

Women's Economic Empowerment in India

Policy Landscape on Unpaid Work

January 2020



About the Document

The document *Policy Landscape on Unpaid Work* is part of a larger study on the landscape of Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) policies in India. It is published along with a main summary document and six other documents, that together look at domains relevant to WEE - collective action, unpaid work, skill development, quality work, social protection, property and assets, and financial inclusion.

The primary objective of the landscape study is to map the relevant schemes and policies that are closely aligned with the objective of promoting economic empowerment for women in India. In addition to undertaking a mapping exercise, the authors were tasked with analysing various central and state government schemes, studying current priorities, international conventions and best practices for promoting women's economic empowerment, and reviewing relevant evaluations to identify implementation and evidence gaps.

The study employs a critical gender lens to identify promising exemplars of transformative policies in terms of design features, implementation efficacy, and impact. It also highlights the gaps in the broader policy landscape of India, with respect to women, as well as in evidence.

Overall, the study aims to inform priorities for addressing critical evidence, data and knowledge gaps to improve the enabling environment for women's economic empowerment, and reduce the barriers for accessing quality work in India.

Unpaid Work

In 2013, the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) introduced a ‘conceptually revolutionary definition’ of work to include any ‘activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or provide services for use by self/others’, thereby recognising types of work that were as yet unrecognised, such as unpaid trainee & volunteer work, and household work.¹ In doing so, they recognised work as something that can be performed for pay or profit, or be unpaid.

Unpaid work can be characterised as time and energy consuming labour carried out by an individual with the goal of aiding in human well-being, more often than not resulting from gendered obligations established by societal norms.² Such labour includes (1) providing direct care for children and/or dependent adults, (2) house work like cooking, cleaning or collecting water or firewood, and (3) work carried out for members of the community, neighbours or distant relatives.³ Global statistics indicate that women bear a disproportionate burden of unpaid work.⁴ However, as the 2017 ILO-Gallup report shows, a majority of women would in fact prefer to work at paid jobs, but the lack of recourse to affordable alternatives for their existing responsibilities remains a major barrier to their entering the paid labour force.⁵

This section focuses on addressing the goal of women’s economic empowerment by addressing the element of “unpaid work” under the ODI framework. To begin with, it is important to address the invisibility of unpaid work resulting from its patriarchal functioning and non-remunerative existence in a society, which only gives importance to paid economic activities and assumes that the two forms (paid and unpaid) are mutually exclusive, and the latter has no influence over the former.⁶ Additionally, the gendered manner in which unpaid labour is carried out also reduces a woman’s bargaining power in the labour market, propagating unequal income practices on the basis of gender.⁷ In India, this is aptly illustrated by the 1988 case of Lata Wadhwa vs State of Bihar, where the Supreme Court, charged with addressing the monetary compensation needed to be rendered under the Motor Vehicles Act in the event of the death of a housewife, restricted the compensation to only her monetary earnings.⁸

Country /Time spent (minutes)	Paid work or study	Unpaid work	Personal care	Leisure	Other
People's Republic of China	291	234	692	211	12
India	185	352	670	221	13
South Africa	195	250	695	282	19

Source: OECD stats. Time Use⁹

Labour surveys in India reveal that more than 80 percent women engage in domestic chores.¹⁰ Indian women do 7 times as much unpaid work as men,¹¹ yet are treated as non-workers because they do not engage in work considered ‘economically

¹ Care Work and Care Givers: For the future of decent work, International Labour Organization, 2018,

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_633135.pdf

² Market systems approaches to enabling women’s economic empowerment through addressing unpaid care work, Jodie Thorpe, Mar Maestre and Thalia Kidder, The Beam Exchange, 03/16, <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/14347>

³ Market systems approaches to enabling women’s economic empowerment through addressing unpaid care work, Jodie Thorpe, Mar Maestre and Thalia Kidder, The Beam Exchange, 03/16, <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/14347>

⁴ Unpaid Work Infographic, Changing World of Work, UN Women, 2016, <http://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/infographic/changingworldofwork/en/index.html>

⁵ Most women prefer to be working and the majority of men agree, ILO Gallup report shows, International Labour Organization, 08/03/2018, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_545963/lang--en/index.htm

⁶ Market systems approaches to enabling women’s economic empowerment through addressing unpaid care work, Jodie Thorpe, Mar Maestre and Thalia Kidder, The Beam Exchange, 03/16, <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/14347>

⁷ Market systems approaches to enabling women’s economic empowerment through addressing unpaid care work, Jodie Thorpe, Mar Maestre and Thalia Kidder, The Beam Exchange, 03/16, <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/14347>

⁸ Domestic Work, Unpaid Work and Wage Rates, Kamala Sankaran, Economic and Political Weekly, 26/10/2013, <https://www.epw.in/journal/2013/43/review-womens-studies-review-issues/domestic-work-unpaid-work-and-wage-rates.html>

⁹ Time Use, OECD Stats, https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=TIME_USE#

¹⁰ Decline in Rural Female Labour Force Participation in India: A Relook into the Causes, Sunita Sanghi, A Srijia, and Shirke Shrinivas Vijay, Vikalpa, 07/2015, https://www.niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/document_publication/Decline%20in%20Rural%20Female%20Labour%20Force%20Participation%20in%20India.pdf

¹¹ Expert’s Take: Making unpaid work visible creates livelihoods for rural women, Subhalakshmi Nandi, UN Women, 08/03/2017, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/experts-take-subhalakshmi-nandi-unpaid-work#notes>

productive'.¹² Estimates reveal that the total value of such time spent by women in India is equivalent to 39 percent of India's GDP.¹³ So in order to achieve the goal of WEE for Indian women, efforts must be made to (a) help ease the drudgery involved in unpaid work and (b) achieve equity of impact.

In recognition of the above, the Indian government has over the last 5 decades attempted to ease the burden of unpaid work for women. The Maternity Benefits Act, 1961, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna and Integrated Child Development Services are some examples of the major schemes and policies in this area. More recently, the 2019 budget has also sought to ensure adequate water supply in an integrated and holistic manner to every household ('Har Ghar Jal') by 2024, through the constitution of a Jal Shakti Mantralaya, under the Jal Jeevan Mission.¹⁴

In the section that follows, we have attempted to analyse and understand the impact of some of these schemes in facilitating economic empowerment of Indian women.

BARRIERS FOR WOMEN IN UNPAID WORK

India is continuously striving to address and reduce the burden of unpaid work on women. Having said that, there are a number of barriers to reducing unpaid work for women that have been mentioned below:

Concerns	Barriers
Social protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of basic utilities like clean water, electricity and fuel increases women's household responsibilities & reduces their free time
Legal protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treating women performing unpaid work as non-workers due to absence of laws that recognise unpaid work as 'economically productive' Limited impact of policies that create affordable alternatives to unpaid work or which push men to partake equally Laws such as the Maternity Benefits Act that further the narrative of child care being the primary responsibility of women Lack of policies that curb informality, and support/encourage women's participation in the labour market
Infrastructure and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of physical safety coupled with women-unfriendly infrastructure such as toilets, whose absence restricts their freedom and participation in the labour market
Societal norms and gender stereotyping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictive social norms that set expectations of unpaid work as a woman's domain Familial fear or societal pressure of women's safety Stereotyping trades/skills taught to women which restricts the jobs they can access
Access to employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited job opportunities in the neighbourhood and lack of strong market linkages Social norms that prevent women from migrating for work

UNPAID WORK SCHEMES – TRENDS

As explained in the initial section, recognising unpaid work done by women is an important component of economic empowerment, especially since women are more likely to be involved in such work as compared to any other marginalised group of people. In India, there has also been a growing recognition of the fact that the absence of government-run services squarely puts the burden on women who are expected to provide unremunerated work, and often as part of their domestic chores, thereby limiting their entry into paid employment. The schemes which fall under this bucket aim to specifically target women

¹² Note: According to the Census in 2011, people engaged in household duties have been treated as non-workers, even when 159.9 million women stated that "household work" was their main occupation.

¹³ Expert's Take: Making unpaid work visible creates livelihoods for rural women, Subhalakshmi Nandi, UN Women 08/03/2017, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/experts-take-subhalakshmi-nandi-unpaid-work#notes>

¹⁴ Budget 2019-20, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, 05/07/2019, <http://www.cbgaindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Budget-Speech-2019-20.pdf>

and alleviate their burden to a certain extent by providing them with assistance. Similar patterns seen in other buckets can be seen here, with the central government's Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) anchoring its flagship schemes and initiatives, with several state governments having their own schemes targeting working women.

The central government must be credited to have taken early steps in recognising the work done by women, with the enactment of a number of social sector schemes designed to provide access to a variety of basic services such as clean fuel, child care etc. under the ambit of welfare programmes. The earliest instance of this is the Maternity Benefits Act (1961) and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) which was launched in 1975, under the aegis of the MWCD, and makes provision for child care facilities. The Maternity Benefits Act was recently amended to enhance the benefits to women with the aim of protecting their interests, while the ICDS has seen multiple evaluations which have shown varied results. More recent times have seen other schemes targeted at women, such as rural electrification and access to clean fuel. The current government has also set an ambitious target to provide piped drinking water to all households by 2022. All of these directly impact women as they alleviate the time spent by women in collecting firewood for cooking and bringing drinking water for the household. Other schemes, including some state level schemes, target senior citizens and agricultural labourers and benefit women even though they are gender neutral.

The number of interventions in this domain are numerous and varied. This is in part due to the variations in context and cultural norms that affect women. As a result, an intervention that works for one demographic does not work for another. An example that best illustrates this is the Maternity Benefits Act. This legislation targets women employed in the formal sector, which is a small percentage of the total number of women in the Indian workforce. As a result, it is unable to affect the circumstances of the large number of women who continue to work in informal setups and whose rights still remain largely unprotected.

A long list of schemes in the *Unpaid Work* domain can be found below.

UNPAID WORK SCHEMES – NATIONAL LEVEL

Policy Name	Focus Area	Target Group	Geographical Reach	Longwe Framework Bucket	Past Evaluations
Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)	Providing free of cost LPG connections to women belonging to BPL families	Women belonging to BPL families	National	Welfare (with associated impact on access)	<p>Access to Clean Cooking Energy and Electricity, Survey of States 2018, ACCESS¹⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By November 2018, over 57 million households have received subsidised LPG connections. • The number of SC, ST and OBC households using LPG in 2015 increased from 12 to 55 percent, 8 to 38 percent and 22 to 56 percent, respectively in the year 2018. • Only 45 percent of the PMUY households use LPG as the primary fuel as opposed to 73 percent of the non-PMUY households. • Among the PMUY households, 63 percent are satisfied with the LPG connections. The number for non-PMUY households is at 76 percent. The primary reasons of dissatisfaction is the high cost of LPG and the distant location of the distributors. • Around 37 percent of the villages surveyed reported dissatisfaction with the selection of beneficiaries under the scheme, citing the many who could afford LPG connections also among the beneficiaries.
The Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Scheme	Health, nutrition and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children up to 6 years • Pregnant and lactating mothers • Women between 16- 	National	Welfare (with associated impact on access)	<p>1. A Quick Evaluation Study of Anganwadis under ICDS, NITI Aayog (2015)¹⁶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23.4 percent of the AWCs did not maintain the records properly. • 41 percent of the AWCs did not have adequate space for accommodation. While 40 percent of the AWCs had their own accommodation, the rest 60 percent were located in rented accommodations.

¹⁵ Access to Clean Cooking Energy and Electricity, Survey of States 2018, Access to Clean Cooking Energy and Electricity, 11/2018, https://www.ceew.in/sites/default/files/CEEW-Access-to-Clean-Cooking-Energy-and-Electricity-11Jan19_0.pdf

¹⁶ A Quick Evaluation Study of Anganwadis Under ICDS, NITI Aayog, 06/2015, https://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/document_publication/report-awc.pdf

		44years			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86.3 percent of the AWCs provided safe drinking water facilities, but only 48.2 percent of the AWCs maintained good hygienic conditions. • 99 percent of the AWCs provided mothers with counselling services on child healthcare. • 71 percent of the AWCs were not visited by doctors and 22.5 percent of the AWCs did not have the required medicines. <p>2. Evaluation Report on Integrated Child Development Services, Volume I, Planning Commission (2011)¹⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been recorded cases of caste-based exclusion from ICDS services. • There is a lack of awareness amongst the intended beneficiaries regarding their entitlements from the scheme. • There is an absence of proper monitoring of AWC and prevalence of corruption in the recruitment of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs). • The AWWs are not skilled and are underpaid. • There is a lack of adequate infrastructure in the AWCs which adversely affects its capacity to deliver the desired services under the scheme. <p>3. Impact Evaluation of an AWC-cum-creche pilot in Madhya Pradesh, World Bank (2018)¹⁸</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was an increase in the overall participation of the parents of young children in the labour force. • However, the availability of clean drinking water and child friendly toilets was less than adequate. • There was no separate food prepared for the younger
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¹⁷ Volume I, Evaluation Report on Integrated Child Development Services, Planning Commission of India, 03/2011, http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/peoreport/peoevalu/peo_icds_v1.pdf

¹⁸ Evaluating Integration in the ICDS: Impact Evaluation of an AWC-cum-creche pilot in Madhya Pradesh, World Bank, 09/2018, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/493951537776051558/pdf/Impact-Evaluation-of-an-AWC-cum-creche-pilot-in-Madhya-Pradesh.pdf>

					<p>children and they were given the same food prepared for children of 3 -6 years of age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The guidelines for food were not being followed and there was shortage of play materials and inadequate space. <p>4. Evaluation of Integrated Child Development Services Program in Gujarat, in India for the years 2012 to 2015, Indian Journal of Public Health¹⁹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 94.7 percent of pregnant women, 74.4 percent of lactating mothers and 86.6 percent of adolescent girls out of the registered beneficiaries were receiving ICDS services. Only 11.4 percent of the anganwadi workers received induction trainings.
Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and subsequent amendments	Maternity leave and other benefits to women working	Women working in the formal sector	National	Welfare (with associated impact on access, heightened consciousness)	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on women not undertaken/not readily available.
Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY)	Free electricity connection to BPL households and rural household electrification	BPL & Rural households Not specific to women	National	Access	<p>Evaluation Report on Rajiv Gandhi Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY), Planning Commission (2014)²⁰</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scheme reduced the number of hours women spend on household activities as well as the expenditure on kerosene. The reduction in the use of kerosene reduces the safety hazards associated with it and the women's labour involved in constantly monitoring their children. The income of the BPL families increased by 18.22 percent. The scheme had a coverage of 93.3 percent with respect to household electrifications.
Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram	Rural electrification	Rural households and farm lands	National	Access	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on

¹⁹ Evaluation of Integrated Child Development Services Program in Gujarat, in India for the years 2012 to 2015, Indian Journal of Public Health, 23/06/2016, http://www.ijph.in/temp/IndianJPublicHealth602124-2142387_055703.pdf

²⁰ Evaluation Report on Rajiv Gandhi Vidyutikaran Yojana, Planning Commission, 05/2014, http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/peoreport/peo/peo_rggvy3107.pdf

Jyoti Yojana		Not specific to women			women not undertaken/not readily available. ²¹
Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya)	Universal electrification	Rural households Not specific to women	National	Access	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on women not undertaken/not readily available.
Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers	Child care facilities	Children of 6 months to 6 years of working women in rural and urban areas who are employed for a minimum period of 15 days in a month, or six months in a year	National	Welfare (with associated impact on access)	<p>Performance of the Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers, Planning Commission (2013)²²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a declining trend in the number of crèche centres over the period 2006-07 to 2011-12. • Out of the total children living in the crèche centres, around 60 percent belonged to BPL families. • A considerable number of the beneficiaries' family occupation was labour, agriculture and related services. • Although most of the beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of the crèche service, the infrastructure of the centres was reported to be poor with improper cooking and sleeping facilities. • More than 1/3rd of the crèche centres did not have safe playgrounds and around 18 percent of the centres did not have play materials and equipment. • Though a majority of the crèche workers received training, the quality of the training received was reported to be poor.
Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)	Irrigation and water conservation	Agricultural farms Not specific to women	National	Access	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on women not undertaken/not readily available.
Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens	To improve the quality of life of senior citizens	Senior citizens Not specific to women	National	Welfare	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on women not undertaken/not readily available.

²¹ While there are studies on this scheme mentioned below, they do not give us any information on the impact of the intervention. Electrification in India: "Saubhagya" scheme, Prachee Mishra, PRS Legislative Research, 05/10/2017, <https://www.lamp.prsindia.org/theprsblog/electrification-india-'saubhagya'-scheme>

²² Performance of the Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers, Planning Commission of India, 2013, http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/sereport/ser/ser_RGNCrèche.pdf

UNPAID WORK SCHEMES – STATE LEVEL

Apart from the above, some state level schemes are summarised below.

Policy Name	Focus Area	Target group	Geographical Reach	Longwe Framework Bucket	Key Findings of Past Evaluations
Dular Strategy (under ICDS)	Capacity building of ICDS and health teams for strengthening ICDS	Children under three years of age, adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating women	Jharkhand	Welfare (with associated impact on access)	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on women not undertaken/not readily available.
Mission Bhagiratha	To provide piped drinking water supply	All households and other establishments Not specific to women	Telangana	Welfare (with associated impact on access)	Studies & evaluations on the impact or status of the scheme on women not undertaken/not readily available.
Drinking Water Supply Project Based on Sardar Sarovar Canal	Providing safe and assured drinking water supply	All households and other establishments Not specific to women	Gujarat	Welfare (with associated impact on access)	Case study of Narmada main canal-based drinking water supply project ²³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the project was initially slow in terms of implementation, by the end of October 2010, it had covered around 68 percent of the villages and 87 percent of the towns proposed in the plan.
Mathru Poorna Scheme	Providing nutritional food to the pregnant ladies	Pregnant and lactating women	Karnataka	Welfare	An ethnographic study of the Mathru Poorna Yojana (One Full Meal) pilot project, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (2017) ²⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a mixed impact of the scheme in both the districts. A significantly larger number of pregnant women participated in the programme than lactating women. The support of the panchayat and the consent of elders was crucial in women's attendance at the programme.

²³ Case study of Narmada main canal-based drinking water supply project: issues and challenges, SM Yadav and AK Chauhan, Sustainability Today, <https://www.witpress.com/Secure/elibrary/papers/ST11/ST11033FUI.pdf>

²⁴ An ethnographic study of the Mathru Poorna Yojana (One Full Meal) pilot project for pregnant and lactating mothers in two blocks of two districts in Karnataka, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies, 10/2017, <https://cbps.in/wp-content/uploads/Final-Ethnographic-Study-of-Hot-Cooked-Meals-October2017.pdf>

As seen from the tables in the previous section, there exist multiple interventions across different sectors which attempt to provide women with services that reduce the burden of, and time spent towards unpaid work, so that they have more time to engage in paid labour. Some of these include providing child care leave before and after child birth, being paid at the village level by formally engaging in (previously unpaid) work in the form of anganwadi workers through the ICDS, and providing access to clean fuel alternatives aimed at reducing the time spent in collecting firewood for regular household work through the PMUY.

There are also multiple schemes that cater to water supply in rural and urban areas, and such schemes take various shapes such as those relating to piped water supply, building reservoirs and installation of hand pumps. These projects tend to be anchored at the local level and involve consultations with Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (VHSNC), where women more often than not, tend to be members. Therefore, participation of women through VHSNCs allows for a gendered lens in their intervention, allowing for women's concerns to be taken into consideration. However, since water supply schemes mainly concern infrastructural development and maintenance, they have not been analysed in this section.

In this section, we present a brief analysis of three schemes in unpaid work – PMUY and ICDS which are central level schemes, and the Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2017 which is a central legislation implemented by states. These schemes have been selected based on three factors – size, differences in intervention area, and evaluations undertaken.

Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2017: Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2017 amended the Maternity Benefits Act which was first passed in 1961 and provided for 12 weeks of paid maternity leave for working women in certain establishments. The Amending Act of 2017 increased this period from 12 weeks to 26, among other changes. Despite the good intentions behind the amendment, analysts predicted that such a move would lead to a situation wherein companies and organisations will be dissuaded from hiring women candidates, especially in smaller organisations, due to the additional financial burden. This was confirmed by a 2018 report by TeamLease, an HR consulting firm, that released results from a survey of 300+ start-ups and small enterprises which indicated that upwards of 17 lakh women will find it difficult to enter the labour force in 2018-19 due to a direct impact of the Amending Act.²⁵ Other smaller surveys also suggested similar impact in the short term. Experts also pointed out other gaps in the amendment which seem to absolve the father of any responsibility for child care, making the impact biased against women, especially in a gender segregated society such as India.

It seems that the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Ministry of Finance have recognised the problem and are currently in the process of reworking payments under the Act to better align incentives among stakeholders, which will hopefully address some of the issues highlighted above. The recommendations from the Shram Shakti report (1988) would be worth considering at this time. The Shram Shakti report had suggested an alternative way of financing maternity benefits, particularly for informal sector employees, by creating a maternity fund to which all employers as well as the government could contribute.

PMUY: Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana was launched in 2016 to provide free LPG connections to women belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households across the country. The scheme is a central sector scheme which means that it is implemented by third party agencies - in this case, the state-run Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). Under the scheme, the government bears the cost of the connection and the beneficiary is provided an interest free loan of Rs. 1,500 to aid in the purchase of a stove and LPG cylinder that are dispensed by OMCs through their distributors. The recovery of the loan is carried out by withholding the refill subsidies provided to the beneficiaries by OMCs after the first 6 refills. This is done in order to promote the everyday usage of LPG without the burden of immediate loan repayment. Beneficiaries are also required to purchase all refills at market prices, with subsidies being credited to bank accounts after.

While the scheme has consistently achieved its target in terms of LPG connections, it has not been as successful in displacing solid fuels such as firewood. It appears that upfront payments for refills are not affordable for most poor or eligible households.

²⁵ New Maternity to cause job loss to women: Report, Arnika Thakur, Fortune India, 2018, <https://www.fortuneindia.com/macro/maternity-bill-amendment-to-cause-job-losses-for-women-report/102061>

In addition to high costs, the gendered nature of roles in traditional/domestic Indian settings, where women feel more reluctant to spend on things for their own well-being, may be contributing to the problem.

ICDS: The Integrated Child Development Services Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme that has been restructured over the years; in its present form, the *Umbrella ICDS* scheme has six sub-schemes for child care and women empowerment. Of these, the *Anganwadi Services* and the *National Crèche Scheme* are the two components which are primarily connected with the unpaid labour done by women. Through institutions known as anganwadi centres set up by the government, and crèches set up in partnership with NGOs, these schemes aim to provide day care facilities for the children of working women, while trying to improve the health and nutritional status of children. The National Crèche Scheme in particular lays emphasis on setting up crèches near homes/places of work. In doing so, it factors in constraints faced by mothers and presents them with an option that is workable.

While ICDS as a scheme and its sub-components have benefited several women and children, our analysis finds that its implementation is heavy and requires strong state capacity to monitor and execute. Studies by NITI Aayog and others suggest that the infrastructure built and used for anganwadi centres is inadequate which can be problematic while dealing with children and pregnant mothers. Due to lower payments and higher workload, the incentives of workers at the anganwadi centres are also not fully aligned and as a result, the quality of care suffers. The National Crèche Scheme has also been contracting both in terms of service delivery and budgets. In January 2015, there were 23,393 functional crèches under the scheme.²⁶ This number dropped to 7,930 functional crèches by 30th June, 2019.²⁷ Budgetary allocations for the crèche scheme have also been decreasing; allocations reduced from Rs. 200 crore in 2017-2018 to Rs. 50 crores in 2019-2020.^{28,29}

(A detailed analysis of the above schemes can be found in the Annexure)

INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

The growing discourse on women's unpaid work has attracted the attention of policy makers and governments. As a first step, recognising women's unpaid work and how it unfairly burdens women is shown to go a long way; though it is important to back this up with data and legislation to counter the gendered narrative.³⁰ The same has been recognised by governments across the globe, who have been attempting to address this by making laws that can counter discriminatory social norms and practices. Some examples of international best practices are given below:

I. Parental leave

Parental leave is a government mandated leave that recognises the need for a parent to take time out from work to care for their new born child without having to compromise on their employability. Many countries recognise the need for women to be granted parental leave but restrict these to mothers alone (maternity leave), which while well-intentioned, reinforces gender stereotypes, deprives fathers of the chance to care for their children and limits women's entry into paid work. Accordingly, certain countries have attempted to rectify this through other models of parental leave, such as paternity leave and a combination of both maternity and paternity leaves. Globally, countries follow varying combinations of the above-mentioned options, some of which are listed below:

- a. Maternity leave: In Chile, mothers get 12 weeks of full time postnatal parental leave which is paid (up to a ceiling), followed by 18 weeks of half-time leave for the rest of the duration, with a 50 percent subsidy of pay.³¹

²⁶ Scheme Guidelines, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Revised%20RGNCSScheme_210515.pdf

²⁷ Implementation of National Creche Scheme, PIB, 11/07/2019, <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=191540>

²⁸ Demand 15 of Budget 2018-19, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget2018-2019/ub2018-19/eb/sbe98.pdf>

²⁹ Demand 15 of Budget 2019-20, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/doc/eb/sbe99.pdf>

³⁰ Unpaid Work and Policy-Making Towards a Broader Perspective of Work and Employment, Joke Swiebel, DESA Discussion Paper 4, Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, 02/1999, <https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/1999/esa99dp4.pdf>

³¹ Maternity and paternity at work: Law and practice across the world, International Labour Organization, 2014, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_242615.pdf

In addition to that, the government has allowed for the option to transfer a portion (maximum 6 weeks) of the extended leave of 18 weeks to the other parent, if desired.³²

- b. Paternity leave: Nordic countries have made women's empowerment and men's involvement in child care and unpaid work a priority in their policy-making decisions. To that extent, they have introduced policies that encourage men to take paternity leave from the day their children are born, by offering both parents 3 months of parental leave that is non-transferable from one parent to another.³³ Although individual laws vary, Sweden offers the longest paid parental leave of up to 70 weeks per child, and Iceland, the shortest, at 40 weeks.

II. Household chores

- a. Water: In 2004, Morocco introduced a 10-year programme to increase access to drinking water in rural areas³⁴ recognising how women and girls had to devote a large portion of their time to fetch water from streams and wells, in addition to facing health risks from poor-quality water. Therefore, with help from international donors and their national water utility (ONEP),³⁵ Morocco created new water-supply infrastructure connected to reservoirs and turned to the private sector for cost-effective ways of managing the system, including outsourcing maintenance. The intervention significantly decreased the time it took for women and girls to fetch water, and resulted in more girls attending school³⁶ with ONEP also reporting 33 percent increase in access to potable water between 2004 and 2014.
- b. Fuel: The use of firewood for household activities has many adverse impacts, including health risks as well as environmental impacts that lead to climate change and pollution. More importantly, time spent by women and girls in collecting firewood is time spent away from education, employment and eventual economic empowerment. A good response to this has been seen in Nepal through the Biogas Support Programme.³⁷ Initiated in 1992 by the Government of Nepal, the project saw 50,000 domestic biogas digesters constructed by local private companies in Nepal.³⁸ Surveys conducted during the initiative observed that increased usage of biogas systems led to improved health for women and freed up to 3 hours of their day, which was a pre-requisite to their participation in economic activities.³⁹ Male members of the family were also reported as showing willingness to cook, due to the easy to use nature of biogas⁴⁰.

III. Care work

- a. Child care: Germany offers child care for every child over the age of one year as a legal right. The apex court in Germany ruled that parents can sue for wage losses if they do not find a place for their child in a public day care facility. Germany's public child care system is state-subsidised and its operations are decentralised. Parents' contributions towards the child care system are set by region and vary according to family size and income of parents.⁴¹

³² Chile Atiende, Postnatal, 30/05/2019, <https://www.chileatiende.gob.cl/fichas/8647-postnatal>

³³ Parental Leave, Nordik Information on Gender official website, <https://www.nikk.no/en/facts/in-depth/parental-leave/>

³⁴ Quenching Their Thirst : Morocco Brings Water to Rural Citizens, 2004-2014, Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University, 2016, <https://successfulesocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulesocieties/files/Morocco%20Rural%20Water.pdf>

³⁵ Office National de l'Eau Potable, or National Office of Drinking Water, Government of Morocco

³⁶ Quenching Their Thirst : Morocco Brings Water to Rural Citizens, 2004-2014, Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University, 2016, <https://successfulesocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulesocieties/files/Morocco%20Rural%20Water.pdf>

³⁷ A successful model of PPP for rural household energy supply, Sundar Bajgain and Indira Shakya, 2005, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTENERGY/Publications/20918309/NepalBiogasSupportProgram.pdf>

³⁸ Biogas Program – Nepal, SNV Netherlands Development Organization, <http://www.snv.org/project/biogas-programme-nepal>

³⁹ A successful model of PPP for rural household energy supply, Sundar Bajgain and Indira Shakya, 2005, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTENERGY/Publications/20918309/NepalBiogasSupportProgram.pdf>

⁴⁰ A successful model of PPP for rural household energy supply, Sundar Bajgain and Indira Shakya, 2005, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTENERGY/Publications/20918309/NepalBiogasSupportProgram.pdf>

⁴¹ In Germany, Parents Can Sue the Government for Failing to Provide Child Care, Caitlyn Collins, The Atlantic, 10/01/2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/01/german-childcare/512612/>

Basis the above analysis, the report makes the following key recommendations for the Unpaid work section:

1. Maternity Leave: Making child care an equal responsibility of both parents

The Act in its current shape may discourage employers, particularly MSMEs and start-ups, from hiring women and may restrict women to low level positions and/or contractual roles. It also perpetuates the social construct that between the mother and the father, it is the mother who is responsible for child-rearing. Therefore, corrective measures that introduce parental leave, instead of maternity leave, may help make child care an equal responsibility of both parents and may eliminate the bias against hiring/promoting women candidates. Identifying potential incentives that the government could provide employers to hire women or give them leadership roles would also help.

2. PMUY: Reworking subsidies on LPG and improving distribution networks

Given the cost burden on BPL families, the government could consider reworking the pricing/amount of subsidy provided to BPL households to make it financially beneficial for them to switch away from traditional firewood. Subsidies could also be credited to banks faster to bring down costs for beneficiaries. Finally, a suitable incentive structure could be implemented for expanding distributorship in remote areas.

3. ICDS: Increasing investments for improving infrastructure and providing better quality services

To improve the quality of services, additional funds might need to be allocated for the construction of centres as well as for the training of staff and for payments to workers. The quality of child care may also need to be standardised so that beneficiaries feel motivated to send their children to anganwadis/crèches.

Affording due recognition to anganwadi workers by providing wages and social security benefits comparable to other public service delivery employees in government could be a critical policy measure to improve quality of care provision.

4. National Crèche Scheme: Rethinking institutional capacity and policy design

For informally employed women in urban areas, the National Crèche Scheme might be a more realistic option compared to the ICDS. However, the scheme has been shrinking both in terms of service delivery and financing from the national budget. Given this, there may be a need to rethink policy design, particularly alternative ways to meet the need for full day quality childcare centres.

5. Other recommendations to recognise and reduce unpaid work:

1. Formally recognising the rights of unpaid workers and care givers, and designing policies and schemes to protect these rights.
2. Building databases and measures to collect information on the different facets of unpaid work and workers.
3. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems that use gender-disaggregated and unpaid work-related information to evaluate and modify programmes and schemes.
4. Providing reprieve to women under unpaid work currently focuses only on alleviating the child care burden for women. However, adequate attention may also need to be given to elderly care, by crafting schemes and policies to ensure affordable, quality elderly care, which in turn will free women to pursue economic activities.

Unpaid Work Annexure

Detailed Scheme Analysis

DETAILED SCHEME ANALYSIS

Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2017

Name	The Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2017
Type	Central Legislation
Focus area	To change the maternity benefits available to women working in different establishments
Target group	Working women in the organised sector
Geographical reach	National
Scheme size	NA
Past evaluations	No past evaluations of the Act have been published till date

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

The Maternity Benefits Act was first passed in 1961 with the intention of regulating the employment of women in certain sectors before and after childbirth, and to provide for benefits such as maternity leave, among others. The 1961 Act provided for paid maternity leave of up to 12 weeks for women with the employer bearing the liability of this leave. The Act also made provisions to penalise employers who dismissed women for opting to take maternity leave.

In 2017, the Act was amended to increase the maternity leave to 26 weeks, and mandated employers over a certain threshold in terms of employee number, to provide access to benefits such as crèches at the workplace.

EVOLUTION OF THE ACT

As mentioned, the Act was first passed in 1961 and has been amended several times since then. Minor provisions of the Act were added or modified in subsequent amendments in the 1970s. For the purpose of this analysis on unpaid work, the Act will be analysed for its most recent Amendment (2017), wherein the maternity leave was increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, and its impact on working women.

The Sixth Central Pay Commission of India recommended in 2015 for relaxation of the period of maternity leave to six months for central government employees, which was considered and subsequently implemented.⁴² This was in line with the guidelines issued by the World Health Organization⁴³ as well as the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare stating inter alia that a child needs to be nursed by the mother for a minimum period of six months.

POLICY DESIGN

The Amendment of 2017 increases the paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for the first two surviving children, and 12 weeks for children thereafter. The Amendment also introduces maternity benefits of 12 weeks for mothers of adopted children, a clause absent in the principal Act of 1961. The government notified that women expecting children through surrogacy are also eligible for maternity benefits under the law.⁴⁴ The Amendment also mandates a crèche facility for child care for those employing 50 or more people.

POLICY ANALYSIS

Below, we have mapped the Act to an analysis structure that combines the Longwe Gender Analysis Framework and supplements it with the two lenses on policy design discussed previously - Alignment of Incentives and Implementation Intensity.

⁴² Notification, Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India, 11/09/2008.

⁴³ Global Strategy on infant and young child feeding, World Health Organization 2002, http://apps.who.int/gb/archive/pdf_files/WHA55/ea5515.pdf?ua=1

⁴⁴ Unstarred Question 4358, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Lok Sabha, 21/03/2018, <http://loksabhadocs.nic.in/loksabhaquestions/annex/14/AU4358.pdf>

Levels of Recognition/ Levels of Equality	Negative	Neutral	Positive	State Capability/ Implementation Intensity	Alignment of Incentives
Control				Low	Misaligned
Participation					
Heightened Consciousness					
Access					
Welfare					

Welfare

The Act provides women with paid leave for a specified period of time, which reduces the drudgery of pregnancy child care. Thus, it is marked 'Positive' on Welfare.

Access

The Act safeguards working women's place in the workforce, and ensures continuance in their jobs. Therefore, it is marked 'Positive' on Access.

Heightened Consciousness

The Act provides payment for unpaid work of child care; increases consciousness of women's rights and highlights the disadvantages faced by women at the workplace with respect to men. Thus, it is marked 'Positive' on heightened consciousness.

Participation

The Act has no component directly addressing the issue of Participation.

Control

The Act has no component directly addressing the issue of Control.

State Capability/Implementation Intensity

While the Act requires the appointment of Inspectors to ensure the administration of its provisions, it is not implementation intensive per se. Determining whether benefits were denied is relatively straightforward and hence, state capability and implementation intensity are marked as low.

Alignment of Incentives

There are four different stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Act – government/ government-funded employers, private sector employers, women employees and inspectors. While the incentives of the government/government-funded employers are aligned and the Act is likely to be fully implemented in these cases, the incentives of the other stakeholders involved in implementation are not aligned. These are explained below:

1. Private-sector employers

- The cost liability of the maternity leave is to be borne entirely by the employers. While this has been the case since the principal Act of 1961, the doubling of the maternity leave period has increased the strain on employers. This strain is further exacerbated on small organisations and start-ups that may have to increase workloads of existing staff or hire temporary employees to balance workload. This may discourage such employers from hiring women. The Ministry of Labour and Employment is working on a reimbursement mechanism for companies so that the government shares a portion of the financial burden with the employers, however, such a system has not been implemented as yet.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Unstarred Question 1032, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Lok Sabha, 17/12/2018, <http://loksabhadocs.nic.in/loksabhaquestions/annex/16/AU1032.pdf>

- Women employees, especially in certain age brackets, may be at a disadvantage due to employers' reservations about the impact of maternity leave on work and the finances of the company. This may reduce the opportunities for such women in the economy, limiting them to contractual roles or low-level positions.

2. Women employees

- Women may not have the resources and support system to engage in lawsuits against companies and employers who deny the benefits of maternity leave. Further, such procedures may adversely affect individual women employees financially and in their career. This may lead to a situation where women may restrict themselves to certain jobs where they do not run this risk, such as in public sector jobs, while denying themselves the benefits and perks which accompany private sector positions.

3. Inspectors

- As in other cases involving checks and inspections, inspectors are likely to benefit if they collude with employers and ignore violations.

Given the mismatch in incentives, the implementation of the Act is likely to be patchy and it is unlikely to lead to the desired outcome.

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION

The Act was notified in 2017 soon after it was passed. However, in mid-2018, TeamLease Services⁴⁶ released a study on its potential impact. According to over 350 start-ups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) surveyed by TeamLease, it predicted a negative short-term effect of the increased burden on employers of the amending Act.⁴⁷ The main finding was that in FY 2019-20, 11 to 18 lakh women are likely to find it difficult to enter the labour force. Some of the other observations were:

- About 26 percent of the respondents in the survey explicitly admitted to preferring male candidates as employees, instead of hiring women.
- 40 percent of respondents expressly stated that they would vet the additional cost of paid maternity leave while hiring female candidates.
- 35 percent of these respondents stated that they anticipated a negative impact of the Amendment Act, and believe that it will impact both cost and profitability of their business.

Another survey among SMEs and start-ups by LocalCircles, a civic engagement platform, gave similar results.⁴⁸ Similar concerns were raised when the 2017 Amending Bill was being debated in Parliament.⁴⁹ Elected representatives also raised the issue of gender-neutral parental leave instead of maternity leave to off-set any negative repercussions on working women.⁵⁰

As mentioned above, the Ministry of Labour and Employment has stated that it is working on introducing a system of reimbursement for employers with the aim of reducing the financial burden brought upon them by the maternity leaves.⁵¹ However, the scheme is not been implemented yet, reportedly due to objections from the Ministry of Finance for the budgetary support of Rs. 400 crore required from the government budget.⁵²

⁴⁶ TeamLease is an HR consulting firm, widely known for conducting studies in the employment market.

⁴⁷ New Maternity to cause job loss to women: Report, Fortune India, 27/06/2018, <https://www.fortuneindia.com/macro/maternity-bill-amendment-to-cause-job-losses-for-women-report/102061>

⁴⁸ Small businesses hiring more men to avoid burden of paid maternity leave: Survey, Economic Times, 09/03/2019, <https://tech.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/startups/small-businesses-hiring-more-men-to-avoid-burden-of-paid-maternity-leave-survey/68324828>

⁴⁹ Government must review maternity act, The Times of India, 26/06/2018, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/toi-editorials/government-must-review-maternity-act/>

⁵⁰ New Bill proposes paternity leave across all sectors, NDTV, 17/09/2017, <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/paternity-leave-across-all-sectors-proposes-private-members-bill-1751408>

⁵¹ Unstarred Question 1032, Ministry of Labour and Employment, 17/12/2018, <http://loksabhadocs.nic.in/loksabhaquestions/annex/16/AU1032.pdf>

⁵² Paid maternity leave: FinMin raises questions over labour ministry's move, Business Standard, 28/12/2018, https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/paid-maternity-leave-finmin-raises-questions-over-labour-ministry-s-move-118122800035_1.html

EVALUATIONS UNDERTAKEN

There are no published evaluations of the Maternity benefits (Amendment) Act, 2017, including from the Department Related Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (which looks at the Ministry of Women and Child Development's activities and budgets). The only analyses which exist are those published by various economists and gender specialists in the media, along with studies such as those done by TeamLease Services.

CONCLUDING NOTE

The analysis above clearly points to a negative impact for women in the start-up and SME sector. Based on global models of parental leave, the current Act as it exists can be modified in the following two ways in order to protect the interests of working women:

- Introduce mandatory paternal leave as part of shared leave for both parents, in order to encourage fathers to take responsibility for child care, as well as eliminate the bias against women during the recruitment process.
- Government to share responsibility of the financial component of maternity leave and implement a reimbursement mechanism for employers to reduce the financial burden on them.

Such changes will ensure that the intentions of the Act are honoured, despite an increase in the state capacity required to implement them, especially putting in place the mechanism for reimbursement to employers.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

Name	Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
Type	Central Sector Scheme
Focus area	Providing free LPG connections to prevent adverse health effects that stem from dependence on solid fuel
Target group	Women belonging to BPL households
Geographical reach	National
Scheme size	Total Outlay = Rs. 8,000 crores (2016-19) Budget 2016 – 17 = Rs. 2,000 crores ⁵³ Budget 2017 – 18 = Rs. 2,500 crores Budget 2018 - 19 = Rs. 3,200 crores ⁵⁴
Past evaluations	‘How Gender Sensitive are India’s Energy Policies?’ by M. Manjula, Economic and Political Weekly (Link) ‘Persistence of solid fuel use despite increases in LPG ownership: New survey evidence from rural north India’ by Ashish Gupta, Sangita Vyas et. al., Research Institute for Compassionate Economics (Link) ‘What has the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana Achieved So Far?’ by Ashwini Dabadge, Ashok Sreenivas & Ann Josey, Economic and Political Weekly (Link)

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) was launched by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) in 2016, as a central sector scheme with an aim to provide 5 crore free LPG connections to women belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households across the country.⁵⁵

The scheme aimed at preventing women and their families from being subjected to high levels of household pollution that are a result of their exposure to/reliance on solid fuels like firewood, coal, dung cakes, etc. The scheme also aims to ease women’s drudgery from regularly collecting firewood by supplying them with clean fuel alternatives in their households.⁵⁶

EVOLUTION

As stated above, the scheme was initially launched to target 5 crore beneficiaries. Following the approval of the Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs, in December 2018, the target was increased to 8 crore beneficiaries, to be achieved by FY 2019-20.⁵⁷

The scheme provides an interest free loan of Rs. 1,500 to aid in the purchase of a stove and LPG cylinder that are dispensed by oil marketing companies (OMC) through their distributors. The recovery of the loan is carried out by withholding the refill subsidies provided to the beneficiaries by OMCs after the first 6 refills.⁵⁸

In an answer to a parliamentary question, the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas stated that PMUY (as of 26 December 2018) had released over 5.89 crore connections. Additionally, the government has decided to widen the scheme’s focus. This is

⁵³ Demand 72 of Budget 2017-18, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget2017-2018/ub2017-18/eb/sbe72.pdf>

⁵⁴ Demand 72 of Budget 2017-18, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget2017-2018/ub2017-18/eb/sbe72.pdf>

⁵⁵ 18th Report: Demands for Grants, Department Related Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas, 17/03/2017, http://164.100.47.193/lsscommittee/Petroleum%20&%20Natural%20Gas/16_Petroleum_And_Natural_Gas_18.pdf

⁵⁶ About PMUY, Website of PMUY, <http://www.pmujiwalayojana.com/about.html>

⁵⁷ Revised Scheme Guidelines, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/revujscheme.pdf>

⁵⁸ What has the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana Achieved So Far?, Ashwini Dabadge and Ashok Sreenivas, Economic & Political Weekly, <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/20/notes/what-has-pradhan-mantri-ujjwala-yojana-achieved-so-far.html>

being done by including the poor population not covered under the socio-economic caste census (SECC) 2011 or the seven categories (mentioned in the next section) established by the scheme's guidelines.⁵⁹

POLICY DESIGN

The scheme focuses on providing government-assisted free LPG connections in the name of women of eligible households. The beneficiaries are identified using data from the SECC, which has fourteen exclusion parameters.⁶⁰ People falling outside these parameters or BPL families under the following groups are eligible for the scheme:

1. Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)
2. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin)
3. SC/ST households
4. Forest dwellers
5. Most backward classes
6. Tea & ex-tea garden tribes
7. People residing in islands and river islands⁶¹

Women belonging to BPL households, who do not have access to an LPG connection and wish to apply for a new connection may do so by applying to the local OMC distributor. They have to submit their details (address, Aadhar card information, bank account information) along with the details of any household member aged above 18 years.⁶² Measures are taken by the OMC to ascertain the authenticity of the application filed by the applicant.⁶³

The awareness for the scheme is carried out by the LPG distributors who, with the help of the local Gram Panchayat, organise LPG panchayats to spread awareness about the health hazards associated with using solid fuels, the benefits of LPG and the safety precautions that should be followed while using LPG.⁶⁴

The government bears the cost of the connection, along with an option for the beneficiary to take an interest free loan of Rs 1,500 from the OMC, to aid the purchase of a stove and/first refill. This is recovered by the OMC from the LPG subsidies granted to the beneficiary at the time of refill. This manner of recovery is carried out by the OMCs only after the beneficiaries have availed their first 6 refills. This was done in order to promote the everyday usage of LPG without the burden of immediate loan repayment. The beneficiaries receive the intermediate refills from the OMC at the subsidised rate.⁶⁵ There also exists a provision within the scheme that provides for the state governments and voluntary organisations to pay the cost incurred in the purchase of the stove and the first refill. However, such a contribution has to be implemented within the umbrella of the PMUY and may not be started under any other scheme or tagline, without the permission of the MoPNG.⁶⁶

The reimbursement claims of subsidies by the OMCs need to be filed on a quarterly basis to the Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell (PPAC), who will scrutinise the claims and forward it to the MoPNG, which would issue the reimbursements.⁶⁷

⁵⁹ Unstarred Question 3185, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Lok Sabha, 31/12/2018, <http://164.100.47.194/Loksabha/Questions/QResult15.aspx?qref=76606&lsno=16>

⁶⁰ Exclusion parameters: households owning motorized two/three/four wheelers/fishing boats, households owning mechanized three/four wheeler agricultural equipment, households having kisan credit card with a credit limit of Rs. 50,000 and above, households with any member as a government employee, households with non-agricultural enterprises registered with government, households with any member earning more than Rs. 10,000 per month, households paying income tax, households paying professional tax, households with three or more rooms with pucca walls and pucca roof, households owning refrigerator, households owning landline phones, households owning 2.5 acres or more irrigated land with at least one irrigation equipment, household owning 5 acres or more land irrigated for two or more crop seasons, households owning 7.5 acres or more land with at least one irrigation equipment. See more here: <https://secc.gov.in/categorywiseExclusionReport?reportType=All%20Category#>

⁶¹ Revised Scheme Guidelines, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/revujscheme.pdf>

⁶² Revised Scheme Guidelines, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/revujscheme.pdf>

⁶³ Revised Scheme Guidelines, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/revujscheme.pdf>

⁶⁴ Information gathered through conversation with an energy sector think tank, name withheld on request.

⁶⁵ Scheme Guideline, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://nadia.gov.in/DISHA/DISHASchemeGuidelines/Pradhan%20Mantri%20UJJWALA%20Yojna%20Guideline.pdf>; This scheme is applicable to beneficiaries of the scheme across OMCs and their dealerships. The scheme is applicable for both 14.2kg and 5kg cylinders. The beneficiaries also have an option to receive a two 5 kg cylinders in place of one 14.2 kg cylinder.

⁶⁶ Scheme Guideline, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India <http://nadia.gov.in/DISHA/DISHASchemeGuidelines/Pradhan%20Mantri%20UJJWALA%20Yojna%20Guideline.pdf>

⁶⁷ Scheme Guideline, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://nadia.gov.in/DISHA/DISHASchemeGuidelines/Pradhan%20Mantri%20UJJWALA%20Yojna%20Guideline.pdf>



Figure: Process for beneficiaries to avail of PMUY benefits

The OMC’s claims shall be duly audited, for which an audit certificate would also be issued. The guidelines also state that the government may call for a third-party audit of the scheme for greater scrutiny.⁶⁸

POLICY ANALYSIS

The following analysis focuses on scrutinizing the PMUY through a gender lens, using the Longwe Framework.

Levels of Recognition/ Levels of Equality	Negative	Neutral	Positive	State Capability/ Implementation Intensity	Alignment of Incentives
Control				Low	Misaligned
Participation					
Heightened Consciousness					
Access					
Welfare					

Welfare

By reducing the health detriments and drudgery involved in the use and collection of solid fuel, PMUY aims to increase the welfare of women. Thus, it has been marked ‘Positive’ on Welfare.

Access

The Economic Survey 2017-18 states that women spend an average of one hour per day for collection of firewood.⁶⁹ PMUY reduces the drudgery of women that is involved in doing so, and instead provides them access to clean fuel alternatives. Hence, it has been marked ‘Positive’ on Access.

Heightened Consciousness

PMUY does not have a component which directly addresses the issue of Heightened Consciousness.

Participation

PMUY does not have a component which directly addresses the issue of Participation.

Control

PMUY does not have a component which directly addresses the issue of Control.

State Capability/Implementation Intensity

PMUY is marked low in terms of its requirements with respect to implementation since it is rides on the existing infrastructure of OMCs. OMCs already have a strong distribution network and use Aadhaar and other such means to prevent leakages.

⁶⁸ Scheme Guideline, PMUY, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, <http://nadia.gov.in/DISHA/DISHASchemeGuidelines/Pradhan%20Mantri%20UJJWALA%20Yojna%20Guideline.pdf>

⁶⁹ Chapter Five: Sustainable Development, Energy and Climate Change, Economic Survey 2017-18, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, https://mofapp.nic.in/economicsurvey/economicsurvey/pdf/068_079_Chapter_05_Economic_Survey_2017-18.pdf

Alignment of Incentives

Incentive alignment must be evaluated for each stakeholder involved in the process. These are primarily the beneficiaries, the OMC and distributors.

1. Beneficiaries

- While all beneficiaries are entitled to an interest free loan of Rs. 1,500 which aids in the purchase of a stove and/or first refill, the loan is recovered from future subsidies. Beneficiaries are also required to purchase refills at market prices, with subsidies being credited to bank accounts. The upfront payments may not be affordable for most poor or eligible households. For example, the Rangarajan Committee⁷⁰ defined BPL on the basis of the minimum consumption expenditure incurred by a family of 5 in 2014 as Rs. 4,860 per month for rural areas and Rs. 7,035 per month for urban areas. Adjusted for inflation, these figures amount to Rs. 6,042 and Rs. 8,746, respectively for rural and urban areas.⁷¹ Going by this, a rural BPL household of 5 members will incur about one-eighth of its monthly expenditure on LPG refills, and a higher percentage in the absence of subsidy. This, in contrast to fire wood which costs Rs. 25 for 40 days,⁷² may disincentivise households from using LPG cylinders.
- Considering the gendered nature of our society, where the chores relating to cooking and firewood collection fall under the women's purview, it is likely that households will not switch to using cleaner fuels, especially if the cost difference is high. Women may also feel guilty about spending on their own welfare.
- While the scheme provides for a maximum of 12 subsidised LPG refills a year,⁷³ the average number of refills availed by the beneficiaries of PMUY equalled to just 3.9 in 2016-17 and 3.4 in 2017-18.⁷⁴

2. Distributors

- The margin of profit for an LPG distributorship remains the same for rural and urban distributors.⁷⁵ However, lack of additional incentives for rural distributors may prevent them from setting up distributorships in backward/remote regions with less demand for LPG/ lesser number of customers with the required paying capacity.

3. OMCs

- OMCs are responsible for the provision of the loan, and the recovery begins after the first 6 refills. While this may incentivise beneficiaries (particularly first timers), the same cannot be said for OMCs. For instance, in case the beneficiary does not come for a refill following the sixth refill, the OMC would not be able to recover the loan. Giving credence to this, the Indian Oil Corporation Annual Report (2017-18) shows the outstanding loan amount from PMUY customers as Rs. 1,099.70 crore (net of recovery through subsidy), as on the 31st March 2018.⁷⁶ Substantial amounts such as these may skew the OMC's incentives for actively participating in the scheme.

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION

As stated above, the PMUY is a central sector scheme which means that the central government bears the financial costs of the scheme. The policy design transfers the implementation of the scheme on the OMCs entirely, with the central government's role being minimal.

⁷⁰ In 2012 the Planning Commission set up an expert panel for poverty estimation under the chairmanship of C. Rangarajan. According to the committee report, a person is considered to be belonging to BPL category if the person's daily expenditure is less than or equal to Rs. 32 (rural areas) or Rs. 47 (urban areas).

⁷¹ Inflation rates of 5.8% (2014), 4.9% (2015), 4.5% (2016), 3.6% (2017), 3.48% (2018), <https://www.statista.com/statistics/271322/inflation-rate-in-india/>

⁷² Cooking gas changes lives but comes at too high a price, FactChecker.in, 22/04/2018, <https://factchecker.in/cooking-gas-changes-lives-but-comes-at-too-high-a-price/>

⁷³ FAQ, Website of Hindustan Petroleum, <http://www.hindustanpetroleum.com/CookingGasRevisedNorms>

⁷⁴ Unstarred Question 1281, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Lok Sabha, 11/02/2019, <http://loksabhadocs.nic.in/loksabhaquestions/annex/17/AU1281.pdf>

⁷⁵ Information gathered through conversation with an energy sector think tank, name withheld on request.

⁷⁶ Integrated Annual Report 2017-18, Page 384, Indian Oil Corporation, <https://www.iocl.com/download/AnnualReport2017-18.pdf>

Financial Year	Beneficiary Target	Connections Released	Budget Estimates	Funds Utilised
2016-17	2 crores	2 crores	Rs. 2000 crore	Rs. 2500 crore
2017-18	2 crores	1.56 crore	Rs. 2500 crore	Rs. 2251 crore
2018-19	2 crores	2.67 crore (up to 28.01.2019)	Rs. 3200 crore	Rs. 3200 crore

Table: Performance of PMUY since inception ⁷⁷

EVALUATIONS

There has been no evaluation of the scheme by the government so far. However, there have been multiple analytical reports in the media as well as published assessments of the impact of the programme in academic publications. The main findings of these are captured below:

- The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), a think tank states that low connectivity of formal banking institutions in rural India increases the financial burden on the beneficiary household which reduces the probability of them taking up LPG as a primary cooking fuel.⁷⁸ The same conclusion has been arrived at by IndiaSpend for a different reason - that of upfront nature of refill expenditure.⁷⁹
- A study carried out by the Research Institute of Compassionate Economics (R.I.C.E) in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh states that 85 percent of the beneficiaries who have availed the Ujjwala scheme still use solid fuels.⁸⁰ Thus, it can be inferred that an increase in the number of beneficiaries has not resulted in a complete transition towards LPG displacing solid fuels as the primary cooking fuel.
- An article published in the Economic and Political Weekly argues that in order for the policy to promote consistent use of LPG, PMUY must change its connection-focused approach and take account of factors such as affordability of refills, availability of supply (increase in distributorship), and accountability of OMCs for sustainable use of LPG.⁸¹ Only then would the policy be able to achieve an increase in the utilisation of LPG and reduction in the use of solid fuels.
- An article looking at India's energy policies through a gendered lens argues for a need to increase the number of distributorships in rural areas as part of PMUY. The writers argue that the increase in the number of beneficiaries has not been complemented by a subsequent increase in the number of distributorships. Their claim is supported by Bihar and Chhattisgarh where there was an 84 percent and 91 percent increase in the number of consumers for PMUY respectively, while the increase in distributorship was only by 5 percent and 18 percent respectively.⁸²

CONCLUDING NOTE

From the above presented analysis it can be concluded that though the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has succeeded in achieving its target of reaching 5 crore beneficiaries by 2019, it has not been as successful in displacing solid fuels. This can be attributed to the misaligned nature of incentives in the design of the policy, as well as the gendered nature of roles in traditional/domestic Indian settings. The refill of LPG cylinders place substantial cost burden on BPL households, which are unlikely to be able to afford them in the long term. In order to remedy this, the government may want to reconsider pricing and disbursement mechanisms. It may also consider increasing distributor incentives to reach remote areas, and promote financial literacy and access to formal banking systems in rural India.

⁷⁷ Unstarred Question 88, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Lok Sabha, 04/02/2019, <http://loksabhadocs.nic.in/loksabhaquestions/annex/17/AU88.pdf>

⁷⁸ Cooking gas changes lives but comes at too high a price, FactChecker.in, 22/04/2018, <https://factchecker.in/cooking-gas-changes-lives-but-comes-at-too-high-a-price>

⁷⁹ Why Goti Bai's cylinder lies in a cow shed, unused, IndiaSpend, 30/04/2019, <https://www.indiaspend.com/why-goti-bais-lpg-cylinder-lies-in-a-cowshed-unused/>

⁸⁰ Persistence of Solid Fuel use despite an increase in LPG ownership: New Survey Evidence from Rural North India, Ashish Gupta et al, Research Institute for Compassionate Economics, 29/03/2019, <https://riceinstitute.org/research/persistence-of-solid-fuel-use-despite-increases-in-lpg-ownership-new-survey-evidence-from-rural-north-india/>

⁸¹ How Gender Sensitive are India's Energy Policies?, Manjula M, Economic & Political Weekly, <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/3/commentary/how-gender-sensitive-are-indias-energy.html>

⁸² How Gender Sensitive are India's Energy Policies?, Manjula M, Economic & Political Weekly, <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/3/commentary/how-gender-sensitive-are-indias-energy.html>

Integrated Child Development Services

Name	Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme
Type	Centrally Sponsored Scheme
Focus Area	Health, Nutrition and Education
Target Group	(1) Children upto 6 years (2) Pregnant and lactating mothers (3) Women between 16-44 years
Geographical Reach	National
Implementation Mechanism	Through States/UTs via Local Bodies, Panchayati Raj Institutions, NGOs, Social Welfare Boards
Funding Source	Union Government (60 percent), State Government (40 percent) ⁸³
Fund flow	To Consolidated Fund of the States upon Annual Programme of Implementation Plan (AIP) approval
Scheme size	Rs. 27,584.37 crores for 2019-20 There has been an increase of around Rs. 4,300 crores in the budget from 2018-19 with major emphasis on Anganwadi Services and National Nutrition Mission
Past Evaluations	A quick Evaluation Study of Anganwadis under ICDS, by <u>NITI Aayog</u> (2015) Performance of Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme, by <u>Supath</u> (2013) Impact Evaluation of an AWC-cum-Creche pilot in Madhya Pradesh, by <u>World Bank</u> (2018)

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has been administering the ‘Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme’ as a centrally sponsored scheme since 1975.

The objectives of the ICDS scheme are to:

1. Improve the nutritional and health status of children;
2. Lay a foundation for psychological, physical and social development of children;
3. Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, and malnutrition;
4. 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.⁸⁴

The Umbrella ICDS scheme has six sub-schemes for the development of child care facilities and women empowerment. Anganwadi services provide for the development of children and Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers (‘PW & LM’). The Scheme for Adolescent Girls aims to empower adolescent girls by way of promoting awareness about health, hygiene, nutrition, mainstreaming them towards formal/non-formal education and providing guidance about public services. The Child Protection Services scheme provides a safe environment for children in conflict with the law and in need of care and protection. The National Creche Scheme on the other hand provides a day care facility for the children of working mothers. The National Nutrition Mission aims to achieve an improvement in the nutritional status of children and PW & LM. The Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana provides cash incentives to women in return for satisfying certain maternal child health conditions.

The *Anganwadi Services* and the *National Creche Scheme* are the two components which are primarily connected to the unpaid labour done by women. For the purpose of this report, in the sections that follow, we shall be addressing these two components of ICDS and analysing their role in women’s empowerment.

EVOLUTION OF ICDS

The scheme began in 1975 with the objective of providing early childhood care and development facilities to children and women. All the services under the core ICDS scheme are delivered through institutions known as the Anganwadi centres. The

⁸³ The ratio of funding between the Centre and state is same for all components under Umbrella ICDS except Supplementary Nutrition Program which has a 50:50 ratio.

⁸⁴ Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Ministry Of Women And Child Development, Government of India, <https://icds-wcd.nic.in/icds.aspx>

scheme provides both induction and job training to its workers i.e., Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWH). It also encourages the use of online training modules for workers, in accordance with the Digital India Programme.⁸⁵

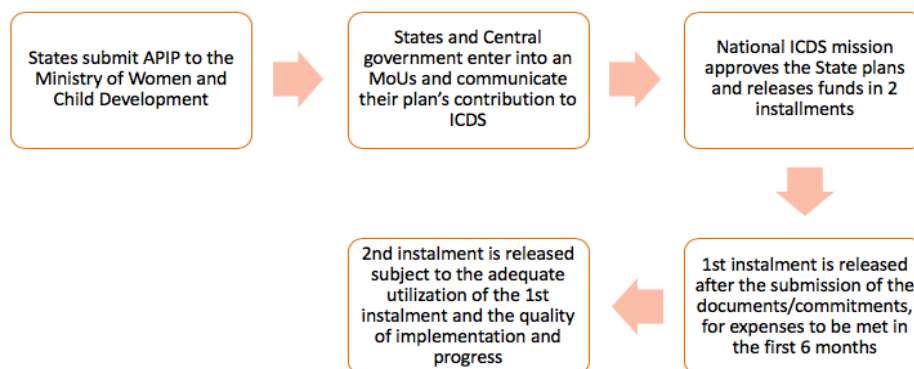
Upon the recommendation of the Inter-Ministerial Group on ICDS restructuring, the scheme was restructured in 2012 during the 12th Five Year Plan.⁸⁶ The scheme was made more flexible for state innovations with the introduction of Annual Programme of Implementation Plans (APIP).⁸⁷ Later, 10 percent of the projects were also allowed to be implemented in collaboration with civil society organisations and similar institutional partnerships.⁸⁸ The government also initiated the conversion of around 5 percent of the AWCs into AWC-cum-Creche Centres (AWCCs) in order to provide day-care as well as nutrition facilities to children (between 0 to 6 years) whose mothers were working.⁸⁹ According to reports, by the end of financial year 2013-14, the construction of a total of 12,653 AWC-cum-Creche Centres was approved.⁹⁰

In 2016-17, the government renamed and restructured the ICDS into Umbrella ICDS that included sub-schemes.⁹¹ The ambit of the Umbrella ICDS was further increased in subsequent years.⁹² In 2016, the Ministry of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Women Development issued revised joint guidelines for the construction of 4 lakh Anganwadi buildings across the country in convergence with MGNREGS.⁹³

POLICY DESIGN

The state governments/UTs submit their APIPs to the Ministry which are appraised by the National and State Level Society. The state governments/UTs enter into a MoU with the central government pursuant to which they are bound to produce written communications stating the plan's contribution to the ICDS Mission.

The funds for the scheme are released to the state treasury in two instalments which in turn transfers it to the implementing agencies on a project basis. The first instalment of funds to the states is released after the submission of the documents/commitments on a lump sum basis, for the expenses to be met in the first six months. The second instalment of the funds is released subject to the adequate utilisation of the first instalment and the quality of implementation and progress.



In terms of the specifics of the National Creche Scheme, implementation is done via partner NGOs by giving out grants. Scheme guidelines allow for user charges to ensure community ownership and increased resources for creches. The guidelines also

⁸⁵ Letter regarding Anganwadi Services Training Program, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 06/06/2018, <https://icds-wcd.nic.in/icdstaining/AWSERVICES%20TRAINING%20PROGRAMME.pdf>

⁸⁶ Report of the Inter Ministerial Group on ICDS Restructuring, Planning Commission of India, 09/2011, http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/genrep/rep_icds2704.pdf

⁸⁷ Cabinet approves increase of cost norms for Supplementary Nutrition provided in Anganwadis and in the Scheme for Adolescent Girls, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), Government of India, 20/09/2017, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=170953>

⁸⁸ ICDS Mission, The Broad Framework for Implementation, Page 28, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, https://icds-wcd.nic.in/icdsimg/icds_english_03-12-2013.pdf

⁸⁹ Crèche Facility, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 21/02/2014, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=104043>

⁹⁰ State/UT-wise AWCS cum Creche approved in 2013-14 under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Ministry of Women and Child Development, <http://data.gov.in/resources/stateut-wise-awcs-cum-creche-approved-2013-14-under-integrated-child-development-services>

⁹¹ Cabinet approves Continuation of sub-schemes under Umbrella Scheme "Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)" for the period till November, 2018, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), Government of India, 16/11/2017, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=173550>

⁹² Budget brief, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Centre for Policy Research, https://accountabilityindia.in/sites/default/files/pdf_files/Integrated%20Child%20Development%20Services.pdf

⁹³ Ministry of Women & Child Development -Year End Review 2018, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 17/01/2019, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187560>

prescribe that the physical infrastructure of the creche should be located closer to the homes of children or near the place of work of mothers to allow for easy access.

DESIGN ANALYSIS

Below, we have mapped the ICDS to an analysis which combines the Longwe Gender Analysis Framework and supplements it with two lenses on policy design discussed previously - Alignment of Incentives and Implementation Intensity.

Levels of Recognition/ Level of Equality	Negative	Neutral	Positive	State Capability/ Implementation Intensity	Alignment of Incentives
Control				High	Moderately Aligned
Participation					
Heightened Consciousness					
Access					
Welfare					

Welfare

By providing pregnant and lactating women with meals under the supplementary nutrition programme and health check-up services, ICDS caters to the basic needs of these women related to food supply and health. Additionally, families are supported by giving free meals to children. Therefore, it is marked 'Positive' on Welfare.

Access

The Anganwadi Services and the National Creche Centres provide basic educational facilities along with food supply to children and a proper facility for the care of children. These services provide women with the liberty to utilise their time in seeking employment opportunities than spending it on household chores. Moreover, the enrollment of women as AWWs/AWHs workers also seeks to provide women with access to employment and an honorarium for their work. Therefore, it is marked as 'Positive' on Access.

Heightened Consciousness

ICDS has no component directly addressing the issue of Heightened Consciousness.

Participation

ICDS has no component directly addressing the issue of Participation.

Control

ICDS has no component directly addressing the issue of Control.

State Capability/Implementation Intensity:

- The scheme requires high state capability and is implementation intensive. The government machinery must ensure that anganwadis and creches have adequate manpower and materials, and execution is controlled for quality. The scheme also needs strict monitoring to ensure utilisation and prevent leakages. The release of instalments is contingent on submission of data and evaluation of progress. This requires strong administrative capacity.

Alignment of Incentives:

The alignment of incentives must be evaluated for each stakeholder in the process. These are explained below:

- Beneficiaries: A number of assessment studies have pointed out the inadequate infrastructure at the AWCs in terms of drinking water supply, food, toilets, etc. As a result, beneficiaries sometimes do not feel incentivised to send their

children to AWCs.⁹⁴ However, because there are provisions for food and nutrition at the creches, poor households send their children to the AWCs for short time periods.⁹⁵ Additionally, in some cases, the geographical spread of AWCs does not lend to easy access for poor households, which means they have to travel greater distances to avail child care facilities.

This may not be a problem with respect to creches set up under the National Creche Scheme. By laying emphasis on setting up creches near homes/places of work, the scheme does factor in constraints faced by mothers and presents them with a workable option. However, given the charges attached with usage and the low number of creches set up under the scheme (there were only 23,393 functional creches across the country in January 2015 and this number has rapidly declined in the years since), the usage of creches in general is unlikely to be high.

- **Anganwadi Workers and Helpers:** AWWs and AWHs are hired on an honorarium basis by the government.⁹⁶ They are considered as volunteers and their wages are not covered under the Minimum Wages Act.⁹⁷ While they are incentivised through other benefits such as ‘Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima Yojna’ under the Life Insurance Corporation’s Social Security Scheme,⁹⁸ 180 days of maternity leave, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) for accidental cover,⁹⁹ Female Critical Illness Benefits upon the diagnosis of certain identified illness, and scholarships to their children, these benefits may not be adequate in terms of support as livelihood.¹⁰⁰

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION

ICDS was first implemented in the year 1975 and restructured in the year 2012. While the coverage of the programme has expanded significantly during these years, its primary objective remains the same.

Following the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission, the ratio of expenditure between the union and states was changed from 70:30 to 60:40, placing the onus of allocation for the scheme on the states.¹⁰¹ In FY 2014-15, there was a decrease in the budget for the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which further led to a decline of around 47 percent in the budget for ICDS.¹⁰² Post FY 2015-16, there has been a considerable increase in the budget owing to the inclusion of more components and restructuring of the scheme into the ‘Umbrella ICDS’. The following table demonstrates the annual union budget estimates for the scheme:

Year	Union Budget Estimates	Expenditure
2010-11	7,932.71 crore (ICDS), 63.31 crore (National Crèche Scheme - NCS)	9,763.11
2011-12	9,294.19 crore (ICDS), 76.5 crore (NCS)	14,272.21
2012-13	14,352.80 crore (ICDS), 99.00 crore (NCS)	15,701.50
2013-14	17,700 crore (ICDS), 99.00 crore (NCS)	16,267.49
2014-15	18,195 crore (ICDS), 112.50 crore (NCS)	16,581.82
2015-16	8,335.77 crore (ICDS), 188.44 crore (NCS)	5,001.73

⁹⁴ Operational Assessment of ICDS Scheme at Grass Root Level in a Rural Area of Eastern India: Time to Introspect, Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, 01/12/2016, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5296463/#b31>; Efficiency of anganwadi centers- A study in Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala, Asha KP, Journal of Academic and Industrial Research.

⁹⁵ An assessment of facilities and services at Anganwadi centers under the Integrated Child Development Service scheme in Northeast District of Delhi, India, Akash Malik et al, International Journal for Quality in Health Care, 09/05/2015, <https://academic.oup.com/intqhc/article/27/3/201/2357363>

⁹⁶ Cabinet approves enhancement of Honorarium to Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) and Performance Linked Incentive to AWHs Under Anganwadi Services (Umbrella ICDS Scheme), Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), Government of India, 19/09/2018, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=183561>

⁹⁷ Unstarred Question 3267, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Lok Sabha, 04/08/2017, <http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Questions/QRResult15.aspx?qref=56566&lsno=16>

⁹⁸ The requirement of payment of Rs. 80 as the premium amount was waived off w.e.f. 01.04.2007 to 31.03.2017.

⁹⁹ Letter regarding coverage of Anganwadi workers (AWWs)/Anganwadi Helpers under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima yojana (PMJJBY); Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima yojana (PMSBY) and Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima yojana (AKBY) and benefits available to them, 05/06/018, Ministry of Women and Child Development, available at https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/ICDS_0.PDF

¹⁰⁰ The cost of the premium for these benefits is paid by the MoWCD and LIC.

¹⁰¹ A Pittance for Our Children: Union Budget 2017-18, Economic & Political Weekly, 24/06/2017, <http://www.cbgaindia.org/inthe-media/pittance-children-union-budget-2017-18/>

¹⁰² Budget Briefs, Accountability Initiative, https://accountabilityindia.in/sites/default/files/icds_2015.pdf

2016-17	16,260.00 crore (ICDS), 150 crore (NCS)	
2017-18	20,755.19 crore (ICDS), 200 crore (NCS)	
218-19	23,088.28 crore (ICDS), 128.39 crore (NCS)	
2019-20	27,584.37 crore (ICDS), 50 crore (NCS)	

Source: Yearly expenditure budgets of Union Government.¹⁰³

While ICDS has been growing in terms of budgetary outlay, the National Creche Scheme has been contracting, especially in recent years. Allocations for the scheme have reduced from Rs. 200 crore in 2017-2018 to Rs. 50 crores in 2019-2020.

EVALUATIONS UNDERTAKEN

The NITI Aayog conducted an evaluation of the Anganwadi Services under the ICDS across 15 States and 4 Union Territories.¹⁰⁴ The study was undertaken to assess the availability of adequate infrastructure at the AWCs, the performance of the personnel associated with the AWCs, procedures and maintenance of records, correctness of the health check-ups etc. The main findings of the report are summarised below:

- 23.4 percent of the AWCs did not maintain the records properly.
- 41 percent of the AWCs did not have adequate space for accommodation. While 40 percent of the AWCs had their own accommodation, the rest 60 percent were located in rented accommodations.
- 86.3 percent of the AWCs provided safe drinking water facilities, but only 48.2 percent of the AWCs maintained good hygienic conditions.
- 99 percent of the AWCs provided mothers with counselling services on child healthcare.
- 71 percent of the AWCs were not visited by doctors and 22.5 percent of the AWCs did not have the required medicines.

Although there is reasonable awareness among people with respect to ICDS programmes, the evaluation study found the infrastructure at the AWCs to be inadequate. It also highlighted the poor working conditions of the Anganwadi workers, the insufficient payment given to them and the need to decrease their burden by limiting their duties to tasks related to AWCs exclusively.

An evaluation of the National Creche Scheme was carried out across 9 states which reported the following findings:¹⁰⁵

- There is a declining trend in the number of creche centres over the period 2006-07 to 2011-12.
- Out of the total children living in the creche centres, around 60 percent belonged to BPL families.
- A considerable number of the beneficiaries' family occupation was labour, agriculture and related services.
- Although most of the beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of the creche service, the infrastructure of the centres was reported to be poor with improper cooking and sleeping facilities.
- More than a third of the creche centres did not have safe playgrounds and around 18 percent of the centres did not have play materials and equipment.
- Though a majority of the creche workers received training, the quality of the training received was reported to be poor.

The findings of this study align with the data made available by the government, which suggests a rapid decrease in service delivery under the scheme. In January 2015, there were 23,393 functional creches under the scheme.¹⁰⁶ This number had dropped to 7,930 functional creches by 30th June, 2019.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Expenditure Budget 2019-20, Government of India, <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in>

¹⁰⁴ A Quick Evaluation Study Of Anganwadis, Under ICDS, NITI Aayog, Government of India, 06/ 2015, https://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/document_publication/report-awc.pdf

¹⁰⁵ Performance of Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers, Planning Commission of India, 2013, http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/sereport/ser/ser_RGNCrèche.pdf; Following are the states which were surveyed: Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Tripura, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

¹⁰⁶ Scheme Guidelines, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Revised%20RGNCSScheme_210515.pdf

¹⁰⁷ Implementation of National Creche Scheme, PIB, 11/07/2019, <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=191540>

The AWC-cum-Creche centres have become a third type of model delivering child care facilities for working mothers. An evaluation of such a centre in Madhya Pradesh was done by the World Bank¹⁰⁸ and reported the following findings:

- There was an increase in the overall participation of the parents of young children in the labour force.
- However, the availability of clean drinking water and child friendly toilets was less than adequate.
- There was no separate food prepared for the younger children and they were given the same food prepared for children of 3 -6 years of age.
- The guidelines for food were not being followed and there was shortage of play materials and inadequate space.

Although the study recognised that there has been an increase in parent visits and increased participation of people in the workforce, it assessed the overall initiative as having modest impact.

CONCLUDING NOTE

The Integrated Child Development Services scheme was launched in 1975 as a centrally sponsored scheme and has slowly expanded in scope. Overall, the scheme is implementation heavy and requires strong state capacity to monitor and implement. The infrastructure built and used under ICDS seems to be inadequate which can be problematic, while dealing with children and pregnant mothers. Due to lower payments and higher workload, the incentives of ANMs, and AWWs are also not fully aligned. These factors leave ICDS with gaps and scope for improvement that need to be addressed to increase the scheme's effectiveness in terms of contribution to women's empowerment.

¹⁰⁸ Evaluating Integration in the ICDS: Impact Evaluation of an AWC-cum-creche pilot in Madhya Pradesh, World Bank, 09/2018, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/493951537776051558/pdf/Impact-Evaluation-of-an-AWC-cum-creche-pilot-in-Madhya-Pradesh.pdf>