



## **State Level Consultation on** **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) in Odisha** *Key Issues and Challenges*

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The concept of Early Childhood Care and Development emerged with an approach to promote holistic development of Child. In alignment with the National Policies and Programs targeted at ECCD, State Government makes financial provision which is known as budget statement. Budget statement reflects Government's aim at spending of available resources. It is a tool which reflects Government's intention to fulfil the needs and aspirations of the general mass embracing the promises made during the budget presentation. Thus, budget analysis can play a pivotal role in enhancing accountability and ensure quality delivery of services for Early Childhood Care in Odisha. This can also facilitate us to recognize Government's priority in ECCD and to identify the existing gap between the service delivery and the receiving ends.

India has made various progressive legislations for fulfillment of need and requirement of Early Childhood Care and Development. Gradual Evolution of Child Rights Proclamation: 'Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child' 1924...Declaration of the Rights of the Child' 1959.... Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 are some of the international provisions ratified and adopted by India.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of eight goals to be achieved by 2015. Six out of eight MDGs very much directly and pragmatically connect to meeting of the Rights of the Child - to equality, education, health and protection. All these are put under the program 'World Fit for Children'; and achieving as well as sustenance of these goals largely depends on realization of the provisions of ECCD through various national flagship programs like Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). Various indicators for monitoring of MDG for children has been formulated an appreciation of such indicators will provide a more objective view of issues of ECCD.

The national perspective, Provisions and Legislations are largely influenced by international standards of ECCD and they are framed to achieve a better world for children. Various legislations have significant provisions for ECCD and they need to be analyzed in the light of targets and commitments made during the five year plans. The introduction of policy for ECCD is the recent national level development which has the potential to bring issues and challenges at the center stage of planning and budgeting.



Odisha is home to 50.36 lakh children under the age group of 0-6 years and 63.06 lakh children in the age group of 6-14 years of age group. Increased rate of infant mortality (which is 63 against the national average of 51) and under five mortality (which is 83 against the national average of 63) have been the triggering issues in the context of early childhood development in State along with the persistent tight spot of malnutrition. The State Government has several ECCD programs to address the perpetual and bleak consequences of malnutrition, destitution, lack of facilities for preschool education like- programs for the improvement of health and nutrition, programs for improvement of psychology and education and programmes for providing protection to the children under the age group of 0-6 years. Despite various programmes and policies implemented and formulated in the state the children and specifically the girl child has remained neglected and not much difference could have been achieved in the status of girl child over last 64 years.

Considering the bottlenecks prevailing in the time methods and means of sharing and dissemination, Odisha Budget and Accountability Centre (OBAC, CYSD) has undertaken policy analysis exercises for Early Childhood Care and Development to reflect primarily on:

- Detailed analysis of the policy provisions for early child hood care and education with special focus on ICDS and other ECCD programs.
- To prepare a broad map of budgetary processes and institutions for ECCD Programs.
- To assess the extent of fund utilization by the state along with the quantum of fund allocated for ECCD programs with special focus on ICDS implementation.
- To assess the distribution of fund for different activities for ECCD programmes with special reference to ICDS.
- To draw some factual evidence on the major constraints in effective utilization of funds

In order to share key issues related to ECCD and its relation to Budget, OBAC-CYSD intends to organise a consultation. The consultation will bring together experts, practitioners, policy makers, academicians, grass-root activists and development partners to debate and deliberate on key issues and challenges, as well as emerging issues and practices with the objectives:

- To highlight on the status of Early Childhood Care and Education
- To highlight the policies and priorities under Early Childhood Care and Education.
- To highlight the status of budgetary provisions made under Early Childhood Care and Education in India as well as in Odisha.