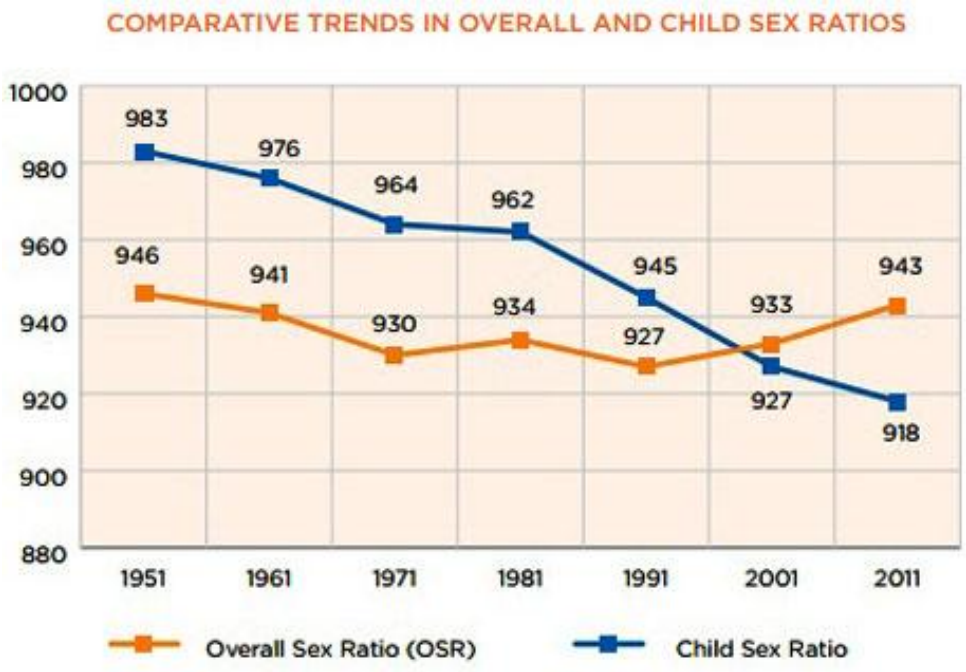
'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' Scheme – A Great Step to Ensure the Rights and Empowerment of the Girl Child

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The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme has been introduced in October, 2014 to address the issue declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR). This is a joint initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The Census (2011) data showed a significant declining trend in the Child Sex Ratio between (CSR) 0-6 years with an all time low of 918. Child Sex Ratio is defined as "number of girls per 1000 of boys between 0-6 years of age" and Sex Ratio at Birth is defined as "number of girls born per 1000 boys born".

The issue of decline in the Child Sex Ratio is a major indicator of women disempowerment. Child Sex Ratio reflects both, pre-birth discrimination manifested through gender biased sex selection, and post birth discrimination against girls. Easy availability and affordability of diagnostic tools has been critical in increasing Sex Selective Elimination (SSE) leading to low Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB). Further it also contributes to the decline in Child Sex Ratio. Strong socio cultural and religious biases, preference for sons& discrimination towards daughters has accentuated the problem.



Coordinated & convergent efforts are needed to ensure survival, protection and education of girl child to help realize her full potential. The Government has announced Beti

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Bachao, Beti Padhao programme to address the issue of decline in Child Sex Ratio through a mass campaign & Multi-Sectoral action in 100 gender critical districts.

Overall Goal: Improvement in the Child Sex Ratio in 100 Gender Critical Districts

Objectives: The objectives of the Scheme are as under

i) **To prevent Gender biased sex selective elimination:** Focused intervention targeting enforcement of all existing Legislations and Acts, especially to Strengthen the implementation of Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PC&PNDT Act) with stringent punishments for violations of the law.

ii) **To ensure survival& protection of the girl child:** Article 21 of the Constitution defines "protection of life and liberty" as a legitimate right of its citizens. The difference in mortality rates of girls and boys indicates the difference in access to various health care and nutrition services as well as the preferential care and treatment given to boys. The access to various entitlements, changes in patriarchal mind-set etc. are to be addressed in order to ensure equal value, care for and survival of the infant and young girl child. Further implementation of various legislative provisions for the protection of the girl child and women has to be ensured to create a nurturing and safe environment for the girl child.

iii) **To ensure education & participation of the girl child:** The access and availability of services and entitlements during the various phases of the life cycle of the Girl Child has a bearing on her development. Essential requirements related to Nutrition, Health Care, Education and Protection have to be fulfilled to enable every girl child to develop to her full potential especially the right to quality early childhood care, elementary and secondary education. Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2010 provides children the right to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighborhood school. Further, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right. Denial of these entitlements is a violation of children's rights, which will have a lasting lifelong negative impact. This will also adversely impact upon future human development.

iv) Discrimination and neglect of girl child can lead to low self-esteem, lifelong deprivation and exclusion from the social mainstream. Appropriate initiatives will be taken to encourage girls to express their views and to be heard, to participate actively, effectively and equally at all levels of social, economic, and political leadership. Long term interventions for gender equality would focus on creating enabling environment including employable opportunities, safety & security, mobility & speedy justice.

The Objectives stated above will be achieved through Convergence and Coordination with concerned Ministries/Departments/District Administration.

Monitorable Targets:

i) Improve the Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) in 100 gender critical districts by 10 points in a year.

ii) Reduce Gender differentials in Under Five Child Mortality Rate from 8 points in 2011 to 4 points by 2017.

iii) iii) Improve the Nutrition status of girls - by reducing number of underweight and anaemic girls under 5 years of age (from NFHS 3 levels).

iv) Ensure universalization of ICDS, girl's attendance and equal care monitored, using joint ICDS NRHM Mother Child Protection Cards.

v) Increase the girl's enrolment in secondary education from 76% in 2013-14 to 79% by 2017.

vi) Provide girl's toilet in every school in 100 Child Sex Ratio districts by 2017.

vii) Promote a protective environment for Girl Children through implementation of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012.

viii) Train Elected Representatives/ Grassroot functionaries as Community Champions to mobilize communities to improve Child Sex Ratio & promote Girl's education.

Core strategies: The proposal is envisaged for focused interventions to improve the Child Sex Ratio, within an overall National Strategy for Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao. Recognizing that the issue of decline in Child Sex Ratio is complex and multi-dimensional, it shall be addressed within the broad framework of survival, protection and education of girl children. A multi-sectoral strategy which is governed by the core principles of respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of girls and women, including the ending of gender based violence will be adopted. The core strategies will be as follows:

i) **Evolving a sustained Social Mobilization and Communication Campaign** to change societal norms, to create equal value for the girl child.

ii) **Positioning improvement in the Child Sex Ratio as a lead development indicator** for good governance.

iii) **Focusing on very low Child Sex Ratio or gender critical districts and cities** for accelerated impact.

iv) **Mobilizing and empowering frontline worker teams** as catalysts for social change, in partnership with local community/women's/youth groups (Ahimsa Messengers).

v) **Developing capacity of Panchayati Raj Institutions/Urban local bodies** especially women panchayat /urban local body members, to create community and peer support for making panchayats / urban wards girl child friendly.

vi) **Engendering development and essential services**: to ensure that service delivery structures are sufficiently responsive to issues of gender and children's rights.

vii) **Enabling Inter-Ministerial and inter-institutional convergence** at different levels.

Components:

i) **Mass Communication Campaign on Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao** : The programme initiated with the launch of "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao", a nation-wide campaign to increase awareness on celebrating Girl Child & enabling her education. The campaign

will be aimed to ensure that girls are born, nurtured and educated without discrimination to become empowered citizens of this country with equal rights. Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (DAVP) has been entrusted with the responsibility of developing a Media Campaign in consultation with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (M/o H&FW), Ministry of Human Resource Development (M/o HRD) & Ministry of Women & Child Development (M/o WCD).

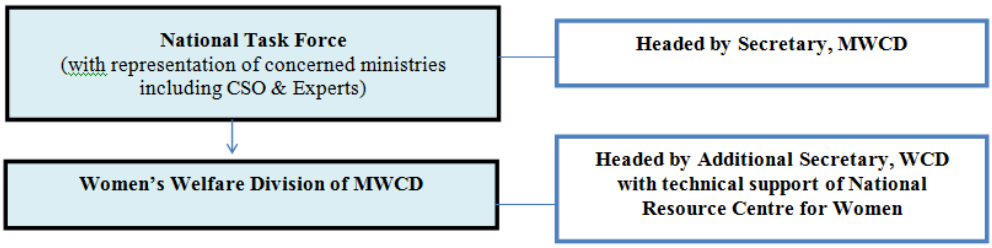
ii) **Multi-Sectoral intervention in 100 Gender Critical Districts worse on Child Sex Ratio**: MWCD will initiate a Multi-Sectoral Action in selected 100 districts covering all States/UTs for schematic intervention. Sectoral actions are drawn in consultation with M/o H&FW & M/o HRD. Measurable outcomes and indicators will bring together concerned sectors, states and districts for urgent concerted Multi-Sectoral Action to improve the Child Sex Ratio. A flexible framework Page 5 of 37 for Multi-Sectoral Action will be adapted and contextualised by State Task Forces for developing, implementing and monitoring State/ District Plans of Action to achieve the State Specific Monitorable Targets. State/ Districts will similarly develop their plans responsive to different State/District contexts.

Implementation of Scheme on different Levels

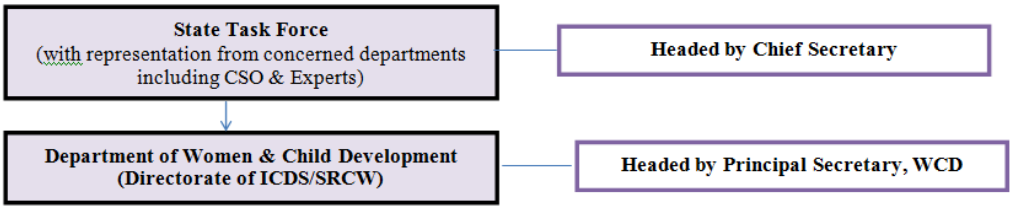
At the Centre, linkages under the proposal shall be established with concerned line ministries/departments namely Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Ministry of Human Resource Development (MoHRD) & Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD). At the States/UTs level, Dept. of WCD will work in close coordination with these concerned departments for inclusion of issue of Child Sex ratio as a priority agenda. Further, Linkages will also be strengthened with the existing government training institutions and Autonomous Training Institutes at national and State Levels to provide training on matters related to Child Sex Ratio. Sharing of good practices with line departments/states for encouraging adoption of good practices would be done.

At the District level, appropriate linkages with Panchayats, Anganwadi Centres, PHCs will also be strengthened. Grassroots functionaries of different departments shall be sensitized & trained on the issue of Child Sex Ratio, value of girl child & promote her education and will in turn facilitate community ownership and participation on creating an enabling environment for survival, protection & education of girl child.

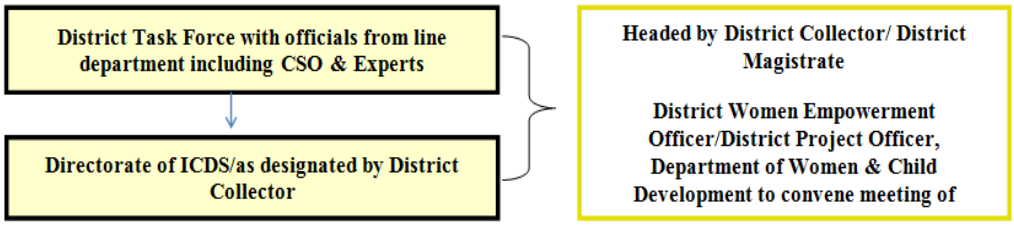
National Level:



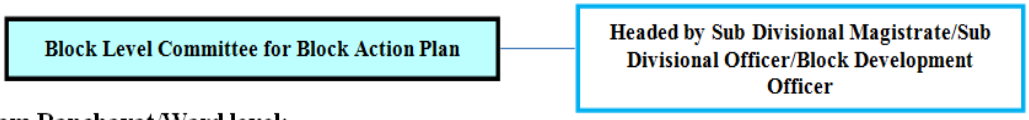
State/UT level:



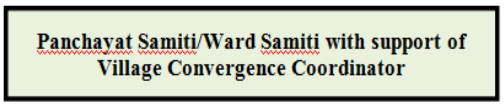
District/City/Municipal Corporation level:



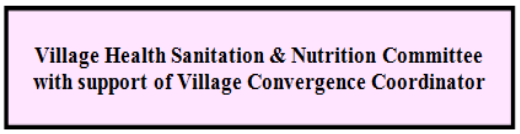
Block level:



Gram Panchayat/Ward level:



Village level:



Conclusion

Girl Children are the most vulnerable section of society. They are physically, mentally and socially immature and depend on others for survival. The vulnerability and dependency has been a matter of universal concern. Their development is threatened by several dangers including exploitation, abuse, ignorance, material want and social and political intrigue. In order to protect girl children from these the government and the civil society have been playing a vital role. It seeks to protect children everywhere against exploitation, neglect and abuse. Fundamental rights and Directive principles of state policies are related with children, they state that everyone entitled to all the rights and freedom set forth therein without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, birth or other status. Further, it states that girl child needs special care and legal protection before and after birth. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. The success of programs and policies for empowering girl child such as BBBP Yojana(Beti Bachao Beti Padhao) depend upon a large number of stakeholders including civil society. Empowering Girl Child needs to be incorporated as one of the important agenda in political dialogue and policy discussion. Real Empowerment of girl child and women can only happen if we redefine the status and role of women in the country and that can make a big difference.

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