



Nourishing the Nation

Poshan Abhiyan's Holistic Approach to Nutrition and Wellness

(Ministry of Women and Child Development)

7 March 2025

Introduction

Poshan Abhiyaan was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on **8th March, 2018** in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan. The focus of Abhiyaan is to lay emphasis on **nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years age**. The programme, through use of **technology, convergence and community involvement** with a targeted approach strives to reduce the level of **stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight** in children, as also focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers, thus holistically addressing malnutrition.

Objectives

- ❖ **Prevent and reduce stunting in children (0- 6 years)**
- ❖ **Prevent and reduce under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) in children (0-6 years)**
- ❖ **Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among young Children(6-59 months)**
- ❖ **Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among Women and Adolescent Girls in the age group of 15-49 years**
- ❖ **Reduce Low Birth Weight (LBW)**

Need for Poshan

Malnutrition early in life can manifest in many forms such as low birth weight stunting, wasting and anaemia.

Persistent poor nutrition during the most critical period of growth and development can result in stunting or children being short for their age. Likewise, acute nutritional deprivation leads to wasting in children causing thinness (too thin for their height).

The financial case for investing in maternal and child nutrition is strong as good nutrition is linked to improved child development and consequently to national development.

Brain attains 80 per cent of its adult size by three years of age and is nearly fully grown by five years. Nutritional deprivation and lack of responsive care during early years not only impairs children's physical growth but also negatively impacts their brain development.

Strategic Pillars of Poshan Abhiyaan

The Abhiyaan operates through four strategic pillars:

1. Access to Quality Services: Providing essential health services through schemes like Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) , National Health Mission (NHM), and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), especially during the first **1,000 days** of a child's life.

2. Cross-Sectoral Convergence: Coordinating efforts across multiple ministries, including water and sanitation under the Swachh Bharat Mission and drinking water access through the National Drinking Water Mission.

3. Leveraging Technology: Tools like the Poshan Tracker application enable real-time data collection and intervention.

4. Jan Andolan: Community engagement is key to driving mass awareness and encouraging behavioral change around nutrition.

POSHAN Abhiyaan Programme Priorities

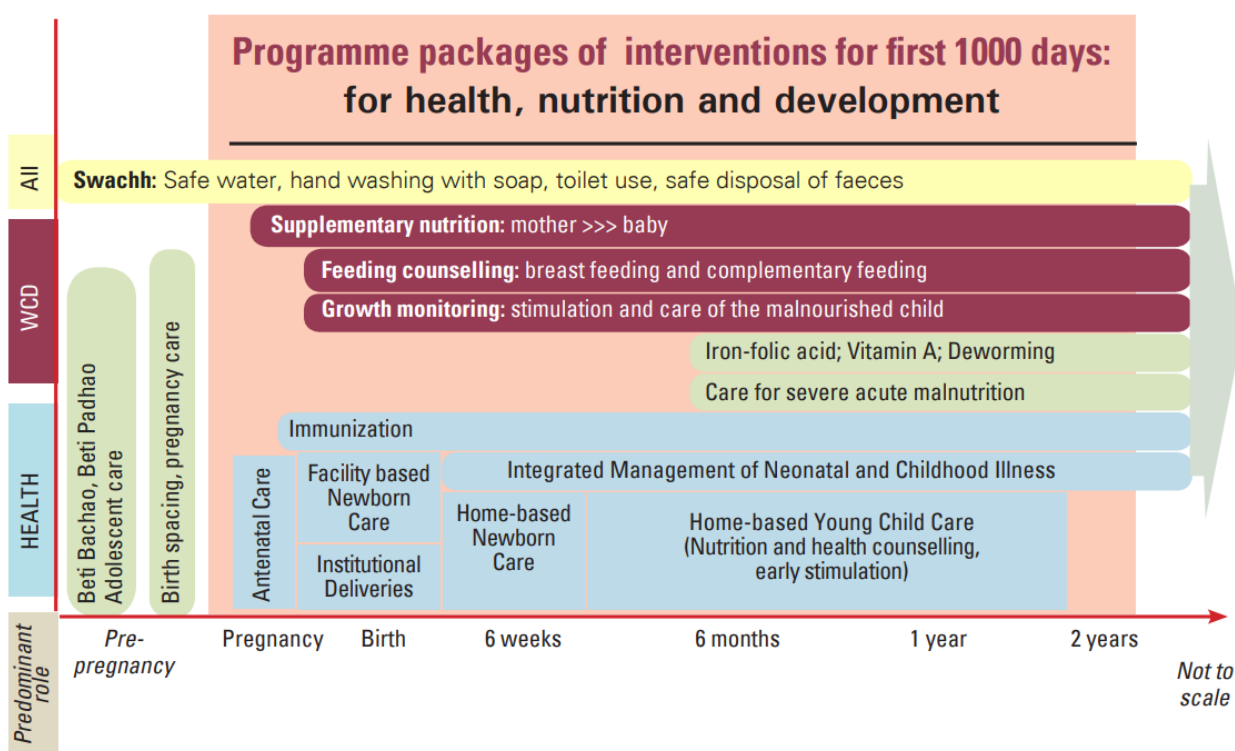
To accelerate improvements in nutrition, POSHAN Abhiyaan prioritises on:

- The first 1000 days – A critical window of opportunity:** The initial **1,000 days**, from conception to a child's second birthday, play a crucial role in ensuring optimal nutrition and healthcare for both mother and baby, laying the foundation for long-term health and development.

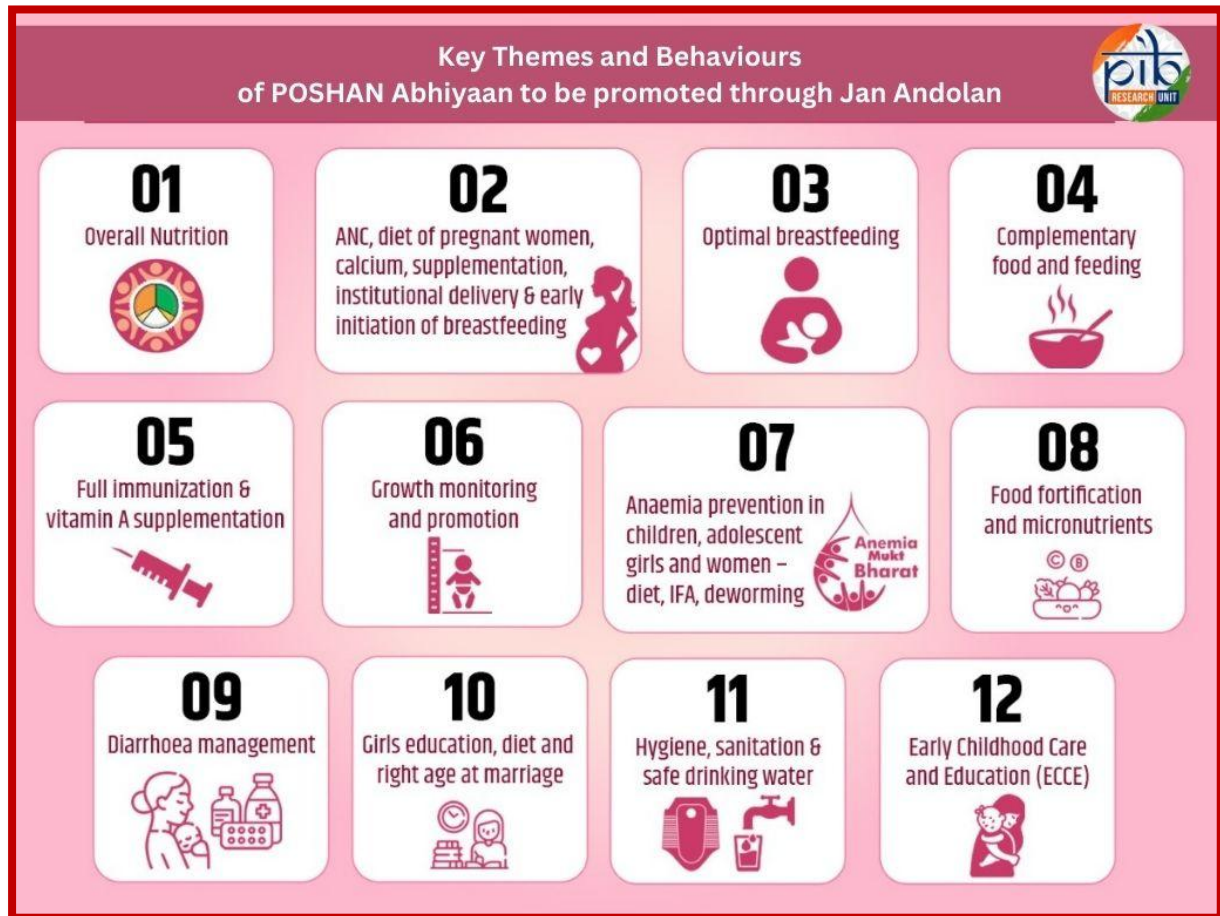


Ensuring Access to Essential Services: The Government of India is dedicated to expanding and enhancing the reach of critical, evidence-based interventions to improve nutrition and overall well-being. This is achieved through the integration of multiple schemes and programs focused on health, nutrition, and holistic development.

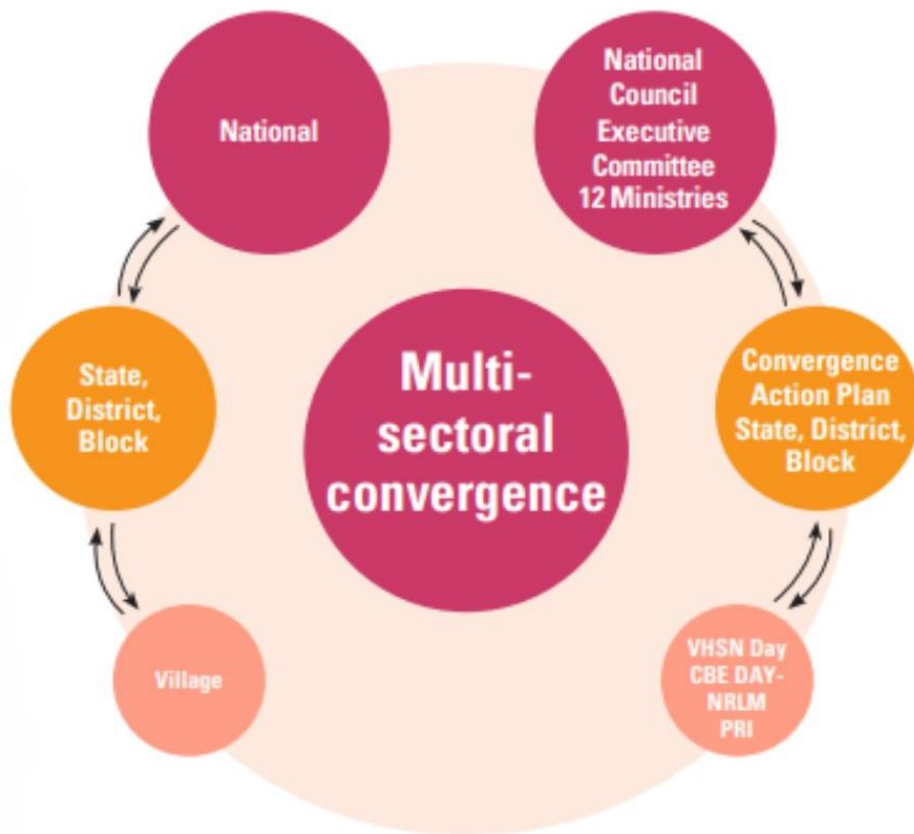
Critical and Effective Interventions



2. **Jan Andolan for behaviour change:** Recognizing that sustainable improvements in nutrition require collective action, the Prime Minister has called upon multiple stakeholders to drive a mass movement (Jan Andolan) for a malnutrition-free India.

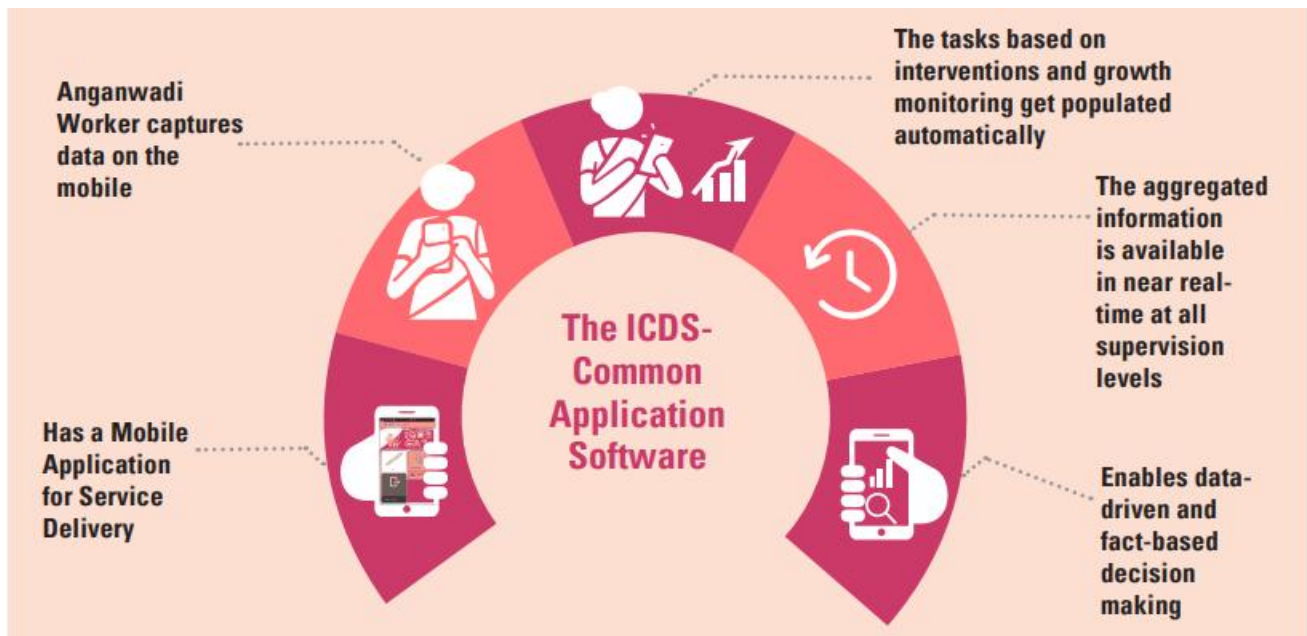


3. **Multi-sectoral convergence:** To facilitate effective multi-sectoral coordination, a National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under the Chairpersonship of Vice Chairman NITI Aayog has been established. The Council provides policy directions and reviews convergence between Ministries and programmes for nutrition on a quarterly basis.

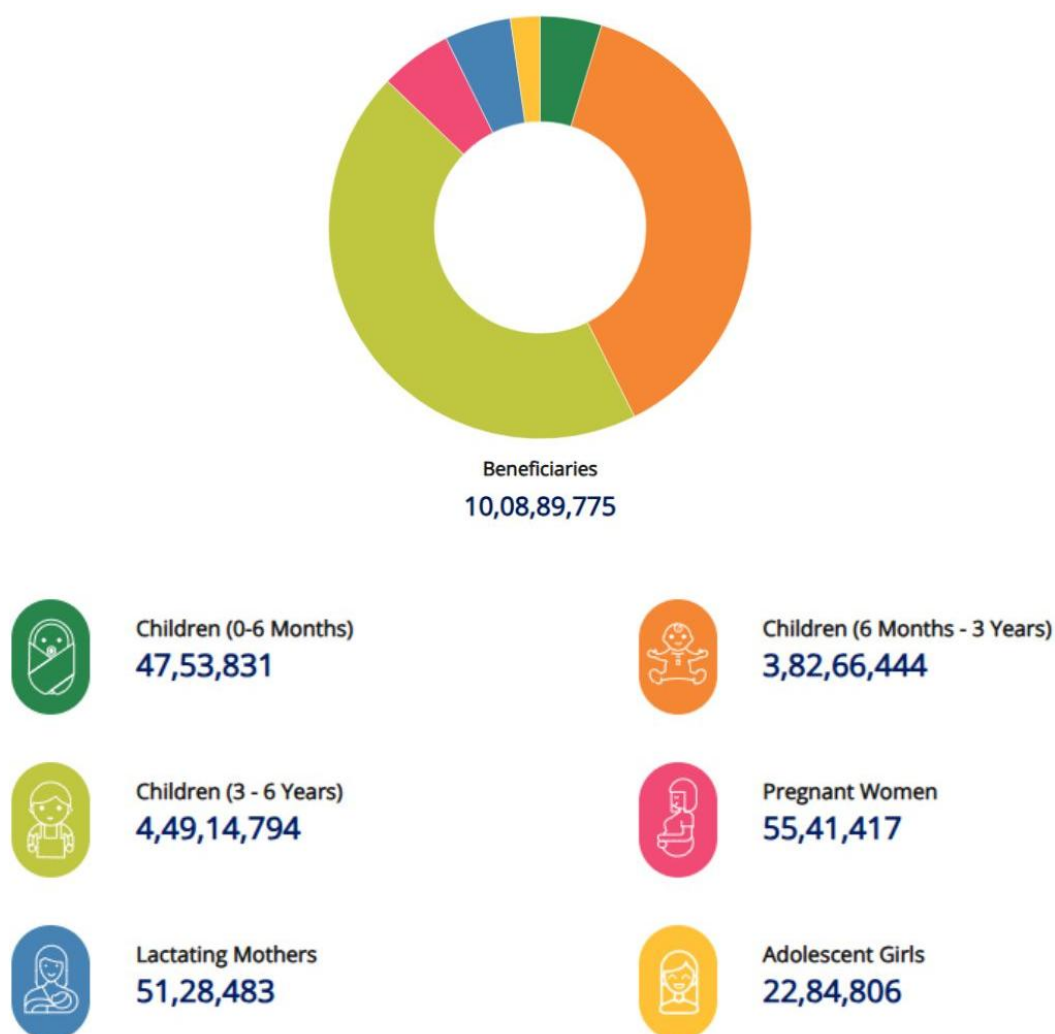


4. Service delivery through technology

POSHAN Abhiyaan delivers services through existing schemes like ICDS-CAS. This is a mobile application to strengthen delivery of Anganwadi Services. Anganwadi workers capture the data on their mobiles. This information is available at State and Ministry level on a real-time basis on a web-based dashboard. The information is used to monitor interventions and take fact-based decisions.



The Government of India approved “**Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0**” (also referred to as Mission Poshan 2.0) which is a strategic shift in mission mode to develop practices that nurture health, wellness, and immunity from malnutrition. With **14,00,117 Anganwadi Centers (AWCs)** operating across **36 States/UTs and 781 districts**, the mission aims to enhance the health, wellness, and immunity of children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. Supported by **13,30,966 Anganwadi Workers**, it ensures nutritional benefits reach **10,08,89,775** eligible beneficiaries. Infrastructure improvements include **6,77,843 AWCs** with their own buildings, **10,07,635** with functional toilets, and **12,43,472** with access to drinking water.



Conclusion

Poshan Abhiyaan represents a landmark initiative in India's fight against malnutrition. By integrating technology, cross-sectoral collaboration, and community-driven efforts, the program has made significant strides in improving maternal and child nutrition. The success of this mission depends on sustained efforts in service delivery, behavioural change, and policy innovation. With continued government support and active community participation, Poshan Abhiyaan is poised to create a healthier

and more nourished future for India's women and children.

References

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