

Proceedings of the National Consultation with States/ UTs held on 22.02.2017 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi for implementation of Maternity Benefit Programme

A National Consultation, under the chairpersonship of Ms. Leena Nair, Secretary, MWCD was held on 22.02.2017 at Hall No.-4, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi with States/UTs along with Central Ministries/ Departments/Organisations for implementation of the Maternity Benefit Programme. Participants from various States/UTs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), D/o Financial Services, D/o Posts, NITI Aayog, DBT Mission under Cabinet Secretariat, PFMS Cell under O/o Controller General of Accounts, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) and National Informatics Center (NIC) attended the meeting. A list of participant is **attached**.

2. Shri K.B. Singh, Director, MWCD welcomed all the participants and informed that Hon'ble Prime Minister in his address to nation on 31.12.2016 announced Pan-India implementation of Maternity Benefit Program. He further requested them to give their suggestions/views for implementation of Maternity Benefit Programme during the course of consultations.

3. Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Joint Secretary, MWCD briefly explained the likely broad contour of the proposed Maternity Benefit Programme, as announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister to be implemented from 1st January, 2017. He informed that under this Programme, eligible beneficiaries have to get themselves registered with Anganwadi Center / Primary Health Centre/Sub-Centre. The pregnant woman is required to furnish details Viz., as name, address, mobile number, Aadhaar Number (s), Aadhaar seeded Bank/Post Office Account Number, consent (s) for using Aadhaar Number for receiving benefits under the Programme. He further informed that maternity benefit of Rs.6,000/- may be provided in three instalments through DBT mode.

4. Ms. Leena Nair, Secretary, MWCD welcomed all for their participation in the National Consultation for implementation of Maternity Benefit Programme. She referred to her letters to States/UTs intimating approval of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to Pan-India implementation of the programme with effect from 01.01.2017. She also informed that after consultation with some of the States on 23rd January, 2017, it has emerged that the program is to be implemented either by Women & Child Development Department or through Health & Family Welfare Department. The States / UTs have already been asked by a D. O. letter dated 09.02.2017 to indicate their one time choice regarding the department which would be implementing the Programme in their respective States/UTs.

5. Secretary, also informed that the MWCD & MoHFW have put in motion the the process for integrating the ICDS CAS + RCH++ Softwares. The gap with respect to village MDDS Code has almost been completed. A few villages which are not yet synched, she

requested the Principal Secretaries to immediately send the details. With this, the 2 (two) softwares are now being enabled to talk to each other.

6. Secretary, MWCD informed that maternity benefit is proposed to be provided in three instalments. The first instalment of ₹3,000/- would be provided before delivery with the minimum condition of registration of pregnancy and one ante-natal check-up. The second instalment of ₹1,500/- would be provided after delivery of the child on producing a certificate from the Medical Officer that the delivery has taken place in a medical facility approved by Health & Family Department. The third and final instalment of ₹1,500/- would be provided after completion of the first cycle of immunisation of the child. The first instalment is to be released preferably within four months of pregnancy and the last instalment is to be provided after three and half months to four months after the delivery. But in any situation, the final instalment should not be delayed by more than six (6) months after the delivery.

7. Secretary, WCD stressed on need of collecting Aadhaar Number and bank/post office account number seeded with Aadhaar, as the payments to beneficiaries' accounts are to be made through DBT mode only. She emphasised on collecting Aadhaar Number of both the beneficiary and her husband at the time of registration of the beneficiary by Anganwadi Worker (AWW) or Asha Worker (ASHA), as the case may be. If a beneficiary does not have an Aadhaar then they should help the beneficiary in enrolling at a nearby Aadhaar enrolment center. The AWW / ASHA should also provide assistance to the beneficiaries in opening an account in bank/post office in their name and help them to get the account seeded with Aadhaar.

8. Secretary, WCD once again reiterated that the programme will be implemented in DBT mode through Public Financial Management System (PFMS). She requested all the participants not to hesitate in raising issues that they are facing related to using PFMS, as representatives from both the PFMS and NIC are present in the meeting. She also informed that the cost sharing pattern between Center and State will be 60:40 for all States and UTs with legislature, 90:10 for NER States and Himalayan States and 100% for UT without legislature.

9. Secretary, WCD further advised all States / UTs to open an escrow account at State / UT level where funds for maternity benefit from Centre will be transferred by the MWCD. The State / UT will have to transfer their matching share of funds to this escrow account. The State/UT shall monitor availability of funds in this account for making timely payment to beneficiaries' account.

10. Secretary, WCD also informed the participants that the JSY of MoHFW, under which cash incentive is provided to the beneficiaries for institutional delivery, will continue for another one year. After first year of implementation of Maternity Benefit Programme, JSY will subsume in Maternity Benefit Program, which is providing higher amount for

institutional delivery. Finally, she requested Principal Secretaries/Secretaries of all States/UTs to personally oversee the implementation of the programme, as the scheme is going to be monitored by the NITI Aayog right from the beginning. Thereafter, she requested Ms. Vandana Gurnani, Joint Secretary, MoHFW and Shri Alok Kumar, Advisor, NITI Aayog to share their views on Maternity Benefit Programme.

11. Ms. Vandana Gurnani, Joint Secretary, MoHFW, informed the participants that JSY has two components: (i) Cash incentives to pregnant women for institutional delivery; and (ii) Cash incentive to ASHA as motivator for institutional delivery. She informed that the first component will continue for first year of implementation of Maternity Benefit Programme. Thereafter, this will be subsumed under the Maternity Benefit Programme. However, the second component under which cash incentive to ASHA is being paid for motivating institutional deliveries will continue and payments to the ASHA will be made by MoHFW.

12. Shri Alok Kumar, Advisor, NITI Aayog, citing the experience of implementing the existing Matritva Sahyog Yojana (MSY) opined that the real challenges are: (i) Opening of bank accounts, (ii) Maintenance of data base, and (iii) Payment mechanism at State/UT level. He further mentioned about two criterions for measuring the success of implementation of the programme: (i) percentage of pregnancies covered, and (ii) efficiency in delivering the instalments.

13. Ms. Nutan Guha Biswas, Additional Secretary, MWCD informed the participants that the Programme is proposed to be implemented with effect from 01.01.2017 hence the women reporting pregnancy after 01.01.2017 are eligible and to be registered under the program. Therefore, States / UTs should take necessary steps in this direction. She also emphasized on ensuring that the money should go to the bank account of the beneficiaries and not that of her family. She also requested those States/UTs who have decided to implement the programme through their Health Department to work in convergence and close association with WCD Department, especially at grass root level.

14. Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Joint Secretary, MWCD made a detailed presentation of the programme and invited participants to make constructive suggestions. JS (RK) highlighted the issues on which all States/UTs are required to give urgent attention such as opening a budget head in their respective State/UT, opening a dedicated escrow account, submission of proposal indicating the number of beneficiaries, setting-up of State/District Cells, orientation of officials, integration of State/UT Treasuries with PFMS. He further explained the whole process by which payments to the beneficiaries' accounts are to be made and indicated expected timelines to be followed for completing the whole process of disbursement of the cash benefit. He also informed the participants that Ministry will send them an official request for opening an escrow account for implementation of the programme and requested them to obtain the necessary approval of their Finance Department. The States / UTs were further requested to designate an officer as 'Nodal Officer' for the Programme who will operate this account. He also informed that funds for

implementation of the programme is likely to be released by the end of March, 2017 and therefore, to utilise the funds all States/UTs are required to complete all these action in a time bound manner. He further informed the participants that the Ministry is exploring the possibility of generating Utilisation Certificate (UC) for maternity benefit component using the MBP-CAS Software (under-development) through the PFMS portal and UCs for other components are to be furnished by State/UT in GFR-19-A.

15. The details of implementing departments, as conveyed by the States / UTs before the meeting are given in the following table. The States / UTs which have not yet submitted their options were requested to submit the same within a week.

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UT	Implementing Department
1.	A & N Island	Women & Child Development Department
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Response Awaited
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	Response Awaited
4.	Assam	Response Awaited
5.	Bihar	Social Welfare Department
6.	Chandigarh	Response Awaited
7.	Chhattisgarh	Women & Child Development Department
8.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Response Awaited
9.	Daman and Diu	Response Awaited
10.	Delhi	Women & Child Development Department
11.	Goa	Women & Child Development Department
12.	Gujarat	Women & Child Development Department
13.	Haryana	Women & Child Development Department
14.	Himachal Pradesh	Social Justice and Empowerment
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	Social Welfare Department
16.	Jharkhand	Women & Child Development and Social Security
17.	Karnataka	Women & Child Development Department
18.	Kerala	Social Welfare Department
19.	Lakshadweep	Response Awaited
20.	Madhya Pradesh	Women & Child Development Department
21.	Maharashtra	Women & Child Development Department
22.	Manipur	Social Welfare Department

23.	Meghalaya	Health & Family Welfare/ WCD Department
24.	Mizoram	Social Welfare Department
25.	Nagaland	Response Awaited
26.	Odisha	Women & Child Development Department
27.	Puducherry	Women and Child Development
28.	Punjab	Response Awaited
29.	Rajasthan	Medical & Health Department
30.	Sikkim	Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare Department
31.	Tamil Nadu	Health & Family Welfare Department
32.	Telangana	Health & Family Welfare Department
33.	Tripura	Women and Child Development Department
34.	Uttarakhand	Health & Family Welfare Department
35.	Uttar Pradesh	Response Awaited
36.	West Bengal	Response Awaited

16. A software for implementation of Maternity Benefit Program is under development by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, India. The software development team made detailed presentation on various aspects of the software. Before Pan-India launching the software will be piloted in few districts. The States / UTs were briefed about the fund flow mechanism. The sanctioning authority will be at Block level i.e. CDPO or his/her counterpart in the Health Department will be the sanctioning officer. The sanctioned list will be sent to State/UT Nodal Officer, who will initiate the payment by sending digitally signed list to bank.

17. Representatives from various States/UTs raised some queries and shared their views on the process flow for implementation of the programme and software being developed. Details of queries/views shared by the States and response of the Ministry on it are summarised as under:

Name of the State/UT	Queries/Views/Suggestion	Response of the Ministry/ UIDAI/DBT Mission
Tamil Nadu	Dr. K. Manivasan, Principal Secretary, Social Welfare Nutritious Meal Programme Department informed that separate budget head is already there and the State has increased the incentive from Rs.12,000/- to Rs.18,000/-.	It was informed that a dedicated account is a must for timely payment of amount to the beneficiary. Therefore the States / UTs wherever necessary must obtain necessary approval for opening a dedicated account.

	<p>However, he was little apprehensive about opening a separate account at State level as their Finance Department does not allows doing so.</p>	
Jharkhand	<p>Mr. Mukhmeet S. Bhatia, Principal Secretary, WCD Department raised the issue that their Finance Department does not allows opening of bank account in private sector banks inspite of RBI's guidelines in this regard. He requested that since dealing with public sector banks is very difficult, guidelines may incorporate the RBI / Gol instructions in this regard.</p> <p>Mr. Bhatia further requested to include Jharkhand in pilot States for development of the software.</p>	<p>The State is presently using PFMS for making payment under Matritva Sahyog Yojana. While issuing the guidelines necessary instructions on opening of dedicated bank account will also be incorporated in the manual as per RBI's guidelines. Moreover, the implementing departments may take up matter with their Finance Department on this issue.</p> <p>As far as PFMS issues are concerned the list of Nodal Officer already circulated to States / UTs for resolving the issues and the same is also available on the website of the Ministry.</p> <p>The selection of State / UTs for piloting will be done after assessing the preparedness of the State / UT for implementation of the programme.</p>
Meghalaya	<p>Mr. T. Dkhar, Commissioner and Secretary, Social Welfare Department raised the issue of Aadhaar number and informed that issuing Aadhaar number to all may take some more time.</p>	<p>Shri Narendra Bhooshan, Deputy Director General, UIDAI, in response shared data related to Aadhaar in North – Eastern States. Further, he informed that generally all schemes of the Government of India gives exception to Jammu & Kashmir, Assam and Meghalaya.</p>

	<p>He further raised concerned on connectivity issue in all the North-Eastern States.</p>	<p>Mr. R.R. Tiwari, Director, DBT Mission, Cabinet Secretariat, responded on the connectivity issue. He informed that DBT Mission has written to the D/o Telecommunication for connectivity issue in North-Eastern States.</p>
Rajasthan	<p>Mr. Naveen Jain, Mission Director, NHM, on software development presentation suggested that data form should be similar to that of Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS). Further, he raised query why there is a need for another software when there is already MCTS developed and maintained by NIC.</p> <p>He further suggested that the browser version should have compatibility with android based and mobile friendly and login ids may be provided at Supervisor/ANM level so that the Supervisor/ANM can enter the details of the beneficiaries on her mobile and could forward the same to CDPO/MO on real time basis.</p>	<p>It was informed that a new software is being developed to adhere to to ensure seamless implementation of the Programme so that the disbursement of maternity benefit to the beneficiaries' accounts is quick and the entire implemntation is implemented on real time basis.</p> <p>The software team informed them that initially the software would be Browser & Web-based. However, in the second phase, it will be developed into android based and mobile friendly.</p> <p>It was also clarified that the existing software (MCTS/RCH) could be interfaced/integrated so that the data from these software could be ported-in easily. This excrises could be undertaken by the States/UTs through their respective IT Departments and in association with SDA.</p>
Maharashtra	<p>Ms. Vineeta Ved Singhal, Secretary, WCD Department, suggested that new software should be integrated with the existing MCTS which was also supported by representatives from Rajasthan</p>	
Andaman & Nicobar Island	<p>Shri Jitendra Agrawal, Director, WCD Department raised the issue regarding the difficulties being faced by the UT in using PFMS for</p>	<p>He was requested to take-up the matter separately in the Ministry and was assured that solution for the problem would</p>

	making payments to the beneficiaries under the existing scheme.	be provided.
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18. Additional Chief Secretary, Haryana, advised all States/UTs to start advance planning for the implementation of the Programme and be ready for using certain part of the budget which will be released in the month of March, 2017.

19. The outcomes of the National Consultation are as follow:

A. Action to be taken by Ministries / Departments of Government of India

- i. On approval of the Programme, the Guidelines of the Programme will be issued immediately. A
- ii. t grassroots level the infrastructure of Women & Child Development Department and Health & Family Welfare Department are slightly different. Hence, there will be separate Tab on the Dash-board for the WCD-H&FW departments.
- iii. The guidleines may be in two sets - on for WCD and one for H&FW - as per field formation in WCD and HFW department.
- iv. PFMS will take active role in integration of the dedicated account and provide support during development of the software for its timely launch.
- v. Regarding selection of Banks by the States / UTs, the existing guidelines may be circulated to the States / UTs in consultation with Department of Financial Services.
- vi. For providing Aadhaar number in areas where Aadhaar coverage is low, UIDAI will take special drive.
- vii. For connectivity issue, DBT Mission of Cabinet Secretariat will take-up the matter with Department of Telecommunication. Further, DBT Mission may expedite finalisation of LGD.
- viii. Department of Post will take special drive for Aadhaar seeding of the accounts of the beneficiaries identified under the scheme. Similar instruction may be issued by the DFS to the banks.
- ix. Notification under Section-7 for use of Aadhaar for receiving benefits should be issued immediately.
- x. On launching of the software, orientation workshops would be organized by MWCD for familiarization and orientation of State/UT Officials.
- xi. At District and Block level NIC will provide necessary support.

B. Action to be taken by States / UTs

- i. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshdweep, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal will immediately decide the implementing department. And communicate to MWCD.
 - ii. The States / UTs will make necessary budget provision for making contribution of their respective State/ UT matching share in escrow account to meet the requirement of funds from January, 2017 to March, 2017 and also for the period 01.04.2017 to 31.03.2018.
 - iii. Wherever required new budget head may also be open for implementing the program.
 - iv. The States / UTs will identify bank for opening escrow account for making their contribution in this account.
 - v. The escrow account details should be intimated to the Ministry by 15th March, 2017 for release of funds.
 - vi. The States / UTs will launch special drive for providing Aadhaar Number to women reporting pregnancy after 01.01.2017.
 - vii. Exercise should be taken for opening and Aadhaar seeding of Bank Account / Post Office account.
 - viii. Orientation program of field functionaries should be taken up immediately.
 - ix. The States / UTs will identify Nodal Officer who will be responsible for initiation of payment.
 - x. Digital signature of the identified Nodal Officer should be obtained in advance.
 - xi. Wherever CDPOs / Medical Officers (Block level) should be declared sanctioning authority under the programme.
 - xii. On issuance of Guidelines, the same will be translated in local language by the concerned State / UTs.
20. The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.
