



## **PRESS BRIEF**

### **Odisha will take another 10 years to construct all AWCs required in the State!**

Bhubaneswar, May 14, 2013: As per the data available with Women & Child Development Department, Government of Odisha, till December 2012, out of total 71,134 AWCs only 16,000 AWCs are functioning in their own building in State. During the 2012-13, the state government had allocated Rs. 200 Cr. for the construction of 4000 new AWCs. Similarly, an insignificant amount of Rs. 200 Cr. has been allocated for the construction of new AWCs in 2013-14 against the total requirement of Rs. 2556.7 Cr. (considering the unit cost of Rs.5.00 lakh per AWC, the total cost for the construction of rest 51,134 AWCs in Odisha would be 2556.7 Cr.). Participating in the State level consultation on the distinguished speakers in the consultation on 'Early Childhood Care and Development' have raised their concerns that it would take more than ten years for the State Government to construct required number of AWCs in the State. It was unanimously agreed that adequate budget provision should be made for Early Childhood Care and Development, as the children are the future of the nation.

Out of total 97 Central Sponsored Plans (CSPs) under Women & Child Development, 26 programs are related to child development. In spite of the focus on women & child development by political leaders, bureaucrats and Civil Society Organisations, the scenario of Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in states like Odisha evokes apprehension. The speakers have also expressed that despite introduction of several programs in the state; lack of vision in program implementation, proper monitoring mechanism and apathetic approach of program implementers at the grass root level are major causes behind the partial success of the plans. Panchanan Kanungo, Former Finance Minister of Odisha in his speech expressed that the Gram Panchayat should be entrusted with all the powers and made accountable so as to eradicate the shortcomings at the grass root level and make services available with quality to all the beneficiaries. State government needs to give in-service training to Anganwadi workers, develop specific pedagogy & curriculum to implement the early childhood care & development program in the state, says Ms. Dharitri Patnaik, India Representative, Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF). The ECCD should not be confined to campaigns only it is our duty to take it as a movement to safeguard the future of the country, says Ms. Patnaik.

The child population between the age group of 0-6 years, in Odisha is 50.36 lakh which is about 12 percent of the total population of the State. Whereas, in 2013-14 estimated budget, the resource allocation for Early Childhood



Care and Development is very low i.e. only 3.14 percent of the state budget and 0.63 percent of Gross State Domestic product (GSDP). The Under Five Child Mortality Rate in Odisha is 83 against the national average of 63 which triggers issues in the context of early childhood development in our State along with the persistent tight spot of malnutrition of 61.71 percent in age group of 0-3 years. At present 37,134 AWCs in State are running in temporary accommodations such as in community hall, youth club, rented house etc. As per the guideline of ICDS mission there is provision of Rs 700 and Rs 3000 for rent per month in rural area and urban area respectively. But the rent is not being paid in many rural areas said the speakers in the consultation. Prafulla Kumar Sahoo, Chairman, CYSD, Dr. Bikash Das, President, CLAP and many social workers from child care institutions were present in this state level consultation organized today by Odisha Budget and Accountability Centre (OBAC).