

First meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyaan held today in New Delhi

Ministry of Women and Child Development

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235 districts to be covered under Phase-II of POSHAN Abhiyaan bringing the total number to 550

Home based Care for Young Child (HBYC) to be the crucial component of POSHAN Abhiyaan

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The first meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyaan was held today in New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog. The Council which has been set up under POSHAN Abhiyaan is the apex body to formulate overall policies, guide and monitor all nutrition based schemes. The mandate of the Council is:

1. To provide policy directions to address India's Nutrition Challenges through coordinated inter-sectoral action
2. To coordinate and review convergence among ministries
3. To review programmes for nutrition on a quarterly basis

The Council will submit its report to the Prime Minister every six months.

Sh.Ram Vilas Paswan, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Sh.Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State(I/C) for Housing & Urban Affairs, State Ministers of WCD from the states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, Secretaries of Central Government and District Collectors of eight districts attended the meeting and deliberated on the implementation of the Abhiyaan. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan stressed that mothers should be involved through Self Help groups for distribution of Take home ration in Anganwadi Centres.

Some of the important decisions taken in the meeting are :

1. **235 Additional Districts have been confirmed as part of Phase II of POSHAN Abhiyaan in financial year 2018-19**

The districts have been selected on the basis of:-

- (a) The level of stunting.
- (b) Ensuring all LWE (105) and Aspirational (117) districts are included.

(c) Wherever a gap of 1 district was left to achieve saturation in

States/UTs.

315 districts were already covered under phase-I of POSHAN Abhiyaan. The balance of 167 districts out of 718 districts will be covered in Phase III of the Abhiyaan

1. Provision of Smartphones instead of Tablets to Lady Supervisors.

Some states have highlighted problems in procurement of tablets for Anganwadi supervisors. The issue was discussed in the meeting and it was decided that Smartphones may be procured for Anganwadi supervisors instead of Tablets.

1. Direct transfer of Funds to States/UTs for Cash Award to Frontline Functionaries, instead of Creation of Corpus Fund.

It was decided to examine the matter in consultation with the Ministry of Finance.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman Niti Aayog stressed on the need for ground level work and participation from all sectors, for converting the mission into Jan Andolan and achieving the goals. He called for feedback and suggestions from members and state and district level officers in implementing the mission.

Dr. Vinod Paul, Member, NITI Aayog in his address highlighted that the focus is on the first 1000 days of the child and preventive care for adolescent girls, women and mothers. He also said that Home-based Care for Young Child (HBYC) would be a crucial component of POSHAN Abhiyaan. In HBYC, ASHAs supported by Anganwadi workers (AWW) will visit the homes of children aged between 3 to 15 months and sensitise mothers on energy density and diet of child. The committee has endorsed his recommendation on:

- Package of interventions matrix for the first 1000 days of the child
- Roll out HBYC within a month
- Social and behavioural change road map and action roll out

During the meeting following decisions were also taken

- The pilot will be conducted in 10 districts for conditional cash transfer (CCT) through direct benefit transfer
- States/UTs to continue their existing system of providing supplementary nutrition under Anganwadi services

Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Joint Secretary highlighted that various incentives have been made a part of POSHAN Abhiyaan. To encourage Anganwadi workers to use mobile phones for real time monitoring (ICT-RTM), incentive funds shall be provided for each Anganwadi worker per month. It will be linked to the achievements of certain targets.

Centralised call centre will be established for monitoring, grievance redressal and interventions.

Speaking on the importance of ICDS-CAS, he said that it will help in collecting real time data enabling supportive supervision and timely intervention by department officials. He also added that it would further create robust monitoring, evaluation and analysis platform at all hierarchical levels,

through an integrated dashboard. E learning module has also been created for Anganwadi workers. Comprehensive Guidelines and Manuals are now available at State Level for all Abhiyaan Components.

Sh. Rakesh Srivastava, Secretary , WCD Ministry in his address said that there is a need to ensure convergence of various programmes spread across Ministries as under:

- Anganwadi Services, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Scheme for Adolescent Girls of Ministry of Women & Child Development;
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), National Health Mission (NHM), Home-based New born Care, Home-Based Yong Child Care, Anemia Mukh Bharat and Rashtrya Bal Swasth Krayakram of MoH&FW;
- Swachhh Bharat Mission, Construction of toilets and WASH of Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DW&S);
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), of Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD);
- Drinking Water & Toilets with Ministry of Panchayati Raj;

He also stressed on the need for Convergence among Field Functionaries like AWWs, ANM, ASHA and DAY-NRLM as a part of Community based engagement. He further highlighted that States/UTs and Line Ministries need to achieve convergence through close coordination between the Departments of Women & Child Welfare; Health; Drinking Water & sanitation; Rural Development; Panchayati Raj; Education and Food and other concerned Departments.

The first lot of 40 Swasth Bharat Preraks is being dispatched by end of the month and would be available at District level to assist the staff in smooth roll-out. Under the Abhiyaan, Swasth Bharat Preraks will be deployed one in each District for coordinating with District officials and enabling fast and efficient execution of the Abhiyaan across the country. Swasth Bharat Preraks would function as a catalyst for fast tracking the implementation of the Abhiyaan. By July 2018, 315 Swasth Bharat Preraks are likely to be deployed in 315 districts of Phase I of the POSHAN Abhiyaan.

The annual targets set under POSHAN Abhiyaan beginning 2017-18 are as under:

S.No	Objective	Target
1.	Prevent and reduce stunting in children (0-6years)	By 6% @ 2% p.a.
2	Prevent and reduce under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) in children (0-6 years)	By 6% @ 2% p.a.
3	Reduce the prevalence of anemia among young Children(6-59 months)	By 9% @ 3% p.a.
4	Reduce the prevalence of anemia among Women and Adolescent Girls in the age group of 15-49 years.	By 9% @ 3% p.a.
5	Reduce Low Birth Weight (LBW).	By 6% @ 2% p.a.

Target of Mission is also to bring down stunting of the children in the age group of 0-6 years from 38.4% to 25% by the year 2022.

For more details on the Poshan Abhiyaan :

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1525450>

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1524208>

POSHAN Abhiyaan Website <http://icds-wcd.nic.in/nnm/home.htm>

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