

Analysis of Social Sector Programme on National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

6.1 Introduction

Our country is essentially, a welfare state committed to the welfare and development of its people in general and vulnerable sections in particular. The Preamble, Directive Principle of State Policy, Fundamental Rights etc. stands testimony to the commitment of the State to its people. Welfare programme in the beginning were directed to provide basic curative and rehabilitative services. However, over the years the approach has changed from curative to welfare and currently they are oriented to providing social justice and empowerment to the disadvantaged and marginalised section of the society viz. the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Minorities, disabled aged persons, street children etc. Thus, a package was evolved by the name of National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) in order to provide coverage to this disadvantaged section of the society. It was launched on August 15, 1995. It is considered a significant step towards fulfilling the commitment made in the constitution through the enunciation of a national policy for social assistance benefits to poor households in case of old age, death of primary bread winner and maternity (Ninth Five Year Plan 1997-2002).

The NSAP provides opportunities for linking social assistance package to schemes for poverty alleviation and provision basic minimum services. Like, the old age pension could be linked to medical care and other benefits aimed at the aged beneficiaries. The integrated rural development programme or Jawahar Rojgar Yojana assistance could also be provided, in addition to the family benefits, for the families of poor households, who suffer the loss of primary breadwinners. Maternity assistance could be linked to other programmes of maternal and childcare.

The programme, initially had three components viz. (a) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS); (b) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS); and (c) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBF). Later, two other components namely (d) National Widow Pension Scheme (NWPS); and (e) National Handicapped Monthly Aid (NHMA), were also added to it. These schemes, primarily, target the people below the poverty line. We have covered the performance and the level of involvement of beneficiaries as well as functionaries.

6.1.2 National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)

Under the scheme, old age pension of Rs. 125 per month is provided to persons of 65 years age and above, who are destitute and earn monthly income of Rs. 225 or less. The programme is sponsored by the Social Welfare Department and only those persons qualify for pension who are recommended by the Gram Pradhan and certified by the Lekhpal. Finally, an applicant becomes entitled to pension when his/her application is approved by the Deputy District Collector. The total amount disbursed, as pension, to the beneficiary is Rs. 1500/- in a year in two half yearly installments.

Profile of Beneficiaries

The total number of beneficiaries selected were thirty, of which 10 belonged to Varanasi and the remaining 20 to Saharanpur district. The age wise distribution of beneficiaries shows that over 70 percent in Varanasi district and about 52 percent in Saharanpur District were between the age group of 60 to 69 years and the remaining 30 percent in Varanasi and over 48 percent in Saharanpur were of over 70 years age. A majority of the beneficiaries were, primarily from SC or OBC group in both sample districts with general castes proportion being very low.

Performance of Programme

The perusal of the selection of beneficiaries shows that the programme functionaries have by and large followed selection pattern norms as the

representation of the deprived section in the sample was large. However, low awareness among the beneficiaries, regarding their selection, cast an aspersion on the fairness and genuineness of the selection process. A detail analysis of the methodology of selection reveals that the selection of some of the beneficiaries was decided by his or her proximity and connection with the influential groups, or by bringing the programme functionaries. These incidences appeared to be more pronounced in Saharanpur district. The basis of selection under the scheme is that person's income should be less than Rs. 225/- per month, which is too low for a developed district like Saharanpur. Since the scheme has limited slots, the focus group households were prepared to resort to unethical means to gain beneficiary status, depriving some other genuine focus group of households. All these development also lowered the performance of the programme to some extent.

In majority of the cases of both sample districts, the disbursement of pension was taking place on six monthly installment basis. However, in about 40 percent cases in Varanasi, the frequency of distribution of pension was uncertain. Likewise, almost half of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and Saharanpur were facing no difficulty in receiving the pension amount. But in Varanasi about 30 percent and a small fraction of beneficiaries in Saharanpur were facing uncertainty regarding their pension payment. Further, over 10 percent in Varanasi and over 21 percent in Saharanpur had to commute, too often to concern departments, thereby causing great deal of hardships to them. It was also revealed, to the study team, that about 13 percent of beneficiaries in Saharanpur had 'monetarily' obliged programme functionaries. All this, supplemented with huge backlog of non-beneficiaries, substantiates our point that the programme has been performing well, only on paper. On ground level, however, it has yet to make a genuine start and perform as per norms.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The involvement of beneficiaries in the programme cannot be called to be satisfactory because the selection process was still too much beaurucratic. A genuine beneficiaries finds it too encombersome and tiring because it involved many functionaries from different department to finalize the selection and to make payment. The process also encouraged malpractice, as was observed earlier, in the performance of programme. The target based approach for the programme was also depriving a sizeable proportion of beneficiaries from participating in the programme. Lack of awareness, on the part of focus group of households, also many times deprived the genuine beneficiaries from participating and encouraged room for 'non-genuine' beneficiaries.

Involvement of Functionaries

The performance of the programme could improve substantially if the involvement of functionaries could be of high level. The study of performance of programme and perception of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries shows that the programme functionaries were only contended with following the norms superficially. Their ritualistic approach, perhaps on account of their heavy workload, has encouraged many unscrupulous elements to take advantage of the situation. The incidences of dead beneficiaries, still receiving the pensions reflect both corruption and total apathy towards the programme by the programme functionaries. The lack of coordination between various departments, involved in the programme, has also contributed to their poor involvement, as was manifested when the information regarding many components could not be obtained. All this clearly projects the low level of involvement of functionaries (Table - 6.1, Annexure 6.1a)

Table – 6.1
Profile of Beneficiaries in National Old Age Pension Scheme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender status				
Male	2	20.0	9	39.1
Female	8	80.0	14	60.9
Age status				
60 – 69 years	7	70.0	12	52.2
70 years and above	3	30.0	11	47.8
Caste status				
SC	4	40.0	18	78.3
OBC	5	50.0	2	8.7
General	1	10.0	3	13.0
Whether other candidates also made effort for pension at the time of selection				
Yes	4	40.0	18.	78.3
No	1	10.0	1	4.3
Do not know	5	50.0	4	17.4
If they were not benefited, what was the reaction?				
Nobody was in favour	2	20.0	4	17.4
Not give bribe	-	-	4	17.4
Dominant personality benefited their own candidates	-	-	5	21.7
Others	2	20.0	4	17.4
Do you know the selection process was not held as priority basis				
Yes	3	30.0	1	4.3
No	3	30.0	14	60.9
Do not know	4	40.0	8	34.8
If yes the reason for not selection				
Not given bribe	1	10.0	1	4.3
Opposed by dominant persons	1	10.0	-	-
Others	1	10.0	-	-
From which medium did you have information about this programme				
Gram pradhan	9	90.0	19	82.6
Panchayat members	-	-	3	13.0
Neighbourer	1	10.0	-	-
Relative	-	-	1	4.3
What was the time interval of receiving the amount of pension				
After three month	-	-	1	4.3
After six month	6	60.0	18	78.3
After 12 month	-	-	4	17.4
Uncertain	4	40.0	-	-
What was problem faced by you in receiving the pension				
No difficulty	5	50.0	14	60.9
Untimely payment	3	30.0	1	4.3
Amount should be increased	1	10.0	-	-
More frequency in up and down	1	10.0	5	21.7
Provide commission at the time of receiving amount	-	-	3	13.0
Total	10	100.0	23	100.0

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>What did you do before receiving pension</i>				
Agriculture	1	10.0	-	-
Agriculture labour	8	80.0	16	69.6
Wages	-	-	1	4.3
Housewife	-	-	4	17.4
No work (nothing)	1	10.0	2	8.7
<i>What were you doing at present</i>				
Agriculture	1	10.0	-	-
Agriculture labour	3	30.0	8	34.8
Wages	-	-	1	4.3
Housewife	-	-	5	21.7
No work (nothing)	6	60.0	9	39.1
<i>Suggestions about programme success</i>				
Benefited to pensioners from other programme	2	20.0	6	26.1
Amount should be increased	6	60.0	9	39.1
Timely payment	1	10.0	1	4.3
Bribe should be banned	5	50.0	6	26.1
Benefit for only illegible candidates	2	20.0	6	26.1
Total	10	100.0	23	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

6.1.3 National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)

The national family benefit scheme (NFBS) provides a lump sum of Rs 10,000 to the bereaved households in case of death of the primary bread winner, irrespective of the cause of death. This scheme is applicable to all the eligible persons in the age group of 18 to 64.

In order to provide the benefit under the scheme, the gram pradhan of the concern village issues the death certificate and also certifies that the household to be living below the poverty line. The legal heirs of the deceased person files an application, to the block development officer (BDO), in a specified form obtained from the block office. The block officer issues the relevant cheque to the heirs after verifying the candidature.

Profile of Beneficiary

The number of beneficiaries selected under the scheme were 6 out of which 2 accounting for 33 percent of the total care from Varanasi and the remaining 66.7 percent came from Saharanpur districts. The caste wise distribution shows that a

majority of them came from SC or OBC category and were largely drawn either from non-agricultural sector or from agricultural sector.

Performance of the Programme

The majority of the beneficiaries had been selected by gram panchayats, however the role of village level functionaries too cannot be ignored. The major source of obtaining information about the scheme had been the village pradhan and block level functionaries. However, some of the beneficiaries also got information from their relative or from telecommunication network. The deceased persons were both the males as well as the females and the cause of death in the majority of cases was illness i.e. natural, though a small proportion in Saharanpur district were also reported to have died in accident.

The perusal of the amount received by the legal heir of the deceased shows that none of them in Varanasi and 25 percent in Saharanpur had received the amount Rs. 10,000/-. Further it was also revealed that in Saharanpur, the legal heir were given the lesser amount in reality but actual on paper by the block functionaries. Similarly the study also shows that about fifty percent of the deceased families had to commute quite often to obtain the assistance in both the sample district which again was quite contradictory to the provisions in the scheme. A majority of the heirs of the deceased beneficiary had admitted that scheme had benefited the people in the two sample district. On the whole, the performance of the scheme was not quite consistent and up to the mark.

Involvement of beneficiaries

The involvement of beneficiaries in the scheme has to be understood in the light of their selection. The pradhan's and functionaries have special role in the selection process. Both functionaries and peoples representatives involvement in the programme, is critically important as they are well aware of the ground realities faced by the deceased families leading genuine selection. This will further enhance the

involvement of beneficiaries. However, the study of perception of non-beneficiaries, on the modalities and operationality of schemes, throws up many other issues which virtually put a question mark on the genuine spell of the selection of beneficiaries. The high proportion of non-beneficiary households, which the current target based approach was unable to stem, reflected the limitation of the procedure.

Involvement of functionaries

The study of perception of by performance of the programme beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries as well as the provide an opportunity to examine the involvement level of functionaries in the programme. However, it should also be understood that the programme functionaries were primarily the block officials who also have other departmental work. Their work load, many a times, do not provide much time to concentrate on other additional work. These work do not provide any incentive, and therefore, they loose interest and perform their duties ritualistically. The reported incidence of their accepting obligation interference, in the selection process etc. substantiate our point. All this reflects their low level of involvement in the programme (Table - 6.2, Annexure 6.2a).

Table – 6.2
Profile of Beneficiary in National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Gender status</i>				
Male	1	50.0	-	-
Female	1	50.0	4	100.0
<i>Caste status</i>				
SC	-	-	2	50.0
OBC	2	100.0	1	25.0
Others	-	-	1	25.0
<i>Household occupation</i>				
Agriculture labour	-	-	2	50.0
Wages	2	100.0	1	25.0
Others	-	-	1	25.0
Total	2	100.0	4	100.0

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Whether other candidates also made effort for benefit at the time of your selection				
Yes	1	50.0	-	-
No	1	50.0	3	75.0
Do not know	-	-	1	25.0
Mode of information about the programme				
Pradhan	2	100.0	3	75.0
Panchayat member	1	50.0	1	25.0
B.D.O.	-	-	1	25.0
Communication	-	-	1	25.0
Relative	-	-	1	25.0
Selection procedure				
Village panchayat	2	100.0	2	50.0
V.L.W.	-	-	2	50.0
Age of deceased				
Below 30 years	1	50.0	1	25.0
Above 30 years	1	50.0	3	75.0
Sex of deceased				
Male	-	-	4	100.0
Female	2	100.0	-	-
Reason of death				
Accident	-	-	1	25.0
Illness	2	100.0	3	75.0
What responsibilities were transferred by the deceased?				
Nothings	1	50.0	-	-
Responsibility of house	1	50.0	3	75.0
Education of children	-	-	1	25.0
Amount of assistance				
3,000.0s Rs.	-	-	1	25.0
5,000.00 Rs.	2	100.0	2	50.0
10,000.00 Rs.	-	-	1	25.0
Difficulties in receiving the assistance				
No problem	1	50.0	2	50.0
Approached block frequently	1	50.0	2	50.0
Assistance used for				
For business	-	-	1	25.0
For repayment of debt	-	-	1	25.0
Families requirement	1	50.0	1	25.0
Repair of house	1	50.0	2	50.0
For final rites	1	50.0	2	50.0
Suggestion for better performance of the programme				
Immediate benefit	1	50.0	1	25.0
Provide pension	-	-	1	25.0
To arrange permanent business	-	-	1	25.0
Increase assistance amount	-	-	2	50.0
No interference of mediator	-	-	1	25.0
As you like	1	50.0	-	-
Total	2	100.0	4	100.0

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Selection criteria of beneficiary				
Local support	-	-	2	50.0
Panchayat's support	1	50.0	-	-
Merit	-	-	3	75.0
Sympathy of block	1	50.0	1	25.0
Whether villagers benefited or not				
Yes	1	50.0	3	75.0
Do not know	1	50.0	1	25.0
In reference of bribe				
Provide bribe	-	-	1	25.0
Not provide bribe	2	100.0	3	75.0
Amount given as bribe				
Below 500.00 Rs.	2	100.0	1	25.0
500.00 Rs. to 1,000.00 Rs.	-	-	2	50.0
Above 1000.0 Rs.	-	-	1	25.0
Total	2	100.0	4	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

6.1.4 National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)

Under the national maternity benefit scheme (NMBS), there is a provision for the payment of Rs. 500/- per pregnancy to women belonging to the poor households for pre-natal and post-natal maternity care up to the first two live births. The benefit is provided to eligible women of 19 years and above.

Profile of beneficiaries

The study covers a total of 42 beneficiaries of which about 45 percent belonged to Varanasi and remaining 55 percent to Saharanpur district. The caste composition pattern shows that over 94 percent in Varanasi and about 74 percent in Saharanpur belong to Scheduled caste or OBC while the proportion of general caste was quite limited. All the beneficiaries in Varanasi and over 95 percent in Saharanpur were of the age group of 20 years or above. However, about 4 percent of beneficiaries in Saharanpur were below 20 years also. A majority of the beneficiaries in both the sample districts, were from non-agricultural sector, followed by beneficiaries from cultivators class and agricultural labourers.

Performance of programme

The performance of the programme has been analyzed on the basis of the provision that has been made in the scheme. On the provisions of beneficiaries receiving assistance, the study shows that all the beneficiaries in both sample districts had received assistance though about 42 percent in Varanasi had received it at pre-natal stage while the remaining 58 percent at post natal stage, whereas, about 35 percent of beneficiaries in Saharanpur had received the assistance at pre-natal stage and over 65 percent at the post-natal stage. Further, over 78 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 90 percent in Saharanpur had faced no problems in receiving the assistance. However, about 11 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 4 percent in Saharanpur also claimed not to have received full payment. Another 21 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and 13 percent in Saharanpur had to commute quite often to receive payments which caused problems and difficulties. However, it could be said that the scheme was liked by all the beneficiaries though over 47 percent in Varanasi district and 52 percent in Saharanpur district felt that the amount of assistance provided under the scheme was too meager.

Likewise, over 94 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and over 86 percent in Saharanpur, were in favour of the concept of small family, which could also be taken as a positive contribution of scheme. However, hardly about 32 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and 65 percent in Saharanpur were observed to be practising family planning methods. The low percentage of beneficiaries may be a reflection on their inhibitions as well as the impact of traditional value, which would take time to wear off. Similarly, the study of perception of beneficiaries towards gender equity also shows positive fall out of the schemes. Thus, it could be said that the performance of the scheme, on the whole, was reasonably good except for some minor difficulties which, may have occurred on account of administrative lapses.

Involvement of beneficiaries

The involvement of beneficiaries in the programme could be stated to be reasonably high. The high proportion of them expressing their satisfaction over the benefits of the scheme, timely receiving the assistance and facing no problems are some of the instances that reflect their level of involvement. Similarly, concept of small family, perception about gender equity and family planning method all directly or indirectly reflect their participation in the programme.

Involvement of functionaries

The performance of the programme is also a reflection on the level of involvement of functionaries. The analysis of performance of programme clearly shows that the beneficiaries have been receiving the benefits under the scheme, facing no problems. Though some incidences of late payments, less payment, problem of commuting etc. are reflection on his performance. The programme requires coordination with other departments like panchayats, health etc. supplemented with his own-heavy departmental work load, which, perhaps, did not provide him enough time. Similarly the target-based approach of the programme also handicapped the functionaries to participate fully. Thus, it could be said that the involvement level of functionaries is reasonably high (Table - 6.3, Annexure 6.3a).

Table – 6.3
Profile of Beneficiary in National Maternity Benefit Scheme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Social status</i>				
SC	6	31.6	13	56.5
OBC	12	63.2	4	17.4
General	1	5.2	6	26.1
<i>Age classification</i>				
Below 20 years	-	-	1	4.3
20 years to 25 years	6	31.6	5	21.7
Above 25 years	13	68.4	17	73.9
Total	19	100.0	23	100.0
<i>Households occupation</i>				
Cultivator	3	15.8	5	21.7
Agricultural labour	3	15.8	7	30.4
Wages	11	57.9	10	43.5
Small shop	-	-	1	4.3
Artisan	1	5.3	-	-
Others	1	5.3	-	-

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
At the time of selection on whether other candidates were also applicants?				
Yes	7	36.8	19	82.6
No	6	31.6	3	13.0
Do not know	6	31.6	1	4.3
Reason of their not being selected				
No body recommended	2	28.6	6	31.6
Biased selection	1	14.3	3	15.8
Not given bribe	-	-	3	15.8
Busy in personal work	-	-	2	10.5
Formalities not fulfilled	4	57.1	3	15.8
Others	-	-	2	10.5
No response	2	28.6	4	21.1
Total respondent	7	100.0	19	100.0
Assistance received				
Pre-delivery	8	42.1	8	34.8
Post- delivery	11	57.9	15	65.2
Assistance amount spent on				
Herself	1	5.3	3	13.0
On (new) born child	4	21.1	7	30.4
Remedy and food grains	12	63.2	14	60.9
Household expenses	1	5.3	1	4.3
Delivery expenses	3	15.8	1	4.3
Disease	2	10.2	-	-
Clothing	-	-	1	4.3
Problem faced in receiving the assistance				
No difficulty	15	78.9	20	90.0
Full amount not received	2	10.5	1	4.3
Commuting	4	21.1	3	13.0
Late payment	1	5.3	1	4.3
ANM was harassing	-	-	1	4.3
Benefit of the scheme to the people				
Very much	3	15.8	4	17.4
Much	2	10.5	-	-
Less	9	47.4	12	52.2
Very less				
Nothing				
Perceptions about small family				
Good	18	94.7	20	86.9
Not Good	1	5.3	3	13.1
Total	19	100.0	23	100.0
Why do you want small family				
Saving	3	16.7	3	15.0
Small family becomes prosperous	3	16.7	1	5.0
Care/look after family	1	5.5	1	5.0
Lack of resources	1	5.5	3	15.0
High and good education	1	5.5	1	5.0
Increasing price	1	5.5	8	40.0
Healthy mother	-	-	1	5.0
No problems	9	50.0	5	25.0
Total respondent	18	100.0	20	100.0

Contd....

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Type of family planning methods adopted</i>				
Condom	1	5.5	3	15.0
Operation	2	11.1	2	10.0
Safe period	1	5.5	-	-
Tablets	2	11.1	9	45.0
Copper-T	-	-	1	5.0
Total respondent	18	100.0	20	100.0
<i>Perception about gender equality</i>				
Equality	16	84.2	17	73.9
Un-equality	3	15.8	6	26.1
Total	19	100.0	23	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

6.1.5 Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)

The Integrated Child Development Programme (ICDS) was launched in 1975. It caters to pre-school children of below 6 years and expectant and nursery mothers with a package of services viz. immunization, health checkups, referral services, supplementary nutrition, pre-school education and health and nutritional education. It may be called to be an important link to the National Maternity Benefit Programme (NMBP) because the functionaries of ICDS initially identify the beneficiaries for the maternity programme. Thus, the beneficiaries of maternity programme should automatically qualify for ICDS and the services it offers.

The extent to which, the beneficiaries of maternity programme have been linked with ICDS was investigated. It was found that out of 42 beneficiaries in maternity scheme, only 11 beneficiaries accounting for about 26 percent of the total had been called in the meeting of ICDS. Of these, eleven beneficiaries, 45 percent belonged to Varanasi remaining 55 percent to Saharanpur districts. Further, these eleven beneficiaries were purposely selected and it was found the all of them had been given information regarding child care and coaxing, while information regarding house care, care during the pregnancy, family welfare scheme etc. was given to lesser proportion of beneficiaries.

Performance of ICDS

The performance of ICDS in both the sample districts was not found to be up to mark. The detail discussion with the beneficiaries revealed that the functionaries of ICDS were only interested in those persons with whom they had acquaintance or were their relations, which defeats the purpose of the programme. It was also revealed that the centre only operates so long as the supplementary nutrition was available and distributed. However, whenever the supplementary nutrition was disturbed, on account of its non-arrival or stoppage in supply to the centre etc., the centre was found to be closed. It was also observed that the supervisors of the programme had many centres under her supervision. Her frequency to centres was quite uncertain and often quite erratic which also affected the performance of the programme. Further, it was also found that the workers of centre were untrained, and of low educational background and were not aware about the objectives, functions and scope of the programmes contributed to its poor performance. It was found that the programme lacks coordination between various departments like health affecting its performance level. It was observed that the programme was also not getting the proper support from the block office, may on account of its own departments work load, all these factors also contributed to the programmes poor showing. Another observation, the study team found, was that the location of these centres was quite unconventional which did not suit the small children. Generally abandoned houses in a dilapidated state, located at the outskirts were found to be the place from where ICDS was operating.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The study also shows that the purpose of ICDS was to act as a strong link with other programmes viz. maternity benefit scheme, balika samridhi yojana and early child care. However, it was found that the involvement of beneficiaries was quite low, largely on account of non or low involvement of functionaries. It was

observed that the basis of selection of beneficiary was not below the poverty line criteria, but programme functionaries followed their own yard sticks, which was quite arbitrary, as a result, the genuine beneficiaries involvement got lower. On account of lack of coordination between departments, the beneficiaries suffered which also contributed to their low involvement. It was also seen that so long supplementary nutrition was available, the beneficiaries involvement was high but when some how, the supplementary nutrition distribution got disturbed the centre invariably faced closure and involvement of beneficiaries consequently suffered.

Involvement of Functionaries

The involvement of functionaries in the programme was found to be poor. It was found that the programme lacked awareness campaign and no attempt was being made to sensitize the people through mass awakening campaigns or environment building exercises. As already stated, the supervision of the programme on account of their heavy load, was also of poor quality, which emboldened the supporting staff to act arbitrarily, selection of assistants to programme was not proper as most of the assistant were from other and distant villages who visited the field quite irregularly, their non trained status also affected the involvement level (Table – 6.4).

Table – 6.4
Profile of Beneficiary in ICDS Programme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Registration in programme				
Registered	5	26.3	6	26.1
Un-register	14	73.7	17	73.9
Total	19	100.0	23	100.0
Social status				
SC	4	80.0	5	83.3
OBC	1	20.0	-	-
General	-	-	1	16.7
Was there any free distribution of food articles pre or past natal period?				
Yes	2	40.0	1	16.7
No	3	60.0	5	83.3

Contd.....

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Were you ever called for a meeting organized at Anganwadi centre				
Yes	5	100.0	6	100.0
Frequency of meeting				
Weakly	-	-	1	16.7
Monthly	3	60.0	2	33.3
Three monthly	2	40.0	3	50.0
Information imparted in meeting				
Childcare and their coaxing	5	100.0	6	100.0
Method of house work dealing	3	60.0	-	-
Method of making jam, jelly etc.	1	20.0	-	-
Care of womb	1	20.0	1	16.7
Family welfare scheme	1	20.0	2	33.3
Should the facility of immunization be provided to mother and child				
Yes	4	80.0	6	100.0
No	1	20.0	-	-
Total	5	100.0	6	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

6.1.6 Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY)

Under the programme, the girl child born after August 15, 1995 to the families, below the poverty line, were provided one time amount of Rs. 500/- for nutrition. There is also a provision of providing scholarship to her at a later stage.

The Balika Samridhi Yojana was also supposed to have link with the beneficiaries of maternity benefit scheme (MBS) as the children of those beneficiaries are entitled to get admission into this scheme. To study the performance of the scheme, eight beneficiaries, from a total of 42 beneficiaries of maternity benefit scheme, were randomly selected of which about 33 percent belonged to Varanasi and remaining 67 percent to Saharanpur district.

Profile of Beneficiaries

The caste wise comparison of beneficiaries show that hundred percent in Varanasi came from Scheduled Caste or OBC category while only eighty percent of the beneficiaries in Saharanpur were from Scheduled Caste and OBC category.

Performance of Programme

About 33 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 20 percent received benefit from the scheme within one month after the birth of the child whereas this proportion

was only 20 percent in Saharanpur district. Another 33 percent in Varanasi and 60 percent in Saharanpur received benefits within three months and remaining beneficiaries in both district got the benefit of the scheme after three months or more after the birth of girl child. The major source of information, regarding the scheme, was either gram pradhan or anganwadi centre in Varanasi and the auxiliary nurse midwife (ANM) in Saharanpur. A major proportion of the amount received from the scheme was spent on looking after the child.

Use of bribe was not responded in Varanasi to get into the scheme, whereas such incidence was reported in Saharanpur where around 20 percent of the beneficiaries did pay money to the functionaries. The perusal of the modalities of scheme shows that, by and large, the scheme was performing at quite a low level as hardly 19 percent of the beneficiaries had been benefited by the scheme. It was also found that the assistance to the beneficiaries was given only once, though she was made to sign on paper twice! The main reason for such discrepancy was due to lack of information. It was found that no opinion building exercise was carried out prior or during the commencement of the scheme.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The involvement of functionaries in the scheme cannot be considered high one, with just 19 percent of the beneficiaries benefiting from the scheme. The high incidence of non participation, (over 84 percent in Varanasi and over 78 percent in Saharanpur districts) virtually underscores the scope of the programme and this may be attributed to indifferent attitude of programme functionaries.

Involvement of Functionaries

The involvement of functionaries was also observed to be quite low as was manifested when it was found that the programme is often operated with the coordination of other departments viz. health, welfare department etc. The absence of coordination has mainly been on account of their heavy departmental work load

and their own developmental policies which often worked at cross purposes. All this has also affected the level of development of functionaries (Table - 6.5).

Table – 6.5
Profile of Balika Samridhi Yojana

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Did you receive benefit from the programme</i>				
Received	3	15.8	5	21.7
Did not receive	16	84.2	18	78.3
Total	19	100.0	23	100.0
<i>Social status</i>				
SC	1	33.3	3	60.0
OBC	2	66.7	1	20.0
General	-	-	1	20.0
<i>Period of receiving the benefit</i>				
With in one month after the bribe	1	33.3	1	20.0
1 to 3 months	1	33.3	3	60.0
Above 3 months	1	33.3	1	20.0
<i>Medium of information about the programme</i>				
Pradhan	2	66.7	-	-
A.N.M.	-	-	4	80.0
Aganwadi centre	1	33.3	1	20.0
<i>Assistance amount spent on</i>				
Care for children health	3	100.0	4	80.0
Domestic work	-	-	1	20.0
For grain	-	-	1	20.0
<i>In order to quality for scheme, did you give money to programme functionary</i>				
Money had to be given	-	-	1	20.0
Did not have to be given	3	100.0	4	80.0
<i>Whether there was a cut in the assistance provided under the scheme</i>				
Deducted	1	33.3	-	-
Was not deducted	2	66.7	5	100.0
Total	3	100.0	5	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

6.1.7 Early Child Care Scheme

Early Child Care Scheme is an important component of ICDS programme in which the care of children, below the age of three years or pre-schooling age, is undertaken. The children are provided toys and are imparted, basic sanitary habits etc. so that they may develop good habits interest and attitude towards learning.

Profile of Beneficiaries

Of the forty two beneficiaries of maternity benefit scheme, the number of beneficiaries figuring in Early Child Care Scheme were just four less than 10 percent. About 11 percent of total maternity benefit schemes beneficiaries belonged to

Varanasi and remaining 9 percent of the maternity benefit schemes beneficiaries came from Saharanpur district. The caste wise composition shows that beneficiaries selected under the scheme represented all caste groups in both the sample districts.

Performance of Programme

The performance of the programme was not found to be satisfactory as the total number of days, early care centre was found to be operating, was less than two weeks in a month in Varanasi. Fifty percent of centres in Saharanpur operated beyond two week's time. It was also found that fifty percent of centres in Varanasi had operational time of less than two hours, however, in the remaining fifty percent the centres the operational time exceeded two hours but was certainly less than four hours as stipulated in the scheme. In Saharanpur district, in fifty percent of the centres, the operational time was between two to four hours whereas in the remaining fifty percent of centres, the operational timing was quite uncertain.

Further, the performance, could, also be gauged by the children attending it. The study also shows that in fifty percent of centres in Varanasi the child attendance was regular whereas in remaining fifty percent, it was quite irregular. However, in Saharanpur district the attendance of children, in both centres, was not regular. It was also found that the centre, in both sample districts, provided supplementary nutrition to children. However, it lacked in other aspects viz. providing care and teaching learning materials in Varanasi where as fifty percent of centres in Saharanpur also lacked it. All these events contributed to the poor performance of the programme and lower the image of functionaries in the eyes of people. The subsequent talks with people revealed that the programme was often been addressed as "Sattu, Pajiri or Biscuit" distributing scheme and when that too stopped, the scheme became non-operational.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The involvement of beneficiaries was quite low. The uncertainty over their time of functioning of centres, perhaps discouraged the beneficiaries to attend it regularly. The centre lacked basic amenities like drinking water reading-learning materials, chart paper etc., which also contributed to the low involvement of beneficiaries. The location of centre was not appropriate from point of view of population or approach road, which also discouraged the parents of beneficiaries to send their ward regularly to the centres. Even the operation timing of these centres was not very specified, which created apprehension in the mind of people. All these also contributed to the low involvement of beneficiaries to the centres.

Involvement of Functionaries

The performance of programme suffered, largely, on account of low involvement of functionaries. It was found that their attendance at these centre were quite irregular. Their duties at centres regarding its time of opening, enrolment of children, their attendance, distribution of supplementary nutrition, distribution of reading and learning material etc. has not been defined or assigned to properly generally creating utter confusion. It was also found that there has been no provision of monitoring which was also contributing to its poor performance. The functionaries of the centres were also untrained. There has been a lot of anguish among people, some of them event went to the extent of stating that the scheme should be closed because it was not helping any one but encouraging malpractice and corruption among functionaries and village council representatives (Table - 6.6).

Table – 6.6
Profile of Early Child Care Scheme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Children benefited by ECC scheme</i>				
Benefited	2	10.5	2	8.7
Not benefited	17	89.5	21	91.3
Total	19	100.0	23	100.0

contd.....

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Social status of beneficiaries</i>				
SC	2	100.0	-	-
OBC	-	-	1	50.0
General	-	-	1	50.0
<i>Period of opening of centre in a month</i>				
Less than two weeks	2	100.0	1	50.0
More than two weeks	-	-	1	50.0
<i>Period of operation of the centre</i>				
Below two hours	1	50.0	-	-
Above two hours	1	50.0	1	50.0
Uncertain	-	-	1	50.0
<i>Do you sent regularly your child at the centre</i>				
Regularly	1	50.0	-	-
Not regularly	1	50.0	2	100.0
<i>What are the benefits of sending the children to centres</i>				
Are provided food for nutrition	2	100.0	2	100.0
Care	-	-	1	50.0
Learn the etiquette	-	-	1	50.0
<i>Basic drawback of the centre</i>				
Irregularity	1	50.0	1	50.0
Irregularity in nutrition	1	50.0	1	50.0
Not provided the material of education	-	-	1	50.0
Total	2	100.0	2	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

6.1.8 National Handicap Aid Programme

The National Handicap Aid Programme provides assistance of Rs. 125 per month or Rs. 1500 per annum to the physically handicapped persons who are living below the poverty line and suffer from the disability to the extent of sixty percent or more. The certificate regarding the disability is provided by the chief medical officer and its poverty status certificate issued by gram pradhan and verified by lekhpal. For claiming the benefits under the scheme, the applicant has to submit his application in prescribed form, obtained at block office along with all relevant testimonials.

Profile of Beneficiaries

The study covers a total of ten beneficiaries of which five each were from Varanasi and Saharanpur district respectively. The gender wise distribution shows that males overwhelmingly dominated it. Majority of the beneficiaries in both sample districts was from the age group of 35 to 60 years and generally belonged to Scheduled Caste and OBC groups. The occupational classification shows that they

were largely drawn from non-agriculture sector or were shopkeeper. Further, a majority of them in Saharanpur had suffered from this deformity since birth, however, all the beneficiaries in Varanasi had deformity or handicap after birth, which had been certified by the doctor.

Performance of Programme

The overall performance of the programme was reasonably sound. Some limitations in implementation of the programme are discussed. The procedure for selection of the beneficiaries involves a lot of formalities for which the claimant had to visit district hospitals, block offices and village pradhan quite often. Secondly, the criteria fixed for qualifying for the scheme was at least sixty percent disability, which, at times, was obtained by using bribe or influence of dominant persons. Similarly, though the information, regarding the scheme was available at village level, information regarding the formalities was lacking. The frequency of assistance provided under the scheme was not timely received and many a time, the information of assistance reaching their bank or post office accounts was not relayed to them by village level functionaries causing unnecessary hardships to them. The amount disbursed under the scheme was also reported to be quite low which was not sufficient to provide him two times square meal. It was also found that the scheme had two separate departments one for the selection of beneficiaries and other for their payment. Lack of coordination between the two departments at times compounded the situation, and the responsibility of providing vital information was not accepted by any of them.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The involvement of beneficiaries in the scheme could not be stated to be high as it was alleged by many non-beneficiaries households that the procedure contained lot of formalities and involvement of too many independent departments. The criteria of sixty percent disability, to be certified by medical officer, was also taken as a

handicap as it encouraged many influential and power broker to resort to unethical means to procure certificate. The lack of information regarding the programme and its features, on account of poor information network, also limited its scope as the information was provided either by gram pradhan or by block or village level functionaries who also guided or dominated the selection procedure. Similarly, the overwhelming presence of non-beneficiaries, in both the samples district, exposes the limitations of target based approach and also reflected the magnitude of problem.

Involvement of functionaries

The lack of coordination and monitoring among various departments like health, block, vikalang department etc. was compounding the situation and no body was prepared to accept over all responsibility of the programme. In all these projects, the poor involvement of functionaries is being increasingly noted. The incidence of functionaries involved to unethical means also reflected their superficial involvement. The dissemination of information to village people was found to be lacking (Table - 6.7, Annexure 6.7a).

Table – 6.7
Profile of Beneficiary in National Handicapped Scheme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender status				
Male	4	80.0	4	80.0
Female	1	20.0	1	20.0
Social status				
SC	1	20.0	4	80.0
OBC	4	80.0	1	20.0
Age classification				
Below 20 years	1	20.0	1	20.0
20 to 35 years	-	-	-	-
35 to 60 years	3	60.0	3	60.0
60 year and above	1	20.0	1	20.0
Household occupation				
Cultivator	1	20.0	1	20.0
Wages	3	60.0	3	60.0
Shopkeeper	1	20.0	-	-
Artisan	-	-	1	20.0

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Since when have you been a handicap person				
By birth	-	-	3	60.0
After birth	5	50.0	2	40.0
Do you have the handicap certificate given by a physician				
Yes	5	100.0	5	100.0
Medium of information about the programme				
Gram pradhan	3	60.0	4	80.0
B.D.O.	1	20.0	-	-
Friend/ relative	-	-	1	20.0
Others	1	20.0	-	-
Were other candidates also applicant for benefit at the time of your selection				
Yes	1	20.0	-	-
No	2	40.0	3	60.0
Do not know	2	40.0	2	40.0
What was the selection criteria				
Wealth	-	-	1	20.0
Merit	1	20.0	2	40.0
Sympathetic	1	20.0	1	20.0
Local support	1	20.0	1	20.0
Support of panchayat	1	20.0	-	-
No response	1	20.0	-	-
Who helped you to receive the benefit				
Pradhan	4	80.0	5	100.0
Self	1	20.0	-	-
Frequency of receiving the aid under the scheme				
Six monthly	2	40.0	3	60.0
Yearly	2	40.0	1	20.0
Irregular	1	20.0	1	20.0
Do you give bribe the functionaries or pradhan to avail the benefit under the scheme				
Yes	1	20.0	1	20.0
No	4	80.0	4	80.0
Total	5	100.0	5	100.0
Problem faced by you in receiving aid				
No problem	3	60.0	2	40.0
Irregular payment	2	40.0	-	-
Lack of information	2	40.0	1	20.0
More visits	-	-	3	60.0
How was the amount utilized				
Food grains	2	40.0	3	60.0
Clothes	1	20.0	1	20.0
Family support	2	40.0	1	20.0
Remedy	1	20.0	2	40.0
Nature of Handicap				
Unable to lift weight	2	40.0	1	20.0
Can not walk	1	20.0	1	20.0
Could not do work due to physical deformity could do no work	2	40.0	-	-
Nothing	-	-	3	60.0
Could you meet out your requirements by the aid amount				
Yes	2	40.0	-	-
No	3	60.0	5	100.0

Contd.....

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Perception for improvement in the programme</i>				
Assistance amount should be increased	-	-	1	20.0
Regular payment	1	20.0	1	20.0
Payment should be certain in time period	1	20.0	1	20.0
Functionaries should be honest	1	20.0	1	20.0
Formalities should be fulfill by block	2	40.0	1	20.0
<i>Do you feel that the society has ever neglected you because of your handicap</i>				
Yes	1	20.0	3	60.0
No	4	80.0	2	40.0
<i>You suggestions for making the life of handicap persons smooth and happy</i>				
Should be timely payment	1	20.0	-	-
Facilities should be increased	1	20.0	-	-
Should provide facility of house	-	-	1	20.0
Govt. aid for self dependent	2	40.0	-	-
Provide facility of remedy	-	-	2	40.0
Assistance amount should be increased	1	20.0	2	40.0
Total	5	100.0	5	100.0

Source: *Field Survey.*

6.1.9 National Widow Grants in Aid Scheme

The scheme provides economic assistance of Rs. 125/- in the form of grants-in-aid to the widows and her children for her family maintenance and education. The aid is given to those widows who are less than 60 years of age and are dependent on others with her children to be minor and living below the poverty line. The monthly income of such households should be Rs. 250/- or less.

Further, there is also a provision of remarriage of widows under which if a person marrying a widow of 35 years of age or less is entitled to receive an award of Rs 11,000/- provided by the government.

Profile of Beneficiaries

The study covered a total of twenty-six randomly selected beneficiaries, of which about 73 percent were from Varanasi and remaining 27 percent from Saharanpur. The high incidence of widow-hood in Varanasi may be attributed to the regions poverty, supplemented with high rate of morbidity. A majority of the beneficiaries in both sample districts, belonged to 61 years and above age group. The proportion of widows, between 45 to 60 years the age group of was also substantial. The caste wise composition shows that a majority of them came from

scheduled caste or from OBC category and generally belonged to non-agricultural labourers class followed by cultivators.

Performance of the Programme

The performance of the programme, by and large, was satisfactory as was reported by the beneficiaries. A good majority of them reported to be facing no problem in receiving payments and the frequency of distribution of grant in majority of the cases was as per the provisions of the scheme i.e. six monthly. However, it suffered from several deficiencies. The first and foremost being its process of selection. The profile of beneficiaries showed that they were generally, either relative or acquaintance of the secretary or the pradhan or some other influential people. The percentage of genuine beneficiaries was quite low, which limits the scope of the programme. The medium of information regarding the scheme to the beneficiaries were largely through gram pradhan or panchayat members. The poor monitoring by block or village level functionaries encouraged them to behave or act arbitrarily, which, at times, encouraged the incidence of harassment faced by beneficiaries, bribery, disruption in the frequency of grants etc. The high proportion of non-beneficiary class, who held pradhan or panchayat members responsible for their exclusion also points out towards performance of the programme to some extent and also exposes the limitations of target based approach.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

As discussed earlier, the involvement of beneficiaries, on paper, could be stated to be high. However, the analysis of profile of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries and their perception about the programme, clearly demonstrate that the selection of genuine beneficiaries in the scheme was low. The complexities involved in the selection process supplemented with the involvement of Gram Pradhan. Lower level functionaries virtually restricted its scope and alienated a sizeable section of

focus groups of households from it. All this contributed to the lowering of genuine beneficiaries involvement level.

Involvement of Functionaries

The study of perception of beneficiaries and performance of programme clearly shows that the involvement of functionaries was not of a very high order. The lack of coordination between various departments viz. welfare department, block and panchayats had limited the scope of the programme and none of the functionaries had accepted the responsibility for it. It was also found that the village level functionaries were not having information about selected beneficiaries and at times the selected beneficiaries were found to be not fulfilling the criteria laid down in the scheme. Absence of effective information networking regarding programme was also reflected in involvement of functionaries areas (Table - 6.8, Annexure 6.8a).

Table – 6.8
Profile of Beneficiary in National Widow Pension Scheme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age classification				
Below 45 years	2	10.5	-	-
45 to 60 years	7	36.8	3	42.8
60 year and above	10	52.7	4	57.2
Social status				
SC	11	57.9	6	85.7
OBC	7	36.8	-	-
General	1	5.3	1	14.3
Household occupation				
Cultivator	2	10.5	1	14.3
Agriculture labour	5	26.3	-	-
Wages	11	57.9	3	42.8
Artisan	1	5.3	3	42.8
Case of death				
Illness	14	73.7	4	57.2
Accidental	3	15.8	1	14.3
Natural	-	-	1	14.3
Others	2	10.5	1	14.3
Difficulties faced by you after the death of your husband				
Responsibility of family	6	31.5	2	28.5
Family non-cooperation	1	5.2	-	-
Family decline	2	10.5	1	14.3
Herself and children look after	8	42.1	5	71.4
Poverty	7	36.8	2	28.5
Marriage of daughter	-	-	1	14.3
Education for children	-	-	1	14.3

Contd.....

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Where does she live at present</i>				
With her in laws	19	100.0	7	100.0
With her parents	-	-	-	-
With her relatives	-	-	-	-
Alone	-	-	-	-
On rented house	-	-	-	-
<i>From which medium did you get the information</i>				
Gram pradhan	12	63.2	6	85.7
Panchayat member	6	31.6	1	14.3
Relative	1	5.2	1	14.3
Immediator	-	-	1	14.3
<i>Who helped you in receiving the pension</i>				
Pradhan	14	73.7	6	85.7
Secretary	3	15.7	1	14.3
Panchayat member	1	5.3	-	-
Immediator	1	5.3	-	-
<i>Frequency of receiving the pension amount</i>				
Three monthly	-	-	2	28.5
Six monthly	15	78.9	4	57.1
Irregular	4	21.1	1	14.2
Total	19	100.0	7	100.0
<i>Problems faced by you in receiving the pension amount</i>				
No problem	14	73.7	2	28.5
Block situated on distance	1	5.2	-	-
More frequency in up and down	4	21.0	5	71.4
Timely not given	1	5.2	-	-
Harassed	-	-	1	14.2
<i>Item-wise detail of how the pension amount spent</i>				
Fooding	10	52.6	6	85.7
Clothing	1	5.2	-	-
Helping family	5	26.3	1	14.3
Remedy	2	10.5	-	-
Others	1	5.2	-	-
<i>Whether the pension amount was sufficient meet out your requirements</i>				
Yes	3	15.7	1	14.3
No	16	84.3	6	85.7
<i>Suggestion for improving the programme</i>				
Cash payment	1	5.2	-	-
Stop bribe	2	10.5	-	-
Chance for poor	5	26.3	1	14.2
Timely payment	2	10.5	3	42.8
Amount increased	3	15.7	2	28.5
Power to panchayat	1	5.2	-	-
Honesty	3	15.7	1	14.2
<i>Have you ever felt that the society has ignored you</i>				
Yes	5	26.3	3	42.9
No	14	73.6	4	57.1
<i>Did you try to avail benefit of the scheme after the death of your husband</i>				
Yes	4	21.0	1	14.3
No	15	79.0	6	85.7
Total	19	100.0	7	100.0

Source: Field Survey.