

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

10.45 As women and children constitute roughly 72 per cent of the population of this country; the Ministry of Women and Child Development was carved out as a separate Ministry in 2006 to further accelerate their development. Two schemes are being implemented for the development of adolescent girls viz. Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) and Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG). KSY aims at addressing the needs of self-development, nutrition and health status, literacy and numerical skills, and vocational skills of adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years. The scheme is currently operational in 6,118 ICDS projects. NPAG is being implemented in 51 identified districts across the country to provide free foodgrain @ 6 kg per beneficiary per month to undernourished adolescent girls (11-19 years) irrespective of financial status of the family to which they belong. Both the schemes are being implemented through the infrastructure of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS).

10.46 The Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP) seeks to provide updated skills and new knowledge to poor assets-less women in 10 traditional sectors viz. agriculture, animal husbandry, dairying, fisheries, handlooms, handicrafts, khadi and village industries, sericulture, social forestry and wasteland development, through mobilizing them into cohesive groups. Thirteen new projects have been sanctioned during 2007-08 (up to 30.11.2007). To facilitate employment of women away from their homes/towns, schemes such as Working Women Hostels with day-care centres and crèches/day centres continue. Care and protection of women in distress is a focused area for attention and is provided through Swadhar Homes and Short Stay Homes. A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation—"Ujjawala"—has been launched recently. The scheme has five components—prevention, rescue, rehabilitation, re-integration and repatriation.

10.47 The National Commission for Women (NCW) safeguards the interests of women with a mandate to cover all aspects of women's rights. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, which came into force on October 26, 2006, seeks to provide immediate relief to women

facing situations of violence in their homes. Gender Budgeting as an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process has also been adopted. It encompasses incorporating a gender perspective at all levels and stages of the budgetary process, and paves the way to translating gender commitments of the Government to budgetary commitments.

10.48 A rights-based approach has been continued in the Eleventh Plan for promoting survival, protection and development of children. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was set up on March 5, 2007, for effective implementation of child rights in the country. Initiated in 1975, ICDS is one of the largest child intervention programmes in the world with a holistic package of six basic services for children up to 6 years of age, and for pregnant and nursing mothers. These services are health check up, immunization, referral services, supplementary feeding, preschool education, and health and nutrition education through one platform, i.e. Anganwadi Centre (AWC). Starting with a modest 33 blocks/ projects, it has gradually expanded to 6,284 projects with 10,52,638 AWCs, of which 5,885 projects with 8,63,472 AWCs became operational as on June, 30, 2007. ICDS covers 736.96 lakh beneficiaries consisting of 606.50 lakh children below 6 years of age and 130.46 lakh pregnant women and lactating mothers as on June 30, 2007. To fulfill the NCMP commitment of providing a functional Anganwadi in every settlement and ensuring full coverage of all children, and also to comply with the Supreme Court's directives, Government has sanctioned 466 additional ICDS projects and 1,88,168 AWCs during 2005-06 and 166 additional ICDS projects, 1,06,833 AWCs and 25,961 mini-AWCs during 2006-07. A number of new initiatives have been taken to improve the impact of the programme, which includes sharing of one half of the cost of supplementary nutrition with the States under ICDS.

10.49 The scheme of Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers provides its services to the children of age group 0-6 years which includes supplementary nutrition, emergency medicines and contingencies. At present about 28,000 crèches are functioning under the scheme benefiting about 7 lakh children.

10.50 The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection

of Children) Act, 2000 is the primary law relating to juveniles in conflict with law as well as children in need of care and protection. This Act provides for proper care, protection and treatment for juveniles, by adopting a child friendly approach in the adjudication and disposition of matters in the best interest of children and for their ultimate rehabilitation through various institutions established under the Act. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2006 came into effect from August 23, 2006 and has made the law more child friendly. Under the scheme "A Programme for Juvenile Justice," 50 per cent expenditure requirements of States/UTs are being provided for establishment and maintenance of various homes under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000. The Integrated Programme for Street Children provides basic facilities like shelter, nutrition, health care, education and recreation facilities, and seeks to protect street children from abuse and exploitation. Childline with dedicated telephone number 1098, a 24-hour toll-free telephone service for all children in distress, is also available in 76 cities under the scheme. The Implementation of "Scheme for Welfare of Working Children in Need of Care and Protection" commenced in January 2005 to provide non-formal education and vocational training to working children to facilitate their entry/re-entry into mainstream education.

10.51 The Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA), an autonomous organization of Ministry of Women and Child Development is functioning with the goal to promote domestic adoption and regulate inter-country adoption as provided under the Guidelines of Government of India. CARA is also implementing the Shishu Greh Scheme for providing institutional care to children up to the age of 6 years and their rehabilitation through in-country adoption.

10.52 The bias against the girl child is reflected in the fall in child sex ratio (0-6 yrs) which has declined drastically from 945 in 1991 to 927 per 1,000 males in 2001. Female Foeticide is found more in the urban educated prosperous classes, and in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat with low sex ratios. Efforts are therefore being made to ensure the survival of the girl child and her right to be born, and nurture her so that she grows up to be an informed, secure and productive participating member of the community and

society. A multi-dimensional strategy has been adopted with legislative, preventive, advocacy and programmatic inputs.

Welfare and Development Of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and other weaker sections

10.53 The programmes for educational development and economic and social empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups and marginalized sections of the society are implemented through the close participation of State Governments, UT Administrations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach is also one of the strategies for attaining objectives of development of the targeted groups. National level Finance and Development Corporations for Scheduled Castes, Safaikaramcharis, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, and the disabled are working towards economic empowerment of the beneficiaries. Allocation for schemes exclusively for welfare and development of SCs and STs has been enhanced to Rs. 3,271 crore in 2007-08.

Scheduled Castes Development

10.54 A number of schemes are being implemented to encourage Scheduled Caste students for continuing their education from school level to higher education. During the current financial year up to November 2007, Rs. 3.09 crore has been released under the Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships to the children of those engaged in unclean occupation and Rs. 458.98 crore has been released under the scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships to an estimated number of over 33.86 lakh SC students. A sum of Rs. 3.94 crore has been released for construction of 8 hostels for 610 boys and 117 girls belonging to the Scheduled Castes. For Upgradation of Merit of SC students, Rs. 0.95 crore has been released for benefiting 706 students. For free coaching to 2,230 students belonging to SCs and OBCs, Rs. 1.57 crore has been released. An allocation of Rs. 88 crore has been made under Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC students for pursuing M.Phil and Ph.D courses. During the current year 1,333 fresh students will be given fellowship.

10.55 The scheme of Top Class Education for SCs aims at promoting quality education among students belonging to SCs by providing full financial support for pursuing education at graduate and

post graduate levels in identified reputed institutions. Under this scheme, Rs. 0.96 crore has been released up to November 2007 out of budget allocation of Rs. 16 crore. The scheme of National Overseas Scholarships for Scheduled Caste candidates provides financial assistance to the finally selected candidates for pursuing higher studies abroad in specified fields of master level courses and Ph.D in the field of engineering, technology and sciences. Thirty awards to Scheduled Castes (27), denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes (2) and landless agricultural laborers and traditional artisans (1) are given every year. Rs. 1.70 crore has been released to selected students up to November 2007 out of the budget allocation of Rs. 4 crore. Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan is a major scheme for economic advancement of persons belonging to Scheduled Castes. During 2007-08, an allocation of Rs. 470 crore has been made under this scheme. Up to November 30, 2007, Rs. 252.70 crore has been released to States/Union Territory Administrations for overall socio-economic development of SC persons. The formulation and implementation of Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan for welfare of Scheduled Castes by the State Governments is being monitored intensively. National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation provides credit facilities to the beneficiaries who are living below double the poverty line. Under the National Safaikaramcharis Finance & Development Corporation schemes, there is no income criteria. National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation has disbursed Rs. 21.64 crore benefitting 4,445 persons up to November 2007 and National Safaikaramcharis Finance & Development Corporation has disbursed Rs. 38.06 crore benefitting 6,806 persons. A sum of Rs. 20 crore has been released as equity support to National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Cooperation up to November, 2007 and Rs. 15 crore has been released to National Safaikaramcharis Finance & Development Corporation. Under Self- Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers, Rs. 25 crore has been released out of Budget allocation of Rs. 50 crore up to November 2007. The scheme, launched in January 2007, is being implemented through National Safaikaramcharis Finance & Development Corporation and other Apex Corporations of the Ministry.

10.56 To abolish the practice of untouchability and curb the high incidence of crimes and

atrocities against SCs, efforts are made through effective implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

Scheduled Tribes

10.57 According to the 2001 Census, Scheduled Tribes (STs) accounted for 84.32 million, corresponding to 8.2 per cent of the country's total population. The objective of the Tenth Plan was to empower the STs through their educational, economic and social development. For the welfare and development of the STs, an outlay of Rs. 1,719.71 crore has been provided in the Annual Plan for 2007-08, which is 3.79 per cent higher than the outlay of Rs. 1,656.90 crore for the year 2006-07 (RE). The outlay of 2007-08 includes Rs. 816.71 crore provided as Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal-Sub Plan (TSP) which includes Rs. 220.00 crore for development of forest villages and Rs. 150 crore for Minor Irrigation of tribal lands.

10.58 SCA to Tribal Sub-Plan is a 100 per cent grant extended to States as an additional funding to undertake a number of developmental schemes on family-oriented income-generating schemes, creation of critical infrastructure, extending financial assistance to Self Help Groups (SHGs) for community-based activities, and development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) and forest villages. Grant-in-aid under Article 275(1) is also being provided to the States with an objective to promote the welfare of the STs and improve administration in the States to bring them at par with the rest of the States, and to take up such special welfare and development programmes which are otherwise not included in the Plan programmes. Under the scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships (PMS), all eligible ST students are provided with stipend to pursue their education beyond matric including professional and graduate and post-graduate courses in recognized institutions. The scheme of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for ST students to pursue higher education was launched during the year 2005-06 and has been entrusted to UGC for implementation.

10.59 A new Central Sector Scholarship Scheme of Top Class Education for ST Students was launched during the year 2007-08 with the objective of encouraging meritorious ST students to pursue studies at degree and post-degree level in any of

the identified institutes. There are 127 institutes identified under the scheme in both the Government and private sectors covering the field of management, medicine, engineering, law and commercial course. Each institute has been allocated five awards, with a ceiling of 635 scholarships per year. The family income of the ST students from all the sources shall not exceed Rs. 2.00 lakh per annum.

10.60 Economic empowerment of the STs continued through extension of financial support to National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC). Financial support is being extended to ST beneficiaries/entrepreneurs in the form of term loans and micro credit at concessional rate of interests from income generating activities. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) is engaged in marketing development of tribal products and their retail marketing through its sales outlets.

10.61 In order to address the problems of tribal communities, who are dependent on forests and to undo the historical injustice done to them, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2006 was passed by Parliament in 2006. This Act recognizes the forest rights of forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers over the forest land under their occupation for self-cultivation, rights over minor forest produce and traditional rights. There is great emphasis on the education of ST girls, especially in the low literacy areas. From 2007-08, keeping in view the habitat/hamlet development approach and also to give a boost to the socio-economic development of the most marginalized community among STs, i.e. Primitive Tribal Groups, the long-term Conservation-cum-Development (CCD) Plans have been formulated on the basis of results of Baseline Surveys conducted by various State Governments and Union Territory of A&N Islands.

Minorities

10.62 Five communities, viz., Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis were notified by government as minority communities under section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992. As per the 2001 Census the minority communities constitute 18.42 per cent of the total population. A new Ministry of Minority Affairs was created in January 2006, to ensure a focused approach to issues relating to the

minorities and to play a pivotal role in the overall policy, planning, coordination, evaluation and review of the regulatory and development programmes for the benefit of the minority communities. The Prime Minister's New 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities was announced in June 2006. An important aim of this programme is to ensure that the benefits of various government schemes for the underprivileged reach the disadvantaged sections of the minority communities. It provides that, wherever possible, 15 per cent of the targets and outlays under various schemes, included in the programme, should be earmarked for minorities. Targets for 2007-08 have been fixed and efforts have been made to refine the method of targeting to ensure that the targets are as close as possible to the 15 per cent.

10.63 A high level committee under the chairmanship of Justice Rajindar Sachar was set up to look into the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community of India. The committee submitted its report in November 2006. A total of 76 recommendations and suggestions contained in the report were examined. A statement on the "Follow-up Action on the Recommendations of the Sachar Committee" was laid in both Houses of Parliament on August 31, 2007.

10.64 Maulana Azad Education Foundation provides financial assistance to implement educational schemes for the benefit of the educationally backward minorities. The National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) is engaged in promoting self-employment and other ventures among backward sections of the minority communities through term loans and micro-finance.

Other Backward Classes Development

10.65 Government provides central assistance to State Governments/UT Administrations for educational development of Other Backward Classes. Till November 2007, Rs. 59.16 crore has been released to States/UT Administrations against an allocation of Rs. 100 crore under Post-Matric Scholarships for OBCs and Rs. 9.46 crore has been released under Pre-Matric Scholarships against an allocation of Rs. 25 crore. For construction of hostels for OBC boys and girls, State Governments/UT Administrations/NGOs have been released Rs. 5.92 crore against an allocation

of Rs. 21 crore up to November 2007. The National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation extends credit facilities to persons living below double the poverty line for undertaking various income generating activities. During the year 2007-08, the Corporation has disbursed Rs. 73.23 crore till November 2007 to benefit 82,955 persons. National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation has released Rs. 25 crore as equity support against an allocation of Rs. 28 crore up to November 2007.

Welfare and Development of Persons with Disabilities

10.66 During 2007-08, an allocation of Rs. 221 crore has been made for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities. Expenditure of Rs. 63.9 crore has been incurred up to November 2007. The programmes are implemented through National and Apex Institutes dealing with various categories of disabilities. These institutes conduct short term and long-term courses for various categories of personnel for providing rehabilitation services to those needing them. Till November 2007, Rs. 20.20 crore (Plan) has been released to these institutes. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 is under implementation. Five Composite Rehabilitation Centres (CRCs) at Srinagar, Lucknow, Bhopal, Guwahati and Sundernagar provide facilities for manpower development and ensuring availability of rehabilitation services for all categories of persons with disabilities. Four Regional Rehabilitation Centres (RRCs) provide services to persons with spinal injuries at Chandigarh, Cuttack, Jabalpur and Bareilly. About 199 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) have been sanctioned in the country for providing comprehensive rehabilitation services at the grass root level.

10.67 Under the scheme of Assistance to the Disabled for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP), Rs. 10.31 crore has been released during 2007-08 up to November 2007. Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme provides financial assistance to voluntary organizations for running special schools for children with hearing, visual and mental disability, rehabilitation centres for persons with various

disabilities including leprosy cured persons, manpower development in the field of mental retardation and cerebral palsy. Under this scheme organizations are given grant-in-aid for both recurring and non-recurring expenditure to the extent of 90 per cent of the total approved cost of the project. During the year 2007-08, Rs. 22.30 crore has been released up to November 2007 to voluntary organizations. The National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation provides credit facilities to persons with disability for their economic empowerment and Rs. 7 crore has been released to the corporation till the end of November 2007.

Social Defence Sector

10.68 Older persons who, in the wake of declining family support systems and other socio-economic circumstances are left helpless, also require the support and protection of the State. To fulfill the commitments of the National Policy on Older Persons for providing health, shelter, vocational training, recreation, protection of life etc. for the aged, special emphasis is being placed on expanding the on-going programmes of old age homes, day care centres and mobile medicare units being implemented under the scheme of Integrated Programme for Older Persons. During 2007-08, Rs. 4.80 crore has been released under this scheme till the end of November 2007. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Bill, 2007 has been passed by both Houses of Parliament. The Bill contains provisions for the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens guaranteed and recognized under the Constitution.

10.69 Rigorous efforts are being made to tackle the growing problem of drug abuse and alcoholism through an integrated and comprehensive community based approach in the country. The programme is implemented through voluntary organizations running Treatment-Cum-Rehabilitation Centres and Awareness and Counseling Centres. An amount of Rs. 6.62 crore has been released to voluntary organizations under the scheme of Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse up to November 2007 during the year 2007-08. For effective implementation of the social defence programmes, personnel engaged in delivery of services in this area are being trained under various training programmes being organized by National Institute of Social Defence.