

## **PRESS NOTE**

### **Nutritional Food Supply, Pre Schooling and Health Care Services under ICDS are dismally poor in Berhampur city**

#### ***Facts of Social Audit of ICDS in Berhampur Slums***

*29<sup>th</sup> September, 2012 at Utkal Ashram Hall, Berhampur*

Youth for Social Development (YSD) a not-for-profit independent social research and development organisation promoting transparency, accountability and good governance has assessed the quality of ICDS service delivery by using social audit methods in 13 slums in Berhampur city of Odisha. Trained citizen volunteers/monitors with set of inventories monitored/checked the quality, transparency and accountability of Anganwadi centres (AWCs), Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) with the participation of beneficiaries, AWWs, Supervisors, vigilance monitoring committee and government officials. They also checked the available infrastructure, information, provision as per the government guideline at the AWCs. The citizen Monitors audited thirteen (13) AWCs, interviewed 393 beneficiaries in thirteen (13) slums in 12 wards, thirteen AWWs, four supervisors and two CDPOs in Berhampur.

#### **Brief findings of Social Audit of Integrated Child Development Scheme**

##### **Beneficiary Perspective**

- Most of the beneficiaries interviewed are belonging to the (59%) scheduled caste category. 31% are belongs to BPL families.
- Most of the beneficiaries are unskilled labour (24%), skilled labour (10%), and housewives (31%) and their average monthly income remains at Rupees 3435/-
- Among the beneficiaries 44% are 7months to three year children, 36% are 3-6 years children and 12% are pregnant women and 8% are lactating mother.
- Irregularities in opening of the AWCs are still a major issue where 29% of the beneficiary's responded irregularity in opening of AWCs and more than half responded AWCs open only 15 days in a month.
- SNP has been supplied to the lactating mother once in a month one third of (37.3%) the beneficiaries complained. The quality of the food items are average in scale of three rated by more than half (61.4%) of the lactating mother.
- Surprisingly only 36.6% are satisfied with the health checks up services at the AWC. Only half (56.6%) of the lactating mother access health check up services from the AWC and 54.2% rated the quality of health services as average in scale of three. These poor services related to no supply of iron and folic acid tablets, irregular health check up etc.
- Surprisingly 65.6% of the beneficiaries shown their dissatisfaction on the services provided at the AWCs. Irregularity of opening of AWC, poor quality of food items, lack of information on food items and others, poor health care services, insufficient quality of food items and no supply of medicines etc.
- 29.2% of new born baby to six years children get their (THR) once in a month despite provisions for once in forth night. More than half of (52.4%) the beneficiaries rated quality of the food remains as average in a scale of three similarly 45.8% rated health care services as average.

- Most of the (70%) of the beneficiaries replied that the AWC runs in rented house without facilities like toilet, class room, kitchen, and storage and play room. There is lack of information disclosure in most of the AWCs like list of beneficiaries, preschool learning details, and daily time table.
- Grievance information has not been disclosed at the AWC. 67.9% find it difficult where to complain in case of any difficulty on the other hand beneficiaries (67.6%) do not have any knowledge of maintenance of various types of records at AWCs. Allegation of false entries has been made by 49% of the respondent in the records available at AWCs.
- More than half of the beneficiaries have no knowledge on VMC at the AWCs and 55% of the beneficiaries have not seen visit of CDPO to the AWCs. Most of the beneficiaries (89.6%) have no knowledge on where to complaint in case of any corrupt practices.

### **Anganwadi Perspective**

- Most of the AWWs can't afford the charges incurred like transport, labour and can't meet the extra cost incurred due to inflation (increasing cost of fuel, vegetable, transport etc.) to maintain the AWCs and also the budget provided by the government is insufficient.
- The remuneration they get are insufficient for their livelihood and they can't afford their service at a very low wage rate on the other hand insecurity in their job threat them all the time.
- Among the major suggestions AWCs should be provided with a separate building with facilities like space for kitchen, preschool education, toilet, electricity and children's play, storage facility etc. and secondly all the eligible beneficiaries should get the food items, thirdly provision should be made to supply good quality of food items and sufficient budget to meet the inflation situation.

### **Supervisor's and CDPO's Perspective**

- Four supervisors monitoring more than 80 AWCs is a very difficult task to check all records and meet beneficiaries and monitor the performance of the AWCs.
- All most all of them know their duties and responsibilities but they don't aware of the child rights and Supreme Court guideline on right to food and ICDS.
- Once in a month is the frequency of the visit of the supervisors to the AWCs. They spend 20 day in the field in a month.
- Insufficient staff, budget, basic infrastructure to the AWCs are the major issues they highlighted the hurdles in efficient functioning of AWCs.
- One of the CDPO highlighted lack of sufficient staff specifically supervisors to monitor service delivery, lack of sufficient funding are the major problem and lack of sufficient cooperation from the communities and beneficiaries are another hindrances in better service delivery.

### **VMC Members Perspective**

- All most all the VMC member interviewed is recommended by the AWW and local elected representative.
- All most all the VMC members are not aware of their roles and responsibilities. They attend the meeting for the sake of their membership and have not take part in any decision making.
- Only 11% replied that they attend the grievances by the beneficiaries and only 10% of the VMCs complained about corrupt practices in ICDS. Most of the VMC suggested that the AWWs need building, good quality food items, regular preschool education, and utilisation of allotted funds in a proper way.

### **Checking of Anganwadi Centre (AWC)**

- Most of the AWCs run on rented building. All AWCs have sign board in front of the building and also informative boards on programme, entitlements inside the centre.
- The rent for the AWCs provided by the by the government are insufficient to get a building in Berhampur city where the rent house are sky high.
- Surprisingly not a single AWC have toilet and separate toilet for girls and facilities for storage of food items.
- 90% of the AWCs don't have space for kitchen and class room for preschool learning, 60% of the AWCs don't have drug kit, 30% don't have drinking water facilities and play equipments and 10% don't have cooking utensils.
- Only 40% of the AWCs have complaint register and information on 'where to', 'whom to' and 'how to' complaint in case of any problem.

### **Community Suggestions**

- Regular and timely opening of Anganwadi centre is one of the major suggestions by the communities.
- Provision of own building with all infrastructure storage space, toilet, kitchen and classroom.
- Regular supply of food items with good quality of SNP and THR to all the intended and eligible beneficiaries at the community level.
- Regular preschool education to all children (3 to 6 years) with toys, books, uniform and quality trained teacher.
- Regular health checks up with health care and referral services to all the eligible and intended beneficiaries of the AWCs.
- Mandatory disclosure all information including sign board, informative board, daily time table, food chart (cooked, dry food and breakfast), preschool learning chart, beneficiary list, list if members of vigilance monitoring committee.
- There should be stringent monitoring by the supervisor, CDPO and the vigilance monitoring committee to ensure proper implementation and compliance to government guidelines at the AWCs.
- A grievance cell/helpline must be establish to make easier to the beneficiaries to complain in case of any problems, misappropriation and corruption and also to readdress the complaints a grievance readdress mechanism should be set up to address the complaints in a regular basis.

***For more details contact***

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