

**No. O-15012/26/2024-Research**  
**Government of India**  
**NITI Aayog**  
**(Research & Networking Division)**

Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001  
Dated the 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Subject: Request/Invitation for Expression of Interest (REoI) for Research Projects -reg.**

1. NITI Aayog hereby requests/invites expressions of Interest (EoI) for conducting research/study from institutions/organisations of repute (including university/deemed university) for undertaking a Research Study on “**Reimagining Integrated Child Development Services**”. The details of the studies are placed as **Annexure I** to this Request for Expressions of Interest (REoI). The detailed Research Scheme of NITI Aayog-2024 (RSNA-2024) guidelines and its amendments, if any: read with this REoI will govern the process and may be seen at NITI Aayog’s website at <http://www.niti.gov.in/guidelines>.
2. All the institutions/organisations are requested to go through the Guidelines of the **Research Scheme of NITI Aayog 2024 (Guidelines/RSNA-2024)** before responding to this public notice, especially to satisfy themselves that they fulfill all the eligibility criteria for availing of grant under the said scheme and also that they can conduct the research study project as per the Guidelines.
3. No Applicant or its Associate shall submit more than one Application for the Consultancy. An Applicant applying individually or as an Associate or as part of consortium shall not be entitled to submit another application either individually or as a member of any consortium, as the case may be. Applicants are advised to provide sufficient details in their applications to allow for an informed and fair evaluation/review.
4. The hard copy of EoI as per the format prescribed at **Annexure- II** along with the undertaking as per the **Annexure -III** must be submitted by hand or by Registered post to Sh. Sanchit Jindal, ASO (R&N) **Room No 435**, NITI Aayog, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001 by the interested applicants. The EoI must be sent in envelopes superscribed with the words “EoI on (name of the topic as mentioned in the corresponding Annexure)” and the same must reach the NITI Aayog within 21 days of the notified date of Public Notice i.e before 4:00 PM of 23-12-2024. EoI through E mail may be sent at address [jindal.sanchit@gov.in](mailto:jindal.sanchit@gov.in).
5. For any query in this regard, the Sh. Sanchit Jindal, ASO (R&N) may please be contacted over email [jindal.sanchit@gov.in](mailto:jindal.sanchit@gov.in)



**(Dr Banusri Velpandian)**  
Sr. Specialist, Law (R&N)

## **Research study: Reimagining Integrated Child Development Services**

### **1. Background**

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is one of the world's largest programs for early childhood care and development. The objectives of the ICDS scheme are:

- i) Improve the nutritional and health status of children (age group 0-6years);
- ii) Lay the foundation for the psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- iii) To reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;
- iv) Achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- v) Enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

Aligned with the objectives, the ICDS is designed to deliver six important services to children (0-6 years), pregnant women and lactating mothers. These services are the following:

- i) Supplementary nutrition
- ii) Pre-school non-formal education
- iii) Nutrition and health education
- iv) Immunization
- v) Health check-ups
- vi) Referral services.

### **2. Poshan Abhiyaan**

The launch of the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition (POSHAN Abhiyaan) in 2018 placed a renewed emphasis on child nutrition. POSHAN Abhiyaan specifically targets to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anemia and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum, respectively.

### **3. Poshan 2.0 and Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi**

To further address the persistent challenges affecting under-nutrition, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0. The main focus of Poshan 2.0 is on maternal nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, treatment of Moderately Acute Malnutrition/ Severely Acute Malnutrition (MAM/SAM) and wellness through AYUSH. It rests on the pillars of Convergence, Governance, and Capacity-building, Community Outreach (*Jan Andolan*) and Innovations related to nutritional support, ICT interventions, media advocacy and research. Under Saksham Anganwadi, 2 lakh Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) (40,000 AWCs per year) across the country are being upgraded for improved nutrition delivery and early childhood care and education for the development of children under six years of age<sup>[1]</sup>. MoWCD has also launched *Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi* for holistic development of children under six years which integrates education and cognitive development with health and nutrition. Ministry

recently released the National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education for Children from Three to Six Years (*Aadharshila*) and a National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for Children from Birth to Three Years (*Navchetna*).

#### **4. Palna- Anganwadi cum creches**

Erstwhile National Creche Scheme has been reorganized and renamed as *Palna Scheme* under the sub-scheme '*Samarthya*' of 'Mission Shakti'. Under Palna Scheme, the provision of Anganwadi cum Creches has been introduced by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Further, the crèches that were running under the erstwhile National Creche Scheme have been included as Stand Alone Creches.

#### **5. Reimagining ICDS for the Future**

ICDS boasts 48 years of operations, with its coverage almost universalized to the target of 14 lakh anganwadi centres. As per the MoWCD Dashboard, 13,96,864 (99.8%) out of 14 lakhs are operational. Out of this, 10,40,168 anganwadi centres are open for 21 days. It has been one of the most critical public programmes, especially in reaching out to the vulnerable sections of the population.

The findings of NFHS-5 (2019-21) show a significant positive trend in maternal- child health services. Close to 70% of women receive ante-natal checkups in the first trimester, and 60% have had at least four ante-natal checkups. Consumption of IFA tablets for 100 days by pregnant women has increased from 30% to 44%. Institutional delivery has reached close to 90%. Immunization among children has increased to 77%. These have significantly contributed to us being in the right direction to achieve the SDG 2030 target for maternal mortality. India has also achieved landmark achievements in the further reduction of child mortality rates. With the neo-natal mortality at 20 per 1000 live births, infant mortality rate at 28 per 1000 live births and under-5 mortality at 32 per 1000 live births, India is poised to meet SDG 2030 targets for child mortality (neo-natal mortality at 12 per 1000 births and under-5 mortality at 25 per 1000 births).

Substantial achievements have been registered in underlying causes of malnutrition. For instance, there has been a marked improvement in sanitation facilities, clean fuel for cooking, and households covered under health insurance. Women empowerment indicators also have shown significant improvements, indirectly contributing to positive nutrition outcomes/processes. About 70% of the women are literate, and 40% have had at least ten years of schooling. Child marriage has declined to 23%. They have greater access to clean cooking fuel, mobile phones and internet. Close to 60% of women have access to any modern family planning methods, contributing to lower fertility levels.

As we move ahead, there is a compelling need to reimagine the ICDS and system to contextualize it to the changing needs and times in the future. In this context, a study on reimagining the ICDS is proposed to meet the futuristic needs. The study aims to identify the emerging challenges and opportunities, evolving demographic trends, changing needs and aspirations of the society. In this context, the study should also identify the gaps in the ICDS programme and recommend a way forward to ensure that ICDS provides high- quality, age and culture-appropriate services by efficient frontline workers.

## 6. Terms of Reference

The expected outcome of the study will be a Report, indicative ToRs for which are placed below:

- i. Literature review of all the existing studies and evaluations conducted on ICDS and identify the gaps highlighted.
- ii. Relooking at the gamut of services presently being provided under ICDS and suggesting additionalities or modifications based on future requirements as well as incorporating digital/ technological/ AI applications.
- iii. Reorienting services in the context of growing urbanization.
- iv. Suggesting innovative, cost-effective, and age-appropriate strategies to encourage holistic cognitive development of children.
- v. Enhanced focus on women-led development. Suggesting different models to ensure an enabling environment to increase women's participation in the workforce.
- vi. Strategies to improve community awareness, participation and ownership of the programme. Implementation roadmap to achieve the strategies/ recommendations provided.
- vii. Identifying international and national best practices in this area.
- viii. Any other miscellaneous analysis which will contribute to fulfil the objectives of the task.
- ix. Based on all of the above, propose alternative models for a revamped, reimagined ICDS 2.0, which meets the country's long- term aspirations in this sector.

## 7. Conditions for Minimum Eligibility of Applicants.

To be eligible for evaluation of its Proposal, the applicant shall fulfil the following:

- A. **Technical Capacity:** The Applicant must be a legal entity as per Applicable Laws (which would include, inter-alia, academic institutions/profit/non-profit organisation). The Applicant shall have, **over the past 5 (five) years preceding the Proposal Due Date (PDD), undertaken a minimum of 3 (three) Eligible Assignments.** The Applicant should not have been debarred or blacklisted by the Central Government, any State Government, a Statutory Authority, or a Public- Sector Undertaking, from participating in any consulting assignment.
- B. **Financial Capacity:** The Applicant shall have a minimum turnover of **Rs. 25 lakh per annum** during each of the 3 (three) financial years FY 2023-24, FY 2022-23 and FY 2021-22. For avoidance of doubt, turnover hereunder refers to the total revenue of the applicant.
- C. **Availability of Key Personnel:** The Applicant shall offer and make available all Key Personnel requirements including Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader, Senior Researcher, Junior Researcher, Content Editor, etc.

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[1] As per MoWCD, during 2022-23, 41,192 AWCs have been identified in aspirational districts for upgradation as *Saksham Anganwadis* with better infrastructure including LED screens, water purifier/installation of RO machines, smart learning and audio-visual aids, child-friendly learning equipment and internet/Wi-Fi connectivity through Bharat-net wherever feasible. For the construction of AWC buildings across the country under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in convergence with Anganwadi Services (now known *Saksham Anganwadi* and POSHAN 2.0 Scheme), construction cost has been revised from Rs.7 lakh to Rs.12 lakh per unit under the revised Scheme – Poshan 2.0. Under the Swachhta Action Plan, Rs.10,000 per AWC was provided for drinking water

facilities in and Rs.12,000 per AWC for toilet facilities, which has now been revised to Rs.17,000 per AWC and Rs.36,000 per AWC respectively. Around 11 lakh Anganwadi workers have smartphones to feed data online on Poshan Tracker mobile application.

### Format of Expression of Interest (EoI)

Respondents Ref No.:

Date:

Name-

Designation-

----- Vertical,

NITI Aayog,

Sansad Marg, New Delhi

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: RESPONSE TO – EOI FOR \_\_\_\_\_

We, the undersigned, offer the following information in response to the Expression of Interest sought by you vide your Notification No. \_\_\_\_\_, dated \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Scope of work and organisation

- (i) The broad scope of work or service (briefly in about 100 words -Remember to tailor the content to the specific project or opportunity you're expressing interest in.)
- (ii) Type of Inputs to expected be provided by NITI Aayog on the subject
- (iii) Eligibility of the Applicant(s) for the EoI/study (Lead Applicant as applicable):

Type of organisation	Address of Organisation	Registration details	Single or Joint or collaboration (Name of all organisations)	Whether blacklisted by Govt of India/ State Govt/any Other department

#### 2. Required Documents:

- (i) Copy of Registration Certificate of the Institution/Organisation **OR** Articles of Association {Copy of the Constitution/MOA (Memorandum of Association) of the Institute/ Any letter issued by UGC if University }
- (ii) Registration number (Copy) in NGO-Portal “Darpan” of NITI Aayog, if applicable.
- (iii) Photo copy of PAN card of the organisation.

**3. Undertaking:** As per **Annexure – III** [To be given separately on A4 size letter head of the Applicant/ Lead Applicant)

#### 4. Information of PI and Organisation

Details of Bidder	
1.	Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
2.	Address of PI
3.	Status of the Organisation (Public Ltd./ Pvt. Ltd./ NGO/ Society/Trust/ University/ Autonomous Body/ Deemed University)
4.	Status as per Registration certificate/ Act

5.	Name and Designation of the contact person:	
	Telephone No. (with STD code)	
	Mobile Number	
	Email of the Contact/ key person	
	Fax No. (with STD code)	
	Website:	
6.	Particulars of associate applicants/ JV members/ consortium members/ sub-contractors/collaborators	

- A. We have examined and have no reservations to the EoI Document including the self-declaration or any addendum that may be issued by NITI Aayog.
- B. We are duly authorized to represent and act on behalf of all collaborating applicants, which shall include jointly and severally / JV/ consortium/ sub-contractors as applicable.
- C. Our response is valid till \_\_\_\_\_ (Minimum validity is of three months from the submission deadline)

Yours sincerely,

(Sign)

NAME OF THE ENTITY

NAME OF THE AUTHORIZED PERSON

DESIGNATION

NATURE OF AUTHORISATION- BOARD RESOLUTION/LETTER OF AUTHORITY/ MOA/OM/POA  
DATE

OFFICE SEAL/STAMP

**SELF-DECLARATION FORM (to be printed on the applicants letter head)**

.....hereby declares to NITI Aayog that:

1. In the last three years, we, the lead applicant or any of our Associates / partners/ consortium members have neither failed to perform on any contract, as evidenced by imposition of a penalty by an arbitral or judicial authority or a judicial pronouncement or arbitration award against the Applicant, nor been expelled from any project or contract by any public authority nor have had any contract terminated by any public authority for breach on our part.
2. We as Respondent(s) do not have any Conflict of Interest in accordance with the scope of the EOI in terms of projects or studies or assignments either ongoing or completed: having competing interests or constituting the same key personnel, during the preceding 3 (three) years as on the deadline of EoI submission.
3. We have not directly or indirectly or through an agent engaged or indulged in any corrupt practice, fraudulent practice, coercive practice, undesirable practice or restrictive practice, in respect of any tender or request for proposal or convicted by a Court of Law or indicted or adverse orders passed by a regulatory authority which would cast a doubt on our ability to undertake the Consultancy for the Project.
4. In regard to matters relating to security and integrity of the country, we have not been charge-sheeted by any agency of the Government or convicted by a Court of Law for any offence committed by us or by any of our Associates.
5. We are solvent and **are not** having our management affairs administered by the Courts or IBC. We are in the position to continue being sustainable in connection to performance of the obligations for this Consultancy procurement action.
6. We shall abide by all the conditions of the REoI and the terms in respect of any matter arising out of the detailed RFP Document if to be submitted on being shortlisted or concerning or relating to the Selection Process including the award of Consultancy.

Yours sincerely,

(Sign)

NAME OF THE ENTITY

NAME OF THE AUTHORIZED PERSON

DESIGNATION

NATURE OF AUTHORISATION- BOARD RESOLUTION/LETTER OF AUTHORITY/ MOA/OM/POA

DATE

OFFICE SEAL/STAMP