

I Integrated Child Development Services

Universalisation

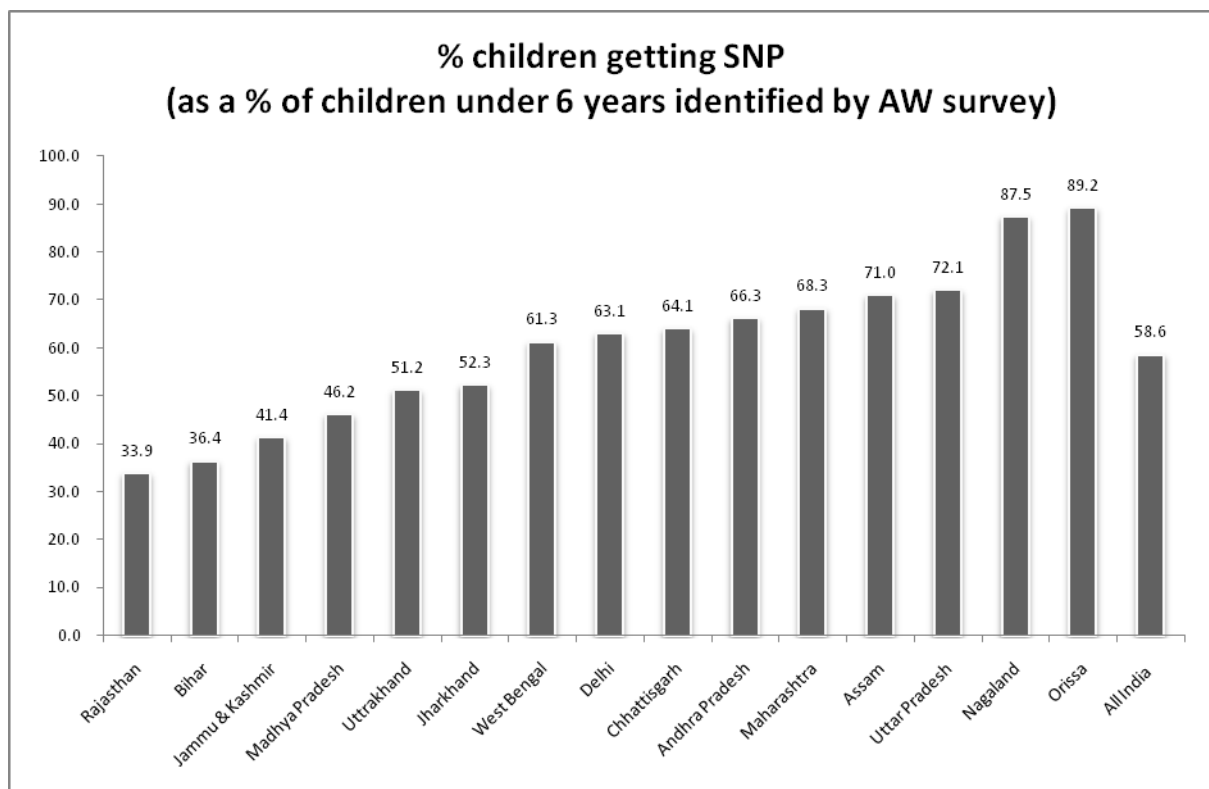
Universal coverage of beneficiaries

The instructions of the Supreme Court have been categorical to ensure the coverage of all children below six years, all pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls in all rural habitations and urban slums with all nutritional and health services of the ICDS in a phased manner latest by December, 2008. The order of the court dated 28th November, 2001 stated, “We direct the State Governments/Union Territories to implement the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in full and to ensure that every ICDS disbursing centre in the country shall provide as under:

- (a) Each child up to six years of age to get 300 calories and 8–10 grams of protein;
- (b) Each adolescent girl to get 500 calories and 20–25 grams of protein;
- (c) Each pregnant woman and each nursing mother to get 500 calories & 20–25 grams of protein;
- (d) Each malnourished child to get 600 calories and 16–20 grams of protein;
- (e) Have a disbursement centre in every settlement”

Further, the order dated 13th December, 2006 states that “The universalisation of the ICDS involves extending all ICDS services (Supplementary nutrition, growth monitoring, nutrition and health education, immunization, referral and pre-school education) to every child under the age of 6, all pregnant women and lactating mothers and all adolescent girls.”

Coverage of Children under SNP in 2007-2008



Although the coverage of children under six under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme of the ICDS increased from 5.8 crore in the previous year to 6.8 crore in 2007-08, this is still less than 60% of the under-6 population as identified by the anganwadis in the country. The NFHS-3 data show that 81 per cent children under 6 years of age were living in an area served by an AWC. About 20% children have not even been covered by the anganwadi survey and can be assumed to be left out of any of the anganwadi benefits. Therefore, if we calculate for the entire population of children under six, then only about 46% of the children are covered by the SNP services of the ICDS.

States with less than 40% coverage: Bihar and Rajasthan

States with more than 40% but less than national average: Jammu Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand.

Pregnant and Lactating Mothers: The number of pregnant and lactating mothers covered under the SNP of ICDS was 1.4 crore in 2007-08, an increase from 1.2 crore the previous year. This increase is even less than the kind of increase seen in the coverage of children under six. Further as estimated by the Seventh Report of the Commissioners, there would be about 4 crore pregnant and lactating mothers in the country so this coverage is only about 35%.

Coverage of adolescent girls

The orders of the Supreme Court dated 28th November 2001 and 13th December 2006 also state that all adolescent girls should be given supplementary nutrition through the anganwadis. However, the Government of India has not yet made any provisions towards universalising the provision of SNP to adolescent girls. The Ministry of Women and Child Development implements two programmes for adolescent girls – the Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) and the National Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG). Neither of these schemes provide for universal distribution of supplementary nutrition for all adolescent girls. The KSY has been extended to cover all the blocks in the country. Although data on the number of beneficiaries under this scheme is not available, looking at the financial allocations made for this scheme by the Central Government to the State Governments/UTs for the implementation of this scheme one can make an estimate of how many girls can be covered. Under this scheme, grant-in-aid of Rs. 1.10 lakh per block is released to the States/UTs every year for the implementation of KSY. Given that the programme is implemented in 6108 blocks, the total grant in aid released would be around Rs. 6718.8 lakh. According to the norms for per beneficiary per day allocation of funds the amount to be allocated for adolescent girls is Rs. 2.30 of which the centre's share would Rs. 1.15. Therefore the budget allocated is sufficient to cover 19.4 lakh girls. In comparison, as per the census of 2001, the total female population in the 11–18 year age group stands at approximately 844 lakhs.¹ **It is therefore estimated that only 2.3% adolescent girls are being covered under this scheme, even if there are no leakages.** The NPAG programme on the other hand covers undernourished Adolescent Girls in the age group 11–19 years who are underweight (weight < 35 kg.) where free foodgrains at 6 kg. per beneficiary per month are provided to them. However this scheme is currently available in only 51 of the 604 districts in the country.² Adolescent girls continue to be an ignored section under the ICDS scheme.

The Government of India has announced that a new scheme called Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls will be introduced soon, which will universalise coverage. However the details of this scheme are not yet available and until the year 2009-10, no budget allocations have been made for such a scheme.

1 Sixth Report of the Commissioners to the Supreme Court

2 All data related to the KSY and NPAG schemes has been quoted from the website of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, <http://wcd.nic.in>

Universal coverage of habitations

The Supreme Court in various orders directed the Government of India and the State/UT governments to ensure not only that every child, adolescent girl and woman of required eligibility be covered, it also requires the scheme to be geographically universalised, or in other words that there is an anganwadi centre in every habitation.³

Accepting the submissions to the Supreme Court by the Commissioners that this would require at least 14 lakh anganwadi centres,⁴ in the judgement of 13th December 2006 it was stated that "Government of India shall sanction and operationalize a minimum of 14 lakh AWCs in a phased and even manner starting forthwith and ending December 2008. In doing so, the Central Government shall identify SC and ST hamlets/habitations for AWCs on a priority basis." Although the government has not been able to meet the deadline set by the Supreme Court, there has been a lot of progress made since the passing of this order. As on March 2008 10.1 lakh anganwadis were operationalised of the 10.5 sanctioned anganwadis. Further in the end of 2008 the Government of India has sanctioned another 2.1 lakh anganwadis taking the total number of anganwadis to 14 lakh. The state governments and Government of India have to make serious efforts to ensure that these centres are operationalised at the earliest.

Sanctioned anganwadis as on March 2008	1052638
Anganwadis operationalised as on March 2008	1010912 (96%)
Number of new anganwadis sanctioned in the third phase of expansion (in 2008)	213859
Number of new mini-anganwadis sanctioned	77102
Total number anganwadis and mini-anganwadis	1380428
Additional provision for Anganwadi-on-demand	20000
Supreme Court orders on universalisation	14 lakh

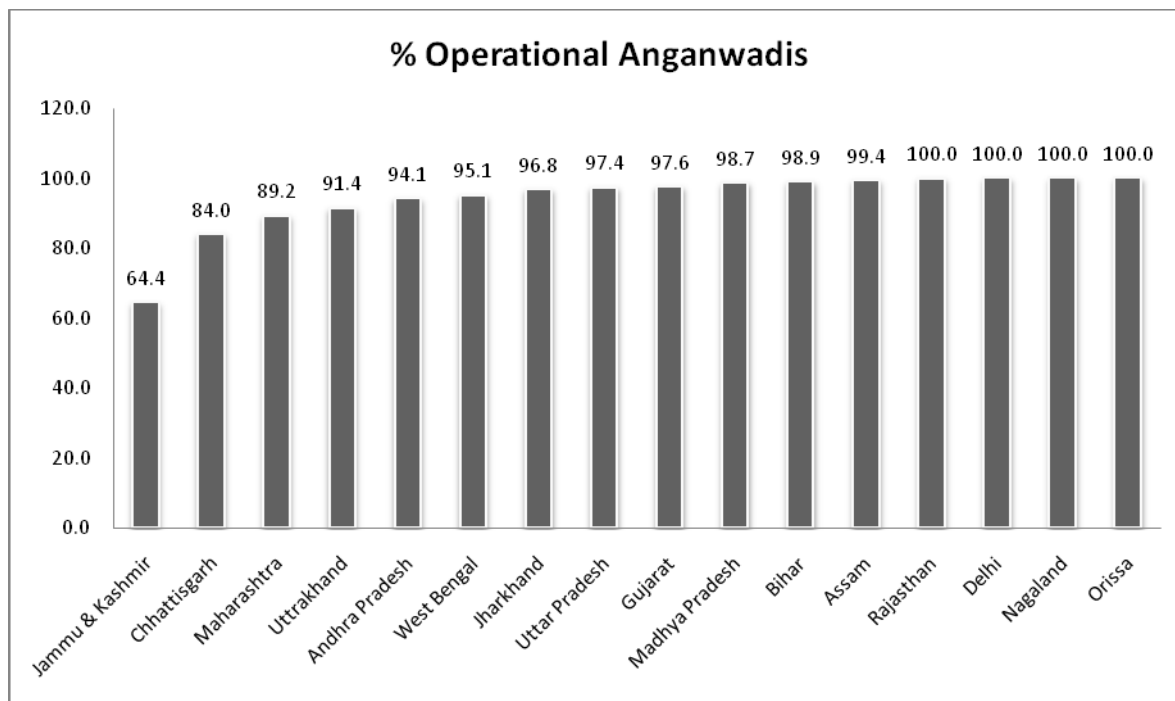
According to an estimation made in the Sixth Report of the Commissioners, the procedures adopted for the recruitment of personnel, finalisation of locations of anganwadi centres and training of staff alone are anticipated to take over a year to complete. It was hence recommended that to the extent possible, administrative procedures be taken up simultaneously rather than sequentially to prevent delays in the expansion of the ICDS. The Government must seriously consider this recommendation.

While most of the states have made good progress in the operationalisation of sanctioned anganwadi centres, Jammu and Kashmir is yet to operationalise more than 30% of the anganwadis. In Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra about 10-15% of the anganwadis are to be operationalised.

³ See order dated 28.11.2001 and order dated 13.12.2006

⁴ 6th report of Commissioners and Letter to the Supreme Court from the Commissioners dated 19 July 2006 give details of how the figure of 14 lakh was arrived at.

Status of operationalisation (of anganwadis sanctioned before March 2008)



Coverage of SC/ST habitations

As mentioned earlier the Supreme Court directions specify that priority must be given to SC/ST hamlets and urban slums in the process of universalisation. The Commissioners have repeatedly written to all the state governments requesting them to conduct surveys to assess the number of SC/ST hamlets and urban slums in each state and whether these have all been covered by anganwadi centres. While many state governments have responded to these letters, specific surveys have not been conducted and it is not clear how the requirement figures have been arrived at. Further some states have not responded to the letters of the Commissioners. The data on the basis of these responses are presented in the table below. However this does not give a good idea of coverage of SC/ST hamlets because even states that have responded with information have not done so in the required format. This is probably because very few states have conducted separate surveys to firstly estimate the number of SC/ST hamlets in the states and then to establish whether they have all been covered by anganwadi centres or not.

S.No	States/Uts	Total No. of		No. having anganwadi centre		No. of urban slums	Total slum population	No. of AWCs in slums
		SC Habitations	ST Habitations	SC	ST			
1	Tamil Nadu	11199	1565	10785	906	630	1661725	1151
2	Karnataka	6353	2529	6812	2613	2578	1267759	2047
3	Haryana	390	0	390	0	970	2323237	2009
4	Punjab	6783	0	20169	0	1378	2405294	1775
5	Maharashtra	600	?		14633	Not Available	Not available	14205
6	Meghalaya	5	5574	5	3779	101	116100	190
7	Chhattisgarh	6567	27510	3716	13836	915	1227976	1264
8	Delhi	Will send after IIPA Study						
9	Tripura	277	1193	77	1088	Detailed exercise is yet to be done		
10	Puducherry	121	0	144	0	33	38944	52
11	Chandigarh	12	0	12	0	30	260144	234
12	Gujarat	117		110	10794	A survey of total number of SC/ST habitations and urban slums require to be conducted in the state within 6 months		3016
13	Andhra Pradesh	11193	18169	16534	10640			1354
14	Assam	No Response						
15	Bihar	No Response						
16	J and K	No Response						
17	Jharkhand	No Response						
18	Madhya Pradesh					30243	Order for survey issued in Feb 2008, but results not shared yet	

19	Nagaland	Data on no. of SC/ST beneficiaries given but not AWCs				11	11	
20	Orissa	Data has been sent on total habitations and total required but not on the number that already exist						
21	Rajasthan	41024	31487			Data not given		
22	Uttar Pradesh	31808	28482			Data not given		
23	Uttarakhand	No Response						
24	West Bengal	28096	10010	20297	7501	8105	6352534	5863

However, this situation will probably improve after the operationalisation of the anganwadi centres sanctioned under the 3rd phase of expansion of the ICDS scheme. The Government of India, in its guidelines to the states regarding the 3rd phase of expansion of the ICDS scheme states that:

“The sanction of new Projects/AWCs/Mini-AWCs and staff honorary workers is subject to the following conditions.....(ii) For location of AWCs: (a) Villages pre-dominantly inhabited by population belonging to SC/ST and minority community should be given priority; (b) Within a village also location of an AWC, as far as feasible, should be in the areas inhabited by population from SC/ST and minority community. **The State Governments must certify that all SC/ST and Minority community habitations have been saturated.....**”

The process of operationalisation of anganwadis must therefore be completed without delay and the state governments must also be directed to certify to the Supreme Court Commissioners that all SC/ST and Minority community habitations have been saturated, with supporting evidence, according to the guidelines of the Government of India and the orders of the Supreme Court. Further, similar guidelines must be issued by the Government of India in relation to coverage of urban slums as well.

ICDS Finances

ICDS is a Centrally-sponsored Scheme implemented through the State Governments/UT Administrations with 100% financial assistance for inputs other than supplementary nutrition which the States were to provide out of their own resources. From 2005–2006, it has been decided to extend support to States up to 50% of the financial norms or 50% of expenditure incurred by them on supplementary nutrition, whichever is less. This Central assistance has been proposed to ensure that supplementary nutrition is provided to the beneficiaries for 300 days in a year as per nutritional norms laid down under the Scheme.⁵

The cost of supplementary nutrition varies depending upon recipes and prevailing prices. However, the Central Government issues guidelines regarding cost norms from time to time. The Government of India has in November 2008 issued new guidelines that are to be effective from 2009-10.

New Financial Norms

	Existing Rates (per beneficiary per day)	Revised (per beneficiary per day)
(i) Children (6 months to 72 months)	Rs. 2.00	Rs. 4.00
(ii) Severely malnourished Children (6 months to 72 months)	Rs. 2.70	Rs. 6.00
(iii) Pregnant women and Nursing mothers	Rs. 2.30	Rs. 5.00

The cost sharing ratio between Centre and States to be effective from 2009-10 (for these new cost norms) are as under:

- (i) 90:10 for all components including SNP for North East
- (ii) 50:50 for SNP and 90:10 for all other components for all States other than North East

⁵ <http://wcd.nic.in/>

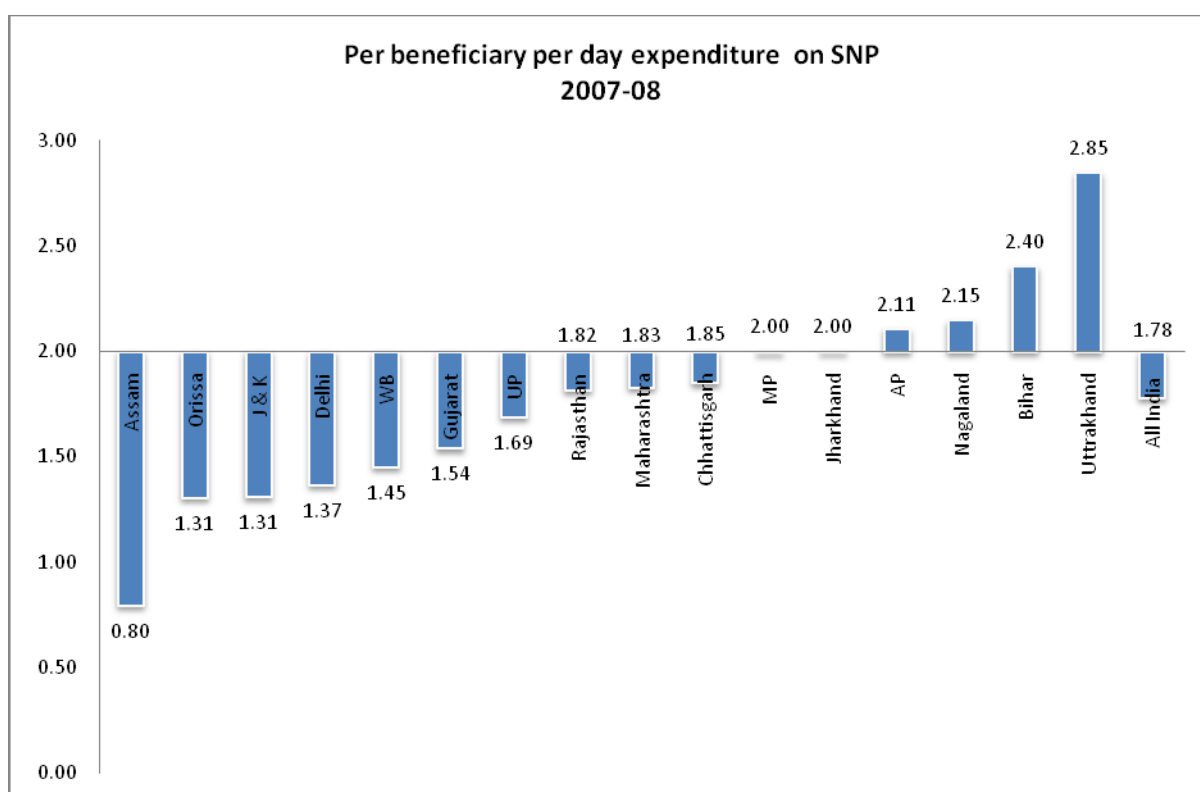
Expenditure for SNP under ICDS: in relation to present beneficiaries

The Supreme Court in its order dated 13th December 2006 states that:

“All the State Governments and Union Territories shall fully implement the ICDS scheme by, inter alia,

- (i) allocating and spending at least Rs. 2/- per child per day for supplementary nutrition out of which the Central Government shall contribute Rs. 1/- per child per day.
- (ii) allocating and spending at least Rs. 2.70 for every severely malnourished child per day for supplementary nutrition out of which the Central Government shall contribute Rs. 1.35 per child per day.
- (iii) allocating and spending at least Rs. 2.30 for every pregnant women, nursing mother/adolescent girl per day for supplementary nutrition out of which the Central Government shall contribute Rs. 1.15.”

Since the central government releases funds to the states for SNP based on the expenditure of states for this purpose, it is more important to look at expenditure rather than allocations on SNP. In this section we look at the actual amount that was spent on SNP in the year 2007-08. Per beneficiary per day expenditure is calculated as (total expenditure on SNP/no. of beneficiaries)/300 since SNP is to be provided for 300 days in a year. (The beneficiaries included are children in the age group of 6 months to 6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers. Adolescent girls have not been included because the nutrition for this age group is given out of a separate budget.) Based on this calculation we find that at an All India level Rs. 1.78 was spent on each beneficiary per day in 2007-08 (beneficiaries include both pregnant and lactating mothers and children under six). The states that spent less than Rs. 2 per beneficiary per day are Assam, Orissa, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, West Bengal, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.



State spending less Re.1 per beneficiary per day: Assam

States spending less Rs. 1.50 per beneficiary per day: Gujarat, West Bengal, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa and Assam

Severe Undernutrition

The main objective of the ICDS scheme is to tackle malnutrition among children under six. The National Family Health Surveys that are conducted at regular intervals give an estimate of the percent of under-nutrition in different states in the country. In the table below is the percent of children under three who are severely underweight based on the NFHS surveys in 1998-99 and 2005-06. It is seen that according to the latest survey 15.8% of children are severely underweight in the country and this has decreased by only 2.2% in the seven year period between the two rounds of the NFHS survey. Further, in some states the percent of children who are severely underweight has actually increased in this period.

States in which the percent of severely underweight children increased: Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat

States in which there was a less than 2% fall in the percent of severely underweight children: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi and Assam.

State	% Children Severely Underweight (children under 3)		
	Weight for Age Percentage below - 3SD		
	NFHS3 (2005-6)	NFHS2 (1998-99)	% decrease
India	15.8	18	2.2
Madhya Pradesh	27.3	24.3	-3
Gujarat	16.3	16.2	-0.1
Andhra Pradesh	9.9	10.3	0.4
Bihar	24.1	25.5	1.4
Delhi	8.7	10.1	1.4
Assam	11.4	13.3	1.9
Tamil Nadu	6.4	10.6	4.2
West Bengal	11.1	16.3	5.2
Rajasthan	15.3	20.8	5.5
Uttar Pradesh	16.4	21.9	5.5
Maharashtra	11.9	17.6	5.7
Orissa	13.4	20.7	7.3
Chhattisgarh	16.4		
Jharkhand	26.1		
Uttaranchal	15.7		

However, the data maintained at the Anganwadi Centres shows gross under-reporting of severely (grade III and IV) malnourished children. According to a report prepared by NIPPCD for the Ministry, the percentage of Grade III and Grade IV as per state government records is now only 1 percent in 2006. In case of 3-5 years children the percentage of children in Grade III & IV has reduced to 0.8 percent (2006). These figures are totally at variance with the NFHS-III figures of 15.8% children being severely malnourished. The field officials are thus able to escape from any sense of accountability for reducing malnutrition. GOI should be asked to pull up states so that they accept the NFHS-III figures, and take appropriate measures for correcting district records and show actual rates for malnutrition.

Recommendations:

- Government of India must operationalise all the sanctioned anganwadis at the earliest.
- A simple procedure for setting up an “anganwadi on demand” must be put in place so that an AWC is sanctioned and operationalised within three months of such a demand being made, in accordance with the order of the Supreme Court dated 13th December 2006.
- Children in the 3–6 year age group should be provided a hot cooked meal at the anganwadi centre everyday. The SNP so provided should be age-appropriate, culturally appropriate, nutritious and locally procured.
- Make adequate budget allocations for the ICDS programme so as to be able to provide SNP to every child under six, every pregnant and lactating mother and every adolescent girl.
- The Government of India must make provisions for supplementary nutrition for all adolescent girls at the same norms as has been set for SNP for pregnant and lactating mothers.
- Strict action must be taken at all levels against the false reporting of data that shows inflated figures of enrolment and deflated figures of malnutrition. To check on this practice of false reporting a system of independent monitoring must be put in place, such that a sample of the households are routinely checked and the data verified by that reported by the ICDS.