open shelters provide a space for children where they can use their time productively, have access to health care and education, be protected from abuse, and neglect on the streets.

Children's home: The State Government itself or in association with voluntary organizations, set up separate homes for children in need of care and protection, in the manner specified below.

In each home there is a provision to accommodate 50 children. All children's homes must be registered as child care institutions of the Act under sub-section (3) of section 34 and rule 71 of these rules (MWCD, 2007);

- Every children's home has to include separate facilities for children of 0-5 years of age groups with appropriate facilities for the infants
- Separate children's homes shall be set up for boys and girls in the age group 10-18 years
- Separate facilities for children up to the age of six years with appropriate facilities for infants

Nutrition and Diet Scale

Every Child Care Institution (CCI) shall strictly adhere to the minimum nutritional standards and a diet scale. Quality and quantity of food that children under institutional care are entitled to receive daily, adherence to diet scale and minimum nutritional standard, provision for special meals on holidays and festivals, special diet for infants and sick children, and meal timing and menu are sorted out in the minimum nutritional standards. The following nutrition and diet scale are followed by the CCIs namely:

- The children shall be provided four meals in a day with breakfast;
- The menu should be prepared with the help of a nutritional expert or doctor to ensure balanced diet and variety in taste as per the minimum nutritional standard and diet scale.

The diet scale include adequate quantity of cereals, pulses, vegetables, fruits, eggs, milk and meat and fish in accordance with the local dietary habits.

Every child care institution shall strictly adhere to the minimum nutritional standard and diet scale suggested as below.

Details of nutrition and diet chart as per JJ rules 2007 are given below:

SCHEDULE II (JJ Rules 2007) Nutrition and Diet Scale (rule 44)

Name of the articles of diet	Scale per head per day
Rice/Wheat/Ragi/Jowar	600 Gms, (700 Gms for 16-18 years age) of which at least 100 gms to be either wheat or Ragi or Jowar
Dal/ Rajma/ Chana	120 Gms
Edible Oil	25 Gms
Onion	25 Gms
Salt	25 Gms

Turmeric	05 Gms
Coriander Seed Powder	05 Gms
Ginger	05 Gms
Garlic	05 Gms
Tamarind/ Mango powder	05 Gms
Milk (at breakfast)	150 ml
Dry Chillies	05 Gms
Vegetables Leafy	
Non-leafy	100 Gms
130 Gms	
Curd or Butter Milk	100 Gms/MI
Chicken once a week or Eggs 4 days	115 Gms
Jaggery and ground nut seeds or paneer (vegetarian only)	60 Gms each (100 Gms for paneer) once in a week
Sugar	40 Gms
Following items for 50 Children per day used in total	
Pepper	25 Gms
Jeera Seeds	25 Gms
Black Gramdall	50 Gms
Mustard seeds	50 Gms
Ajwain seeds	50 Gms
On Chicken Day for 10 kg. of chicken (Non-veg provided sometimes)	
Garam Masala	10 Gms
Kopra	150Gms
Khas Khas	150 Gms
Groundnut Oil	500 Gms
For Sick Children	
Bread	500 Gms
Milk	500 MI
Other Items	
LP Gas for cooking only	

Variation in diet

- Three varieties of dal i.e., Toor (Tuvary), Moong (Green Gram) and Chana (Bengal Gram) may be distributed alternatively.
- The Superintendent may arrange to substitute chicken with fish at his discretion, if there is no extra expenditure to Government.
- On non-vegetarian days, vegetarian children shall be issued with either 60 Gms. of Jaggery or 60 Gms of Groundnut seeds per head in the shape of laddo or any sweet dish or 100 gms paneer.
- Potatoes shall be issued in lieu of vegetables once in a week.
- Leafy vegetables like Fenugreek (Methi), Spinach (Palak), Sarson (Mustard leaves) Gongura Thotakura or any other sag, etc. may also be issued once in a week. If a kitchen garden is attached to any institution leafy vegetables, in addition to drumstick trees, curry leaves trees and coriander leaves, should be grown and issued and the Superintendent should try to issue variety of vegetables and see that the same vegetable is not repeated for at least a period of one week.
- The Superintendent may make temporary alternations in the scale of diet in individual cases when considered necessary by him, or on the institution's Doctor's advice subject to the condition that the scale laid down is not exceeded.

Meal timing and menu

- Breakfast after 8:00 am: During breakfast following items are

provided such as (i) Upma or chapattis made of Wheat or Ragi or any other dish, (ii) Chutneys from Gongura or fresh curry leave or fresh coriander or Coconut and Putnadal, etc. dal/vegetable may be issued as a dish, (iii)Milk, (iv) Seasonal fruit in sufficient quantity, if any

- Lunch at 1: 00 P.M. and Dinner after 7:00 P.M. : (i) Rice/Chapattis or combination of both, (ii)Vegetable Curry, (iii)Sambar or Dal (iv) Butter Milk or curd are provided in lunch.

Homes or shelter homes for children with special needs: Homes for mentally challenged

In addition to dietary allowances prescribed in Rule 26, children diagnosed as needing nutritional supplements or special diet shall be provided with the same. Every officer in charge shall ensure that every child has the right to adequate and appropriate nutrition. Residents shall receive food that is suitably prepared and presented at normal meal times and of a quality and quantity to satisfy the standards of dietetics, hygiene and health and as much as possible, religious and cultural requirements. Clean drinking water should be available to every child at any time.

Care, protection and rehabilitation services

The scheme provides financial support to State Government/UT administrations for running services for children either by themselves or through suitable NGOs. These services include:

- Homes of various types for children,
- Outreach services through child line
- Open shelters for children in need of care and protection in urban and semi urban areas
- Family based non-institutional care through sponsorship, foster care and adoptions.

Emerging points from discussion with officials regarding ICPS and review of guidelines of ICPS

In the context of ICPS interpretation on nutrition of children, some telephonic discussions were conducted with officials of Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD), National Council for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) on 14th and 17th July of 2017. All the concerned personnel mentioned that there is no separate budget head for nutrition of children of different age groups for children homes. So it is difficult to calculate the total budget estimate and expenditure for nutrition provided for children. As per JJ act (Care & Protection of children) 2000 and ICPS guidelines every child care institution is mandatory to follow the minimum standard for accommodation, infrastructure, food and nutrition, education, medical, recreation etc. There are separate diet charts and menu per day per person prescribed in the guidelines for children.

Shishu Greh (Children's Home) is taking care of children of 0-6 years of age and working for their adoption through special adoption agency by the State Governments. Shishu Greh Scheme promotes child adoption in India. Under the scheme, the adoption is promoted and simultaneously in pre-adoption period, complete care of a child is reserved. There are government organizations to do so, but as the trend shows more activities are run into actions by NGOs/Charitable trust over this scheme. In India every day hundreds of children become orphan and due to lack of any support they are forced to live depraved and destitute i.e. poor life. Therefore, the scheme targets on all such issues and make sure no child in their vision remains deprived of the facilities and all happiness what he/she deserves.

Benefits of shishu greh scheme

- The scheme provides grants for setting up of orphanage which will shelter orphans
- The scheme grants the permission of setting up of small schools with orphanage
- Better nutrition to children: Children are given better nutrition as there is pre-adoption programme for child care
- To avoid any medical emergencies orphanage is allowed to have a better medical setup in the orphanage itself
- Since the scheme is truly dedicated to bring happiness to the orphans, destituted children, they promote adoption aggressively and try to find a sweet home for the needy child
- To process the scheme, the government releases the financial assistance in which 90% is provided by govt. and 10% will be carries out by NGO/organization themselves.

As per the revised ICPS guidelines by MWCD (pp.122-123) and discussion, it was found that Rs. 2000 per child per month is provided in a home which comprises food @ Rs.1400 per child and Rs. 600 for clothing, medicine, soap, oil etc. per month but no amount specified for nutrition for children, which can prevent them from major health and nutritional problems such as stunting, wasting, severely wasting and underweight under the age of 5. As per

the calculations, the annual expenditure for food per child is Rs.16,800 and per day, it is nears about Rs.46. Additional grant only for children of special needs are given importance @Rs.400 per child per month to cover expenses on nutritional food.

Since there is no accurate data on the number of children residing in the CCIs and who needs medical attention due to malnourishment, the above mentioned amount of per child expenditure retaliates for an exempted budgetary analysis of the requirements for the needy children.

National Nutrition Mission (NNM) through convergence mechanism and other components would strive to create the synergy. The target of the NNM is to reduce stunting to at least 2% p.a, stunting from 38.4 (NFHS-4) to 25% by 2022 (Mission 25 by 2022). Therefore the ICPS is also an important scheme to bring in effect the targets of the NNM and monitor the status of children under 5 years of age staying in institutional homes.

Conclusion

This paper discussed about the objectives, target groups and financial analysis of ICPS. Although separate budget is not available for nutrition of children under ICPS but the diet chart for food and nutrition of children and calculated requirement of nutrition per child per day were explored. The ICPS and MWCD envisage a broad and comprehensive framework for child protection and create a strong protective environment for children. Every child in India has the right to be cared for in a loving and nurturing family environment, to live with dignity and be protected from separation, violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation. Subpar cognitive development of a child will also affect his productivity and eventually the economy of the state. The National Plan of Action for children (NPAC), 2016 provides a comprehensive framework focusing on all the key areas concerning children. It now requires a targeted budget allocation for effective implementation (CBGA, 2017-18). Further, this paper gives a way for further studies by researchers/academicians/development professional or practitioners related to pre-nutrition assessment and post nutrition-assessment of children during the staying period at institutional homes and how nutrition deficiencies can affect their future.

To protect children from vulnerabilities and difficult circumstances, ICPS is the foremost flagship programme through institutional and non-institutional services and support. It helps them in physical and cognitive development by maintaining proper minimum standard of care in institutional settings through providing nutritious food, fulfilling their nutritional requirement for maintaining good health, shelter for safety, environment, education, and entertainment to grow towards their full potential. Therefore, the budget needs to be reflected for the required care of each child to make them healthy through timely review and identification of their health status. For increasing health and nutritional status of children, it is necessary to monitor the standard health and nutritional services provided at children homes in a continuous manner.

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