



Mission Poshan 2.0: Strengthening India Nutrition ecosystem

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Abstract: -

Mission Poshan 2.0 (Saksham Anganwadi) is an integrated nutrition initiative targeting children (0–6 years), adolescent girls, and pregnant/lactating mothers. It combines nutrition, health services, and early education into a single framework to build India's human capital and meet Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2 & 4). The program addresses the "caloric gap" by providing Supplementary Nutrition, including fortified Take-Home Rations (THR) and Hot Cooked Meals tailored to specific caloric and protein needs. This is paired with Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), which uses play-based learning to prepare preschoolers for formal schooling under the National Education Policy 2020. To ensure health outcomes, the mission integrates preventive healthcare, such as universal immunization, growth monitoring, and vitamin supplementation. All services are monitored via the Poshan Tracker, a real-time digital tool that ensures transparency and tracks the nutritional progress of every beneficiary at the grassroots level.

Keywords: Adolescent, Nutrition, Malnutrition, Children, Integrated, Development etc.

Introduction:

Poshan 2.0, also known as Saksham Anganwadi, is an Integrated Nutrition Support Program. It aims to alleviate the problems associated with malnutrition in children, teenage girls, expectant moms, and nursing mothers by a deliberate change in the content

and delivery of nutrition as well as the development of a convergent ecosystem to foster immunity, wellbeing, and health-promoting habits.

Maternal nutrition, infant and young child feeding standards, MAM/SAM treatment

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and wellness through AYUSH will be the main topics of Poshan 2.0. The three pillars of convergence, governance, and capacity building will support it. Poshan Abhiyan will serve as the cornerstone for innovations in media advocacy and research, community outreach, ICT interventions, nutritional support, and Jan Andolan will all be covered.

The children to reach their full potential, they must have access to adequate health care, nourishment, security, safety, responsive caregiving, and early learning opportunities. Early Childhood Care and Education is therefore a crucial part of the program. Understanding that early childhood care is the cornerstone of human development, the Scheme is intended to support the holistic development of children under six years old through enhanced ECCE content and the delivery of cognitive, emotional, social, and intellectual development of the child in order to prepare all preschoolers for school and for the smooth integration of children in the age group of five to six in Grade I under the National Education Policy, 2020. In order to effectively reduce disparities, the initiative is specifically designed to serve low-income and disadvantaged communities.

Background

POSHAN Abhiyaan – Prime Minister’s Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN). It is a centrally

sponsored scheme. Initially, it involved a 50:50 sharing ratio between the Centre and States. Later modified to 60:40 for states, 90:10 for special category states, and 100% for UTs without legislatures, making it a centrally sponsored program.

⇒ In **1975, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** established Anganwadi Centres, which served as a foundation for early children care, health services, and supplemental nutrition.

⇒ In order to promote maternal health, the **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) of 2017** introduced maternity benefits through direct cash transfers.

⇒ The **2017 National Nutrition Strategy (NITI Aayog)** placed a strong emphasis on community involvement, monitoring, and convergence.

⇒ **POSHAN Abhiyaan, 2018** Unified several ministries into a single framework with quantifiable goals.

⇒ In order to increase productivity and results, **Mission Poshan 2.0 (2021–2022)** combined several programs into a single integrated structure.

Vision

Poshan 2.0 aims to address the difficult problem of malnutrition among pregnant and nursing mothers, adolescent girls (14–18 years old), and children under the age of six.

Given that women and children make up more than two-thirds of India's population, Poshan 2.0 is essential to the country's development. This program's design prioritizes achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs, particularly SDG 2 on Zero Hunger and SDG 4 on Quality Education, will benefit from Poshan 2.0. The mission will centre on the basic significance of nutrition, early childhood care, and education for children's growth and development into healthy, productive people.

Objectives

The objectives of Poshan 2.0 are as follows:

- ☞ To aid in the nation's development of human capital.
- ☞ Address the problems caused by malnutrition.
- ☞ Encourage healthy eating practices and nutrition awareness for long-term health and wellness.
- ☞ Use essential tactics to address inadequacies related to nutrition.

Anganwadi Services package

The Anganwadi Services Scheme provides the following package of services in an integrated manner to eligible beneficiaries:

- ☞ Supplementary nutrition
- ☞ Pre-school non-formal education
- ☞ Nutrition & health Education
- ☞ Immunization
- ☞ Health check-up

- ☞ Referral services

Supplementary Nutrition (SNP)

This service bridges the "caloric gap" between what a person eats and what they actually need for healthy growth.

⇒ **Children (6 months – 3 years):** Take-Home Ration (THR) in the form of fortified food packets (e.g., *Panjiri* or khichdi mix) and 500 Calories (K Cal)/ Day and 12-15 Protein (g)/ Day

⇒ **Children (3 – 6 years):** A Hot Cooked Meal served daily at the centre plus a morning snack.

⇒ **Severely malnourished children** (6- 72 months), 800 Calories (K Cal)/ Day and 20-25 Protein (g)/ Day

⇒ **Adolescent Girls** (14-18 years), 600 Calories (K Cal)/ Day and 18-20 Protein (g)/ Day

⇒ **Pregnant & Lactating Mothers:** THR packets and micro-nutrient supplements like Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) tablets and 600 Calories (K Cal)/ Day and 18-20 Protein (g)/Day

Pre-school non-formal education

The primary goal is the holistic development of the child, ensuring they are physically, emotionally, and cognitively prepared for Grade 1. Play-based activities including storytelling, rhymes, group games, and drawing and the target group is 3 – 6 years.

- ⇒ **School Readiness:** Developing a positive attitude toward learning and the school environment.
- ⇒ **Holistic Development:** Stimulating physical, motor, cognitive, social-emotional, and language domains.
- ⇒ **Universalization:** Ensuring children from marginalized communities have access to early learning to reduce future primary school dropout rates.

Health Check-ups

- ☞ Regular monitoring ensures early detection of health issues.
- ☞ Recording weight and height (Growth Monitoring) on a "Growth Chart."
- ☞ Antenatal care (ANC) for pregnant women and postnatal care for new mothers, including simple medicine distribution for common ailments like diarrhoea.

Nutrition & health Education

- ☞ This is "knowledge-based" support aimed at women (aged 15–45) to build long-term healthy habits.
- ☞ Information on IYCF (Infant and Young Child Feeding) practices, the importance of breastfeeding, sanitation, and how to use local foods to prevent anaemia.
- ☞ Iron syrup for 6 months to 5-year-old child: 1 ml twice in a week.

- ☞ IFA tablets during pregnancy and post-pregnancy.
- ☞ 12 months to 5-year-old child: De-worming tablet once in 6 months.
- ☞ Pregnant Women: 1 de-worming tablet during second trimester.
- ☞ Vitamin A supplementation for 9 months to 5-year-old child bi-annually.
- ☞ Diarrhoea management: ORS, Zinc Supplementation.

Referral Services

Identifying "High Risk" pregnancies or children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and referring them to a Primary Health Centre (PHC) or a Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre (NRC).

Immunization

This is a preventive service to protect children and mothers from life-threatening diseases.

- ☞ Vaccination for children against Polio, DPT, Measles, and TB.
- ☞ Tetanus Toxoid (TT) injections during pregnancy for Mothers.

POSHAN Tracker

On March 1st, 2021, MoWCD launched the "Poshan Tracker" application via the National e-Governance Division (NeGD), MyGov, as a crucial instrument for governance. The Poshan Tracker's technology is being used for dynamic determining the prevalence of underweight, stunting, and

wasting in children as well as monitoring the last mile of nutrition service delivery. Real-time tracking and monitoring of all AWCs, AWWs, and beneficiaries on specified metrics will be made possible by the POSHAN Tracker.

References

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