



Status of women and child welfare in Telangana – An observation of field level activities - A study

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.66856/ijcmr.2026.12.3.12231>

Abstract

Women and child are an important component of the Telangana state. They form an integral part of the economic development and healthy economy. The present study is based on onsite discussions with the officials and workers engaged in development of status women and children and the relevant programmes for their development both at state as well as village / mandal level. Field level primary and secondary data have been collected from state working officials of Telangana state. The study envisages that the women and children are utilising the opportunities provided by different programmes such as Saksham Anganwadi, Asha, Mission Vatsalya, and Mission Shakti.

The overall observation is that these programmes are contributing to the welfare and development of Women and Child to the welfare and development of child to a greater extent and there is certainly a need to continue their programmes through these schemes and programmes as there is proper information to be addressed to the new-born baby child to younger girls. The district-level data shows that due to not understanding of the programmes as rural women are prevented from attending the time-based schemes only due to either they are engaged in agricultural labour work or they are no interested to get the benefits out of these programmes. Hence, there is a need to provide knowledge and information hubs both at state and village-level and also at district level. The study suggests certain measures to strengthen Women and Child welfare measures are in need.

Keywords: Telangana, women and child welfare, economic development, women empowerment, child development, Saksham Anganwadi

Introduction

The Women and Child department Government of Telangana has been undertaking various schemes i.e., for pregnant lactating mother and children below the age of 6 years and adolescent girls old-age women adult women. They are provided with free medicines. For the 6 months children, Balamrutham (Cerelac) would be given as food intake and free meals is given as food for the lunch.

Rhymes, Pedda-Balashiksha which are made to educate to children of below 3-6 years of age at pre-school stage along with food is provided free and mal-nourished children are provided honey instead of milk. This will result in nourishing weak genes replaced with healthy and hygiene children. Moderately malnourished children, extra care is being taken.

Every day during 9 am to 4 pm Anganwadees are linked with the motive of providing free food available to women and kids at pre schooling.

Mission Vatsalya aims at providing food with proteins to boys and girls and Covid Orphans - and these programmes are felt satisfactorily. Measures are being taken to abandon on child abuse, bonded labour, child marriages, through courts Rescue and court justice is done in criminal incidents.

CWC Child Welfare Committee

- Child care institutions determine the child to join CCI.
- 54 –orphan and rehabilitation centres are established and being provided police protection.

Review of Literature

Methodology of Research

Primary sources and secondary sources are employed, participant observation method. Oral enquiries have been undertaken to tap the information for conducting this study.

Main offices at Hyderabad and District collectorates have been consulted to get proper understanding in Mahabubnagar District. District Welfare Office, at district level.

Saksham Anganwadi

Pregnant lactating women and child below the age of 6 years. They are provided with nutritious food for pre-school children belongs to below 6 years of age provided on daily basis at 1 PM to 4PM. Milk, eggs, green vegetables, Dal are provided to children between 3 Kg and above. Weighted with help of Anganwadee teachers. They help women get normal delivery. Asha scheme, being undertaken by Health department. The total number of 2,500 women are being served under District Collectors purview, Women and Child Welfare department.

Mission Shakti

This scheme is being implemented for helping girls aged 18 years and above are focussed ad due to obstacles of love and compassion between wife and husband, which is often disguised by criminal incidents and courts are being established and maintained through Sakhi centres. Legal protection for the welfare of women is provided.

DHEW District Hub for employment of women, Mahila-sadhikaartha centre awareness programmes are being organised and implemented through Anganwadees, community health centres ward leadership self-help groups orientation programmes and camps organised by the NGOs towards women and child development in rural areas.

Background and Context of the Study:

Women and children constitute important indicators of social and human development, and their welfare is closely

associated with health, nutrition, education, social security and access to public services. In India, significant progress has been achieved in several areas, but women and children continue to face challenges related to malnutrition, anaemia, gender inequality, child marriage, violence, educational disadvantage and inadequate access to quality services (UNICEF India, 2023; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare [MoHFW], 2021). The situation requires a comprehensive approach in which government programmes, local institutions and community-level agencies work together to improve the quality of life of vulnerable groups. The Government of India has strengthened this approach through programmes addressing nutrition, women's safety and empowerment, and child protection under Mission Saksham Anganwadi & POSHAN 2.0, Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya (Ministry of Women and Child Development [MWCD], 2026). UNICEF also emphasizes that investment in women's nutrition, education and empowerment has an important inter-generational effect because the health and nutritional condition of mothers directly influences the well-being and development of children (UNICEF India, 2026).

Telangana has undertaken several field-level interventions for improving the welfare of women and children through Anganwadi centres, nutrition services, health programmes, education initiatives, sanitation measures and child-

protection mechanisms. However, available evidence indicates that the State continues to experience a significant nutrition burden involving undernutrition, overweight / obesity and anaemia among women and children (UNICEF India, 2026). NFHS-5 data reported that 57.6 per cent of women aged 15–49 years and 70.0 per cent of children aged 6–59 months in Telangana were affected by anaemia, demonstrating the continuing importance of nutrition and health interventions (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Telangana, 2022; MoHFW, 2021). Telangana also faces challenges concerning early childhood education, learning outcomes, child labour and child protection, particularly among vulnerable communities (UNICEF India, 2026). Therefore, field-level observation is useful for understanding not merely the existence of government schemes but also their actual implementation, accessibility and impact on women and children. The present study attempts to examine these dimensions and to identify the strengths, gaps and possibilities for improving women and child welfare programmes in Telangana.

One particular useful Telangana statistic is that the Telangana at a Glance 2023 reports NFHS-5 indicators including 60.7% anaemia among children aged 6–59 months, 48.2% among pregnant women, and 56.6% among women aged 15–49 years.

Table 1: ICDS Structure Nagarkurnool District Field Level

S. No.	Particulars	Details
1.	District Nodal Officer	District Welfare Officer under chairmanship of District Collector
2.	Total ICDS Project (Erstwhile Block model)	5 Projects
3.	Names of Projects	1. Achampet 2. Balmoor 3. Kollapur 4. Kalwakurthy 5. Nagarkurnool
4.	Project Head Child Development Project Officer	CDPO-1
5.	Number of Mandals covered per project	3 to 4 mandals
6.	Supervisors per project	5 to 10 supervisors per project
7.	Norms	1 supervisor for 25 Anganwadi centres

Table 2: Anganwadi centres – Nagarkurnool

S. No.	Type of Anganwadi centre	Sanctioned Number
1.	Main Anganwadi centre	908
2.	Mini Anganwadi centres	223
3.	Total Anganwadi centres (AWCs)	1,131
4.	Working Hours	9: AM to 4: 00 PM

Table 3: Other field Level structures in Nagarkurnool

S. No.	Field Level centre/scheme	Function
1.	Sakhi – one stop crises centre	For women in distress
2.	Childrens Home	Child Protection
3.	District Hub for women Empowerment	Under Mission Shakti
4.	SHE Teams	Prevention of Harassment
5.	Integrated Child Protection Scheme	ICPS
6.	Indira Mahila Shakti 2025	SHG- Solar Plants, Petrol, Pumps, Buses, Interest- Free Loans.

Participant Observation

Field observation in Nagarkurnool district indicates that 1,131 Anganwadee centres under 5 ICDS projects function

as first point of contact for women and child welfare, with daily monitoring through Poshan Tracker and Arogya Lakshmi App. The shift from Take Home Ration to spot

feeding of one full-meal has ensured that the targeted nutrition is consumed by mother herself not shared by the family members as verified during lunch hour inspection at AWCs. In other case mother and children were not interested in consuming the provided food because of either they are not hungry or not interested in taking the provided food.

Suggestions

1. Government departments should strengthen the field-level implementation of welfare schemes for women and children, particularly in rural and economically weaker communities.
2. Greater awareness should be created among women regarding education, health, nutrition, employment opportunities, legal rights, and available welfare programmes.
3. Anganwadi centres, schools, health centres, and local self-government institutions should work together to improve child nutrition, education, healthcare, and protection.
4. Skill development, self-help groups, and livelihood programmes should be further strengthened to promote women's economic independence and participation in local development.
5. Regular field-level monitoring and community participation should be encouraged to identify gaps in implementation and ensure that benefits reach the deserving women and children of Nagarkurnool district.

Conclusion

The field-level study indicates that the status of women and children in Nagarkurnool district is closely linked with education, health, nutrition, employment, and social awareness.

Although several government welfare programmes have contributed to improving their conditions, gaps in awareness, access, and implementation continue to exist in some rural areas.

Empowering women through education, employment, skills, and effective participation in local institutions can significantly improve the well-being of families and communities.

Similarly, sustained attention to child nutrition, education, healthcare, and protection is essential for developing healthy and productive future generations.

Therefore, coordinated efforts by government agencies, local institutions, voluntary organisations, and communities are necessary for achieving inclusive and sustainable women and child welfare in Nagarkurnool district.

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