



Terms of Reference

Relating to: Study on strengthening ICDS Services for addressing malnutrition among children from socially excluded groups in Uttar Pradesh

About PACS :

Poorest Areas Civil Society Programme [PACS] is an initiative of the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) in partnership with civil society. PACS helps socially excluded communities to claim their rights and entitlements more effectively. PACS focuses on socially excluded groups including scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, Muslims, women and people with disability. This seven-year programme (2009-2016) aims to support civil society organisations (CSOs) in promoting inclusive local, district and state policies, programmes and institutions. It focuses on areas of livelihood, education, health and nutrition in gender and rights perspectives. PACS programme is being implemented in 90 districts across 7 states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. PACS programme is managed by the IFIRST Consortium (Indian Forum for Inclusive Response and Social Transformation), the management consultants for the programme which is a consortium of five organizations led by Christian Aid with Caritas India, Financial Management Service Foundation (FMSF), Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS) and Access Development Services.

Objective of Assignment :

Malnutrition is the underlying cause for about 50% of the 2.1 million under-5 deaths in India each year .The prevalence of under nutrition is highest in Madhya Pradesh (55%), Bihar (54%), Orissa (54%), Uttar Pradesh (52%) and Rajasthan (51%), while Kerala (37%) and Tamil Nadu (27%) have lower rates *^[1]. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS III) 42 per cent of children in Uttar Pradesh in the age group of 0 to 5 years are underweight and 7 per cent are severely malnourished. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that despite controlled socio-economic factors, socially excluded communities are at a distinct disadvantage in relation to health and nutritional well-being owing to the prevalence of discriminatory practices.

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) measures child nutrition against three measures of physical growth, namely height-for-age (stunting), weight-for-height (wasting) and weight-for-age (underweight). Data from NFHS-3 (2004-05) indicates that children belonging to SC, ST OBCs and Muslims have relatively high levels of under nutrition according to all three measures. The contributing factors for malnutrition are household food insecurity, intra-household food distribution, imbalanced diet, inadequate preventative and curative health services, insufficient knowledge of proper care and infant feeding practices.

In India, ICDS is currently the most significant government intervention for reducing maternal and childhood malnutrition, and has emerged as the world's largest programme of its kind. The programme provides a well-integrated package of services through a network of community level Anganwadi centres (AWC). ICDS objectives are consistent with the Millennium Development Goals for reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. ICDS has the potential of not only improving the nutrition status of

children and women, but also to break the lifecycle of malnutrition by improving health and nutrition of pregnant women and adolescent girls.

PACS programme promotes non-discriminatory access to healthcare systems and services for socially excluded groups. As a part of its design and strategy PACS works on both the demand side and the supply side strengthening people's voices to seek accountability and better responsiveness as well as sensitizing the service providers to ensure efficient, effective and discrimination free delivery of services.

PACS intervention on health and nutrition is spread in 11 districts across 1511 villages of Uttar Pradesh. It works with partners to encourage the active and informed participation of socially excluded groups with block and district level functionaries to plan and monitor inclusive health programmes. The programme also supports communities to demand non-discriminatory access to nutrition programmes, including food security schemes, run by government agencies.

PACS has a wide range of experience in engaging with ICDS in terms of building community awareness on nutrition, capacity building of community based organizations and community monitoring of ICDS centres. The programme also focuses on sharing of experiences and learning across CSO partners to advocate the agenda of malnutrition. The field experiences of PACS and its partners have brought to light that there is ample scope of strengthening the ICDS centres in terms of improving service delivery, building infrastructure, ensuring basic facilities and monitoring quality of services through community participation. PACS experience has established that bringing together different stakeholders on a common platform has proved to be an effective strategy to address the issue of malnutrition at local level.

The study is an attempt to understand the role of ICDS services in addressing the issue of child nutrition in Uttar Pradesh with special focus on children belonging to socially excluded groups. The study is expected to give specific recommendations for strengthening the ICDS services especially the ICDS centres in order to address malnutrition among children from socially excluded groups.

The study will also explore possible areas wherein a broader collective strategy can be formulated highlighting the role of different stakeholders including institutions like Panchayats, different departments, State Nutrition Mission etc. in addressing issues of malnutrition in the state.

Objective of Assignment

The key objectives of the assignment are as follows:

- To assess the status of implementation of ICDS services particularly in access, availability and quality of services focusing on children belonging to SEGs in PACS intervention districts in the state of Uttar Pradesh (List attached as Annexure 1 of this ToR).
- To recommend viable approaches and strategies involving different stakeholders, to strengthen the delivery of services by ICDS for addressing malnutrition among children from socially excluded groups.

[1] Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS III)

Scope of Work :

- Formal interaction with the PACS team and concerned CSOs working on nutrition theme in the state to understand the ground situation.
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- Finalisation of the content framework including study design and methodology, chapterisation and content layout of the end report.
- The consultant will be responsible for data collection using primary and secondary sources which would include field visits, community interactions, and telephonic discussions with CSO partners as per the agreed methodology.
- Analysis of data - including data cleaning, monitoring and verification.
- A formal presentation of the draft study report will be made to the PACS team for soliciting suggestions and inputs.
- Finalisation of the study report after incorporation of the inputs from the PACS team.
- Support in dissemination of study report with multiple stakeholders at the state level.

Timeframe :

The timeline for completion of the assignment is three months from the date of commissioning of the study.

Eligibility criteria for the consultant :

- The consultant should have an academic bent of mind with a keen interest in carrying out research on issues in the social sector, preferably with emphasis on nutrition & health rights dimensions. It is also desirable that he/she should have knowledge of research methodology.
- A proven track record in ensuring preparation of different study, research and other documents on various developmental issues.
- A minimum of five years of experience of various documentation activities for various social development programmes and organizations.
- Excellent language proficiency in English and Hindi.

Reporting & Coordination :

The consultant will report to Director PACS or any person designated for the task on all deliverables at agreed timelines.

Key Deliverables

1	Finalisation of the content framework, chapterisation, study design, and content layout of the end report as per the details given in scope of work of this ToR
2	Final study plan with timeline including field visit, data analysis etc.

3	Draft study report as per the agreed study design with PACS.
4	Presentation and discussions with PACS team to solicit inputs for finalisation of the study
5	Final report in print ready version (English language) incorporating suggestions and inputs made by the PACS team.
6	Participation in the dissemination workshop at state level