



Needs Assessment of Childcare Facilities in Remote and Tribal Settings of Gujarat, Odisha, Kerala and Meghalaya

July 2023

STUDY REPORT

About IWWAGE

Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE) aims to build on existing research and generate new evidence to inform and facilitate women's economic empowerment agenda. IWWAGE is an initiative of LEAD, an action-oriented research centre of IFMR Society (a not-for-profit society registered under the Societies Act). LEAD has strategic oversight and brand support from Krea University (sponsored by IFMR Society) to enable synergies between academia and the research centre.

About LSST

This study is being supported by Lok Swasthya SEWA Trust (SEWA). LSST focuses on ensuring that informal women workers obtain social protection like health care and child care to enable their economic empowerment and self-reliance, both financially and in terms of decision-making and control. It helps them obtain full employment at the household level to achieve self-reliance and better health status. It has been working towards providing holistic and comprehensive primary health care to informal workers with a multi-prolonged approach, focusing on health information and awareness, referrals, promotion of rational therapeutics, livelihoods and social security, including health care, childcare, insurance, pension and housing with basic amenities.

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Table of CONTENTS

Abbreviations	06
Executive summary	07
Introduction	10
Review of literature	12
2.1. The importance of early childhood development	
2.2. The mother's burden	
2.3. Alternative caregiving- investment and implementation	
2.4. Caregiving Facilities – What and what more?	
Research design	16
3.1. Research questions	
3.2. Methodology	
3.3. Survey design, training field staff and implementation	
3.4. Research ethics	
3.5. Study sample	
3.6. Study limitations	
Findings	22
4.1. Demographics of respondents	
4.2. Children's profile	
4.3. Unmet need for childcare of employed-and-paid women	
4.4. Preferences for childcare services	
4.5. Knowledge and awareness of AWC operations	
Conclusion and the way forward	44
Appendix	46
Appendix A: Survey questionnaire	
Appendix B: List of states, districts, villages, and AWCs covered	
Appendix C: Summary tables	

List of TABLES

- Table 1: Data collected for the needs assessment study
- Table 2: Proportion of households in each income category
- Table 3: Proportion of households in each income category in each district
- Table 4: Current Marital Status of respondents
- Table 5: Number of residents in the respondents' households
- Table 6: Social Category of respondents across districts
- Table 7: Proportion of respondents who have worked and not worked in the last 12 months
- Table 8: What type of work are the women engaged in?
- Table 9: Gender distribution of respondents' children across districts
- Table 10: Reading and writing abilities of children
- Table 11: Number of years of schooling of children in each district
- Table 12: Children's attendance in virtual classes during Covid
- Table 13: Proportion of women in every district who received facilities from Anganwadi or other childcare centres
- Table 14: Availability of creches or any other childcare facilities at the workplace across districts
- Table 15: Where are the children spending their time while the mother is at work?
- Table 16: Why did women have to stay home with children?
- Table 17: Willingness to send children to paid healthcare facilities
- Table 18: Willingness to pay for childcare
- Table 19: Willingness to pay for childcare services across districts
- Table 20: Duration for which mothers are willing to send their children to care facilities
- Table 21: Time-preferences of respondents to drop off and pick up children from childcare facilities
- Table 22: Services preferred by mothers at childcare centres in order of their ranks
- Table 23: Daily operational time at anganwadis
- Table 24: Weekly operational days at anganwadis
- Table 25: Number of workers/helpers at anganwadis
- Table 26: How much and what kind of help was received by women in childcare activities from Anganwadi workers/helpers
- Table 27: Dissemination of information by anganwadi workers/ helpers across districts

List of **FIGURES**

Figure 1: Responses to the question "Have you ever attended school?"

Figure 2: Education level of respondents

Figure 3: Religions of respondents by district

Figure 4: Decision-making in the house regarding childcare

Figure 5: Age distribution of the respondents' children

Figure 6: Services received from AWC or other childcare facilities

Figure 7: Time spent on childcare activities by women

Figure 8: Women's time-use per day

Figure 9: Willingness of respondents to send children to free childcare facilities near their home

Figure 10: Operational hours of anganwadi

Figure 11: Preference for timing and AWC working hours depends on nature of work

ABBREVIATIONS

RASHA Accredited Social Health Activist

AWC Anganwadi Centre

AWH Anganwadi Helper

AWW Anganwadi Worker

CAPI Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing

ECCE Early Childhood Care and Education

ECD Early Childhood Development

ECE Early Childhood Education

FLFPR Female Labour Force Participation Rate

ICDS Integrated Child Development Services

NSS National Sample Survey

PHC Primary Health Centre

SHG Self Help Group



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#

Several studies have shown that the unmet need for childcare is a critical factor behind the poor participation of women in the labour force. The disproportionate burden of unpaid care work is challenging for women from all backgrounds. However, those from low-income families are particularly affected as they struggle to balance the demands of domestic chores with the need to earn a living. Women in such situations face a "double burden" of performing strenuous work outside the home while caring for their loved ones inside the home. This often leads to them taking up informal, low-paying jobs to make ends meet. Unfortunately, they also have to leave their young children unsupervised due to a lack of resources, which can put them at risk.

Mothers require dependable day-care facilities that can accommodate their schedules, provide nutritious meals, maintain clean and secure environments, and promote cognitive development to achieve their professional aspirations. Unfortunately, such services are often insufficient or unavailable, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Therefore, it is crucial to improve the quality and accessibility of centre-based childcare services, such as creches, through adequate funding and meticulous planning. By offering Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilities, we can support mothers in accomplishing their objectives while ensuring the well-being of their children.

This report is based on the needs assessment study conducted by IWWAGE as a part of a long-term study on ECD in collaboration with SEWA. The study's objectives were to assess the existing arrangements for childcare in remote tribal areas (both before the onset of the pandemic and after the Covid-19 induced lockdown) as well as their impact on the mother's employment. The study sample included women across five districts in four states: Tapi and Sabarkantha in Gujarat, Kandhamal in Odisha, Trivandrum in Kerala and East Khasi Hills in Meghalaya. The survey aimed at understanding the requirement and unmet needs of quality childcare in remote and tribal areas as well as the

impact of Covid-19 on households and women's engagement in paid and unpaid work. The survey served as baseline for Gujarat to compare against endline findings, which will unravel the impact of ECD interventions.

Similar studies have been undertaken but they are very few and focus on the pre-primary schooling of children alone. The Centre for Budget and Policy Studies and the British Academy have studied the status of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in the tribal districts of Bihar and Tamil Nadu in a study titled "Examining Contexts, Practices and Costs of Early Childhood Care and Education in India"¹. Through in-depth ethnographic inquiry, the study examined the knowledge and practices of childcare and education within tribal and marginalised communities in two Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Bihar.

Most studies on ECD in India have focused on the pre-primary schooling of children aged three to six years. In this regard, the IWWAGE-SEWA study is the first of its kind and undertakes not only the assessment of the need for quality childcare for mothers in the tribal regions of India but also the impact of centre-based childcare on maternal employment and early childhood outcomes for children aged zero to six years. The study also comes at a time when Covid impacted the functioning of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) and substantially increased women's care work component. The present study attempts to unpack its impact on women's work and ECD outcomes in tribal districts, which have not been studied before. This study serves to understand better the current status of childcare in remote tribal settings, how childcare responsibilities affect a mother's employment, their preferences for an ideal childcare arrangement, and the gaps between the assessed needs and realities on the ground.

Survey findings indicate a substantial deficit in providing quality childcare services in India for all mothers, irrespective of whether they are engaged in paid employment outside their homes. Most women send their children to unpaid care facilities near their homes.

¹ Centre for Budget and Policy Studies and the British Academy, 2019. Examining the contexts, practices and costs of Early Childhood Care and Education in India: Responsive models for child development.

The main findings of the needs assessment survey are:

- Respondents were women (mothers) in five specific remote tribal districts (Sabarkantha and Tapi in Gujarat, Kandhamal in Odisha and East Khasi Hills in Meghalaya), aged between 18 and 45 years, with at least one child or more aged between zero to six years. Average age of the respondents was 29 years.
 - A little over 80 per cent of the women were educated.
 - Around 50 per cent belonged to families with household size of five to eight members and 40% to household size of one to four members.
 - Of the women surveyed, 85 per cent belonged to ST community.
 - The monthly income of 40 per cent of the sample was less than INR 2000, 23 per cent belonged to the INR 5000 to 9000 bracket and 17 per cent to INR 10000-19000 bracket.
 - 45 per cent of the sample were involved in some form of paid employment, with 66 per cent being small and marginal farmers.
 - The study shows a clear need to build proper childcare arrangements either close to mothers' worksites or their homes. All the states reported low availability of creches.
 - The survey findings suggest that nearly 67 per cent of the mothers working for pay or profit resort to 'informal/personal' resources for childcare.
 - 41 per cent of women involved in paid work skipped work due to childcare responsibilities.
 - 84 per cent of mothers were willing to send their children to a childcare facility if it was free.
 - Most of them wanted these care centres to have services such as learning, and playing and preferred an operational time of four to six hours. The preferred timings, especially for the opening of the AWC, however, depended upon the nature of the occupation of the women.
- The study revealed the critical role played by state-run childcare programs (AWCs), pointing to the need to make AWCs even more effective with better capacity-building, ramping up infrastructure and sufficient budgetary allocations.
 - Parents' primary concerns regarding childcare facilities were affordability, safety and quality of the childcare services. They did not earn enough to send their children to a paid care facility and ruled out the possibility of sending them to any such facility.
 - Women prefer to leave children at Anganwadi centres if they are operating while at work or schedule their work around the operational hour of AWCs. Extending hours of AWC functioning will fulfil a part of women's unmet need for childcare.

The findings of the needs assessment study indicate that whether women work outside their homes for a living or not, they need access to proper childcare arrangements; many have to skip paid workdays due to childcare responsibilities. Thus, there is a need for childcare among both women working for pay or profit and women not engaged in paid work, to ameliorate the burden of unpaid care work on women. A majority of mothers would be willing to send their children to a childcare facility that would not accrue any cost to the mother.

9 INTRODUCTION



In India, the discourse on childcare as an indispensable factor in women's economic and social wellbeing dates to the pre-independence period. A document prepared in 1939 on 'women's role in a planned economy' clearly laid out the necessity for crèches to support mothers of young children. The 'Towards Equality' report submitted to the Committee on Status of Women in 1974 mentioned it briefly, but the necessity was strongly highlighted in the Shramshakti report of the National Commission on Self-Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector, which placed the agenda of care support for women at the core of policy discussions. Since then, early childcare support and care-sensitive policies have been in the Indian policy discourse. However, apart from the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) – primarily a child nutritional support programme – the other programmes in India, such as the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs), National Crèche Programme, and crèches at a worksite within the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, there has been a dearth of continuous programmatic support for women in the care economy, especially towards childcare for women in informal work.

Much remains to be learnt of the requirements in terms of childcare faced by the most vulnerable women working in the informal economy and, specifically, among women who live in remote tribal communities, in challenging hilly terrains and in other complex geographies where the reach of even the ICDS is limited. It is important to study the childcare arrangements in the tribal regions of the country, their impact on maternal employment and early childhood outcomes. Towards this, IWWAGE has collaborated with SEWA to conduct a longitudinal study, a first of its kind, between 2021 and 2024, to examine the burden of childcare and Early Childhood Development (ECD) needs of households, parents and caregivers in remote and tribal settings. This study has been conducted in five remote tribal districts, namely, Sabarkantha and Tapi (Gujarat), Kandhamal (Odisha), Trivandrum

(Kerala), and East Khasi Hills (Meghalaya). The three-year partnership focuses on gathering ground-level data and information and applying evidence-driven insights based on IWWAGE and LEAD's decade-long experience of working on conducting actionable research on women and their needs. The study is expected to help inform decisions and design schemes focusing on women, their employment and unpaid care work, and children's educational and nutritional needs in their early years.

Three rounds of primary data collection were envisaged. Two rounds have been completed: a needs assessment survey (which serves as a baseline for Gujarat and was conducted between late 2021 and early 2022); and an initial evaluation of the ECD interventions survey to assess how effectively the SEWA ECD-related interventions have been implemented (conducted in late 2022). The third, an endline survey only in Gujarat (two districts of Tapi and Sabarkantha) to understand the impact of the SEWA ECD interventions, will be conducted in 2024. This report articulates the study approach, methodology and findings from the needs assessment round conducted between November 2021 and May 2022.

This report is divided into five sections. Section 2 provides contextual background and a snapshot of literature on why centre-based childcare is a requirement for mothers and the importance of ECD. Section 3 presents the scope and design of the study undertaken by IWWAGE, including the methodology adopted and the sampling framework. Section 4 provides findings from the quantitative needs assessment survey of approximately 1,200 women conducted across four states. Section 5 presents a summary of the key findings from this round of the study and sets the agenda for the midline study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE



Developing nations, striving towards inclusive development for growth, are increasingly focusing on human capital and relevant social and physical infrastructure. India, amongst other countries, has a long way to go in breaking intergenerational poverty and lack of resources for a significant fraction of its demographic.

Indian women have long been at a disadvantage when it comes to household resource allocation, education, and job opportunities due to social conditioning and norms. This disadvantage is further compounded when they are expected to take on unpaid caregiving work as young mothers, which often forces them out of the labour force.

The Indian Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) lay at 20.1 per cent in 2021 (World Bank²). The Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum (2016) ranked India 136th out of 144 countries regarding women's economic participation and opportunities. In the 2011-12 National Sample Survey (NSS), it was discovered that over 3 per cent of women surveyed were solely engaged in household chores and were not part of the labourforce. However, the survey also found that these women would be willing to join the labourforce if they had access to quality childcare. The cost of joining the labourforce is influenced by a combination of factors, including the availability of formal paid employment, gendered barriers to accessing the labour market, and affordable and quality childcare support.

2.1. The importance of early childhood development

ECD is an essential investment contributing to a country's long-term development. A child's brain is at its most receptive during his/her first five years which leads to early experiences significantly impacting the development of neurological connections³. This makes early childhood a critical window of opportunity to shape a child's holistic development trajectory and build a foundation for their future⁴. Women function as primary caregivers to their children, and the opportunity to work or attend to the child often creates a double bind. An analysis of the NSS data, 1983-2011, indicated

an increasing negative association between the presence of young children in the household and women's employment⁵. In 2009-10, 38.4 per cent of rural and 19.6 per cent of urban women in the reproductive age bracket (15 to 49 years) participated in the labour force.

Over 200 million children under five years of age, mainly in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, need to fulfil their developmental potential⁶. Young children require proper healthcare and nutrition, protection from harm and a sense of security, opportunities for early learning, and responsive caregiving. But, in developing countries, they are exposed to multiple risks, including poverty, malnutrition, poor health, and unstimulating home environments, which detrimentally affect their cognitive, motor, and social-emotional development. These disadvantaged children pay the price in lost potential, going through life with poor physical and mental health and struggling to learn and later earn a living. Therefore, in countries that are more socio-economically vulnerable, emphasis on a fair chance for both mothers and children is required to understand and implement the multiple pathways, from distal governance policies to proximal caregiving practices.⁷

2.2. The mother's burden

In India, traditionally, women have permanently been assigned to undertake any unpaid household work and caregiving activities⁸. A published study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development across countries found that, in India, women devote up to 360 minutes to unpaid care activities in a day compared to 36 minutes spent by men on unpaid household activities. The care giving role played by the mothers is vital, given the poor health statistics of children in the various states of India. As per the Niti Ayog Sustainable Development Goal index, the percentage of children under five that are stunted is 39.1 per cent in Gujarat, 20.5 per cent in Kerala, 29.1 per cent in Odisha and 40.4 per cent in Meghalaya. Given the poor health of children and women, especially those from the socio-economically vulnerable sections, and their compulsion to engage in some form of productive employment, it is important that

² World Bank Data. 2021. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.TOTL.FE.ZS?locations=IN>

³ Tierney, A. L. and C.A. Nelson. 2009. Brain Development and the Role of Experience in the Early Years. *Zero to three*, 30(2), 9–13.

⁴ Penn, H. 2002. The World Bank's view of early childhood. *Childhood*, 9(1), 118-132.

⁵ Bordia Das, M. and I. Zumbyte. 2017. Women's Employment, Child Care and Household Structure in Urban India.

⁶ Grantham-McGregor, S., Y. B. Cheung, S. Cueto, P. Glewwe L. Richter, B. Strupp, and International Child Development Steering Group. 2007. Developmental potential in the first 5 years for children in developing countries. *Lancet* (London, England), 369(9555), 60–70. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(07\)60032-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(07)60032-4)

⁷ Bornstein, M. H., P.R. Britto, Y. Nonoyama-Tarumi, Y. Ota, O. Petrovic, and D.L. Putnick. (2012). Child development in developing countries: introduction and methods. *Child Development*, 83(1), 16–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01671.x>

⁸ Ferrant, G. L.M. Pesando, and K. Nowacka. December 2014. OECD, Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labor outcomes.

women are supported in their role as care givers. Otherwise, they end up either quitting employment altogether or are restricted to informal, precarious and low paid jobs.

Unsurprisingly, the FLFPR in India has dropped significantly over the last 30 years⁹. Women's participation status in the labour force reflects their societal position and the economy's needs. Higher economic growth will need much greater labour force participation of educated, skilled women in rural and urban India. This is likely to be correlated with the structures that society creates to look after young children so that young females can be freed for work. In three out of four working-class nuclear families, the working mother has to leave her job to care for her child.

A survey in Rajasthan's Udaipur district by IFMR-LEAD along with Seva Mandir which evaluated a community day-care model called Balwadi concludes that women's care responsibilities are a possible reason for their low labour market participation¹⁰. The needs assessment survey of 3,177 mothers with children in the one to six age group found that, on average, the respondents spent 9.4 hours each day doing some unpaid work as against 17 minutes per day doing paid work. Of the time spent on unpaid household chores such as farming and caring for children, the respondents spent the most time caring for children or older adults, approximately 2.5 hours a day. It states that more mothers with young children could opt for paid work if they found reliable alternative caregivers for family-related responsibilities.

However, regarding ECD, parental support programmes and social protection are necessary to improve maternal wellbeing and children's development. The system of preschool centres is the most practical and efficient solution for educating children aged three to six years. However, according to the World Bank, nearly half of these children worldwide are deprived of access to preschool education, almost 80 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.

2.3. Alternative caregiving – investment and implementation

Around the globe, children and caregivers in developing countries tend to suffer deprivation of economic capital, general economic infrastructure and choices of goods and services. It is imperative to accord priority to ECD since it is the most cost-effective way to break the intergenerational cycle of multiple disadvantages, remove inequity, and help achieve long-term socio-economic development¹¹.

Investing in ECD is not a priority for most governments, yet. Many lower- and middle-income countries spend only 0.1 to 0.2 per cent of their gross national product on ECD; this number is about 2.3 per cent in the OECD countries¹². However, cost-benefit studies show that, in addition to the direct benefits to the lives of children and families, benefits accrued in a generation due to investments in early childcare and education can reduce money spent on welfare.

The Government of India and the private sector offer Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India. To address early childhood care and educational needs, the government established balwadis and anganwadis, which comprise the public sector ECCE programme. Working mothers in the urban private sector often have access to caregiving facilities or can afford to send their children to private creches during work hours. Rural women mainly depend on older relatives who live with them. Migrant female workers bear the brunt of neither formal childcare available nor the affordability of bringing relatives away from home, having to take infants with them into dangerous work environments. Twenty-five years ago, Pratham started to work in ECE in Mumbai and established 3,000 balwadis in three years. It found a strong latent demand. Parents, especially mothers, wanted their children to go to preschools. Paratham's work found that mothers were happy for someone else to look after the children for a couple of hours when they could relax or earn, and their children could learn simultaneously.

⁹ Verick, S. (2014). Women's labor force participation in India: Why is it so low. International Labor Organization.

¹⁰ Nandi, A., S. Maloney, P. Agarwal, A. and S. Harper. 2016. The effect of an affordable day care program on health and economic well-being in Rajasthan, India: protocol for a cluster-randomized impact evaluation study. BMC public health, 16(1), 1-10.

¹¹ Reetu, C., G. Renu and S. Adarsh. 2017. Quality early childhood care and education in India: Initiatives, practice, challenges and enablers. Asia-Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education, 11(1), 41-67.

¹² Richter, L. M., et al. 2017. Lancet Early Childhood Development Series Steering Committee. (2017). Investing in the foundation of sustainable development: pathways to scale up for early childhood development. The Lancet, 389(10064), 103-118.

2.4. Caregiving facilities – what and what more?

Seva Mandir, a non-governmental organisation in Rajasthan, started “centre-based childcare” in 1986, starting with eight balwadis. By 2004, these were full-day centres for children aged one to five years in areas where government or other childcare services were unavailable. The aim of the centres was to allow mothers to earn essential income or work in the fields to support their families without fearing for their children’s safety while away. With time, the centres improved with the inclusion of day care and preschool education and provided better food to cover a part of the children’s daily nutrition needs. The focus on nutrition was greater, given the state of children’s malnutrition. Parents paid a minimal fee, but communities supported the running of centres by providing them services such as fetching fuel and water, cleaning, repair work, and provision of fruits and vegetables. With the success of the balwadi model in addressing childcare issues and communities’ demands, many new anganwadis and mini-anganwadis opened in remote areas, and the programme was included in India’s 11th Five Year Plan as a model intervention.

India introduced ICDS in 1975. The basic plan was the same: to increase child survival rates among the economically backward and enhance the health, nutrition and learning opportunities of preschool children and their mothers. The Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) are local women. However, the government’s Anganwadi model came with more formal responsibilities and insufficient support for these women, who mainly depended on their motivation, skills and patience. The AWCs had to accommodate 30 to 40 different children and focus on their ECD in addition to maintaining information on the populace, statistics on new births and deaths, differently abled and destitute children, and supplementary feeding and nursing on young children and mothers. One AWC must maintain 22 registers. The mammoth task falls on the shoulders of the women working without formal training and struggling with inadequate infrastructure, lack of essential equipment or community support, and intimidation or extortion from the supervisors¹³.

Most AWWs are women from low-income families, with low educational levels and limited skills that need to be upgraded through regular training. Additionally, they do not have permanent jobs with comprehensive retirement benefits such as other government staff do to keep up their motivation.

Nearly half of the AWCs lack drinking water facilities, and 36 per cent need toilets, consistent power supply and basic medicine stocks. AWCs also do not provide an environment that encourages parents to drop their children off at these centres. Only a limited number of AWCs have facilities such as creches and good quality recreational and learning facilities for preschool education¹⁴.

As mentioned above, in most developing countries, child development and social protection are researched and studied for child development outcomes. Historically, in India, the focus has been on nutrition and health; only recently has the conversation involving psycho-social stimulation and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) been included in the agenda. Therefore, programmes that focus on centre-based childcare and track outcomes on child development and maternal employment mostly come from the Western world. Childcare support makes it feasible for parents to be employed, and quality early intervention programmes (zero to six years) and after-school programmes (more than six years) can enhance child development. This is especially true for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

¹³ Patil, S. B. and M.K. Doibale. 2013. Study of profile, knowledge and problems of Anganwadi workers in ICDS blocks: A cross sectional study. *Online Journal of Health and Allied Sciences*, 12(2 (1)).

¹⁴ Katticaran, J. and I. PGDM. 2012. Improving Services of Anganwadi Centers & Increasing its Reach.



Image Credit: Suchit Nanda/ Majority World/Stars Foundation

This study serves as a needs assessment survey to understand better the status of childcare in remote tribal settings (pre-Covid-19 and since the Covid-19 lockdown when AWCs shut down), how childcare responsibilities affect a mother's employment and what their preferences for an ideal childcare arrangement are.

The objectives of this study are:

- To understand the unmet needs and demand for full-day, quality childcare services in remote and tribal settings;
- To determine how women, manage their paid work opportunities (outside their homes) while undertaking unpaid care work; to understand the types of activities women are engaged in (paid and unpaid) and the time spent on unpaid care work;
- To unpack the impact of Covid-19 and the economic lockdown on households' childcare needs, mothers' unpaid care work burden and women's engagement in work; and
- To look at issues such as the quality of existing centres, their distance from their beneficiaries, staffing (capacity and quality), nutrition and health services offered, ECD material, etc.

3.1. Research questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions to assess women's childcare needs:

- What are the unmet needs and demand for full-day, quality childcare services, specifically in remote tribal settings and various vulnerable and marginalised groups, either through ICDS or other provisions exist?
- How do women (mothers) manage paid employment opportunities outside their homes and pursue aspirations while undertaking unpaid care work? What types of activities do women engage in (paid and unpaid)? How much time do women spend on paid and unpaid work, including care, and what are the associated costs?
- What has been the impact of the Covid-19 economic lockdown and the shutting down of AWCs/ICDS on households' childcare needs,

mothers' unpaid care work burden, and women's engagement in paid work opportunities?

- Are women willing to send their children to childcare facilities?
- What would be their preferred time of operations for these facilities?
- What are the perceptions of women (mothers) about the childcare services currently available to them (pre-Covid and during the lockdown)? What is women's awareness and knowledge about the quality of existing facilities, services offered, staffing, and participatory role played by local communities in the governance of childcare centres and provision of locally sourced nutritional foods to the centres?

3.2. Methodology

The needs assessment round of the project was a quantitative study employing a non-experimental approach in five districts across the four states (Appendix B). A survey tool was drafted to answer the research questions (Appendix A). The survey aimed to examine the burden of childcare on women in remote tribal areas and better understand their childcare needs. Therefore, the respondents were women (mothers) in five specific remote tribal districts, aged between 18 and 45 years, with at least one child or more between the ages of zero and six years.

While the survey respondent was a woman (mother) with at least one child aged zero to six years, the children's roster in the survey questionnaire gathered the information for all children in the household aged zero to six years. Only one woman from the household was included as the survey respondent, and information on all children aged zero to six years was collected from her alone. If more than one woman/mother in the household had children aged between zero and six years, only one—employed-and-paid woman—was interviewed. The younger or the youngest mother was surveyed if both women were employed or neither was employed.

A household or house is referred to as all members, including children, who live or have lived under

this “roof” or within the same house for at least 30 continuous days in the past one year. When they are together, they share food from a common source and contribute to and share in a common resource pool; individuals who do not have a permanent residence outside of this household.

Certain questions were framed targeted at specific periods: (i) “in the last 12 months” referred to October 2020 through October 2021, the 12 months before when the survey was conducted; (ii) “before Covid times” referred to the period before March 2020 or before the first lockdown, i.e., the “normal” times before Covid-19; and (iii) since/ during Covid-19 times implied the whole period of Covid-19 since March 2020 or the first lockdown up to the time this survey was conducted.

3.3. Survey design, training field staff and implementation

The survey instrument included modules to capture the following data:

- Demographic characteristics of the respondents (including age, education level, social group and religion) and households (size, income and economic profile);
- Children’s roster, including information on all children in the household between the ages of zero and six years;
- Respondents’ occupational profile if she engaged in paid work opportunities outside her home and use of time; her childcare-seeking practices and how Covid-19 changed the arrangement in the last 1.5 years; and her unmet need for childcare and preferences or expectations; and
- Respondents’ knowledge and awareness of the functioning of the local AWC before Covid.

All surveys were conducted in person using SurveyCTO on tablet devices that enumerators were trained on. The field study was conducted by ‘grassroots leaders’, recruited locally by SEWA and trained by LEAD members fluent in English and local languages. The survey instrument was intended to take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

Due to the third wave of Covid-19 in early 2022 and its related restrictions, schedules for the training of grassroots leaders and, subsequently, field implementation of the survey slowed down across districts which resulted in the study covering six months; for instance, the survey was implemented in Kandhamal and Trivandrum in November-December 2021, and Sabarkantha and East Khasi Hills between March and May 2022. However, the team tried to ensure minimal to no gap between the training of field enumerators and implementation of the survey within a district.

All analysis in this study is solely based on the data collected through field surveys. A vital feature of the analysis was to look at variations across districts in all areas of enquiry and discover how certain factors differ among women who work for pay or profit from the women who don’t work for pay or profit. Wherever relevant, a sub-group analysis was done by studying variations across income, social class, religion, occupational group, education, and other key demographic characteristics. All these findings helped address questions about the childcare needs of women in remote tribal areas and among vulnerable and marginalised populations.

3.4. Research ethics

All surveys were in-person and conducted door-to-door using the Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) survey software (available on smartphones) that enumerators were trained in. Each survey instrument was designed to take at most 30 minutes to complete. Selected enumerators were fluent in the local languages. All survey training was conducted in person at the IWWAGE office in Delhi. The survey instrument was piloted to a sub-sample of respondents to inform the final design. Informed verbal consent of each respondent was recorded via an inbuilt application on SurveyCTO at the beginning of each survey.

On 4 October 2021, the research team submitted the study protocol, survey instrument and other documents for review by the Institutional Review Board and clearance. Subsequently, approval was received from the IFMR Human Subjects Committee on 13 October 2021.

3.5. Study sample

The three-year study in collaboration with SEWA is conducted in two parts. The first part entailed two rounds – a needs assessment survey of quality childcare services in the tribal districts under survey (late 2021 and early 2022) followed by an initial evaluation of SEWA ECD related interventions (introduced to alleviate the impact of Covid 19 pandemic on well-being of children and caregivers). This was conducted in late 2022 and early 2023. The initial evaluation of ECD interventions assessed how effectively ECD interventions had been implemented, their short-term impacts on the lives and wellbeing of people from all states as well the challenges faced by them. The needs assessment served as a baseline for Gujarat and the ECD interventions initial evaluation was the midline for Gujarat. Gujarat is the only state where an endline, planned mid-2024, will also be conducted to analyse the overall impacts of SEWA ECD interventions. This would constitute the second part of the study.

This needs assessment study (baseline round) was based on the design pre-formulated by SEWA with the intervention to be implemented in designated AWCs/ICDS centres by SEWA in the four states. Accordingly, the sampling is purposive, depending on the beneficiaries of the intervention centres. Women (mothers of children between zero and six years) were proportionately sampled from each AWC in consultation with SEWA and local partners who understand the context and feasibility of getting a representative sample.

Therefore, the target sample size for the needs assessment study was 1,325 mothers: 25 mothers across each of the 15 AWCs in Gujarat, Kerala and Odisha, and 50 mothers in each of the four AWCs in Meghalaya. However, upon implementation of the survey and keeping in mind the field realities, the study collected data from 1,198 women across the five districts (Table 1): 27 per cent in Kandhamal, 25 per cent in Sabarkantha, 23 per cent in Trivandrum, 16 per cent in East Khasi Hills, and 9 per cent in Tapi. Although the proportions of respondents in the Tapi and East Khasi Hills sample are low, the sample is broadly representative given the districts' population, extrapolated from Census 2022. In Tapi, the sample is also smaller because families had left for sugarcane harvesting around the time of the needs assessment survey.

Table 1: Data collected for the needs assessment study

		IWWAGE Survey		Census 2011 and Estimates			
State	District	Respondents	Proportion of the sample (%)	Females aged 20-49 years (2011) ¹⁵	Decadal growth in population ¹⁶	Extrapolated population in 2021 ¹⁷	Proportion of population (%)
Gujarat	Sabarkantha	296	24.71	5,09,700	16.62%	13,56,821	36.39
	Tapi	108	9.02	1,89,466	12.14%	4,19,478	11.25
Kerala	Trivandrum	272	22.70	8,08,731	2.07%	9,76,138	26.18
Odisha	Kandhamal	322	26.88	1,52,803	13.10%	3,52,975	9.47
Meghalaya	East Khasi Hills	200	16.69	1,78,261	24.96%	6,23,200	17.71
Total		1,198	100.00	18,38,961		37,28,613	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

¹⁵ Census 2011. Females aged 20-49 years, Table: C-14 Population in five year age-group by residence and sex. Column 4).

¹⁶ Census 2011. Decadal growth in population, Table: A - 2 Decadal variation in population since 1901, column 7).

¹⁷ Extrapolated population in 2021= Population in 2011+(Population in 2011*Decadal growth rate*10 years).

3.6. Study limitations

The study follows purposive sampling, including quantitative and qualitative techniques. The sample size chosen is proportionately distributed as per the population based on the Census data and in consultation with SEWA and local partners who understand the context and feasibility of getting a representative sample. Further, the districts and blocks included in this study have been predetermined by SEWA as its intervention will only be implemented in select AWCs. Since no listing of women in households in these selected districts was available at the local AWC, the study relied on information provided by SEWA and local partner organisations, listing mothers of children aged between zero and six years situated locally.

This study relied on conducting in-person door-to-door surveys. Given the surge in Covid-19 cases in the middle of the field study, the survey schedule was disturbed, forcing us to gather data from different districts a couple of months apart.

This study does not intend to make causal inferences or attribute any effects to the functioning of AWCs or the ICDS. However, the scope of research questions directs correlation analysis between key variables to better understand the childcare needs of women across remote tribal areas.







FINDINGS

4.1. Demographics of respondents

Age

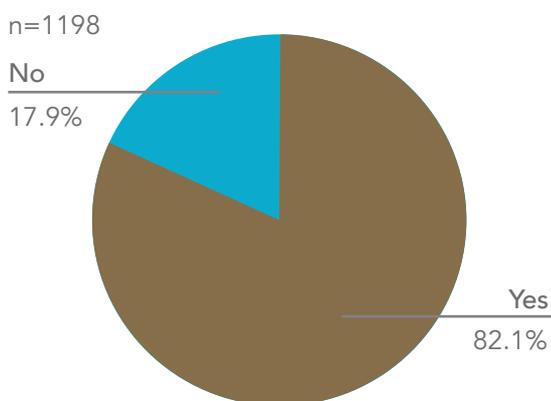
Among the respondents, 65 per cent was 25-34-year-olds; these women were the most active in the labour force and thus had more significant childcare needs than others. The average age of the respondents was about 29 years, and the median age was around 28 years. In line with the sampling strategy, all respondents in our sample had at least one child aged zero to six years.

Education

More than 80 per cent of the respondents in our sample had attended school. Nearly 36 per cent had completed secondary education, 23 per cent had completed higher secondary education, 15 per cent had completed middle school, and 11 per cent had only primary education. In addition, 10 per cent of the respondents was graduates, while only 2 per cent had completed post-graduation or attended vocational training programmes.

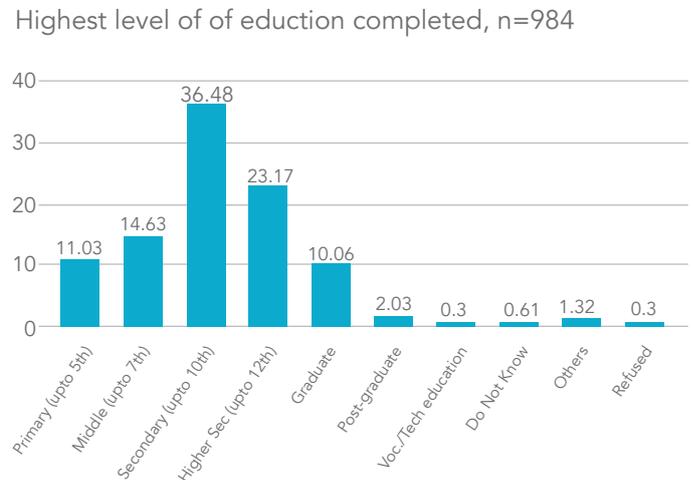
Trivandrum had the more educated proportion of respondents: 46 per cent had completed class 12 whereas 14 per cent were graduates, whereas Tapi had a very high proportion of secondary and higher secondary educated women. Respondents from Sabarkantha and East Khasi Hills were less educated with 47 per cent and 39 per cent, respectively, having completed schooling only till class 7.

Figure 1: Responses to the question “Have you ever attended school?”



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Figure 2: Education level of respondents



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Household Income

The average monthly income of the households in our sample was INR 11,522.83, while the median income was INR 4,000. About 75 per cent of the respondent’s household income was less than INR 10,000. Among them, 23 per cent had an income between INR 5,000 and INR 10,000, 40 per cent had a monthly household income below INR 2,000 and 11 per cent between INR 2,000 and 5,000. The household monthly incomes reported here are for the pandemic period (November 2021- May 2022), when people faced massive job and income losses. It was observed that there was only a single source of income for households with a monthly income below INR 2,000. Households earning more had multiple income sources.

Table 2: Proportion of households in each income category

What is the current monthly household income (in Rupees)?	Frequency	Per cent
Less than INR 2,000	479	39.98
INR 2,000 - 4,999	138	11.52
INR 5,000 - 9,999	281	23.46
INR 10,000 - 19,999	207	17.28
INR 20,000 - 29,999	36	3.01
INR 30,000 - 49,999	23	1.92
INR 50,000 - 99,999	16	1.34
INR 100,000 - 499,999	14	1.17
INR 500,000 - 999,999	3	0.25
More than 1,000,000	1	0.08
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Table 3: Proportion of households in each income category in each district

What is the current monthly household income (in INR)?	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills	Total
Less than INR 2,000	78%	6%	81%	3%	7%	40%
INR 2,000 - 4,999	10%	25%	8%	16%	3%	12%
INR 5,000 - 9,999	6%	43%	1%	44%	37%	23%
INR 10,000 - 19,999	4%	24%	6%	26%	34%	17%
INR 20,000 - 29,999	1%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%
INR 30,000 - 49,999	0%	0%	1%	3%	6%	2%
INR 50,000 - 99,999	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%
INR 100,000 - 499,999	0%	0%	0%	1%	6%	1%
INR 500,000 - 999,999	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
More than INR 1,000,000	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mean income	1,993.42	6,895.37	2,865.42	12,486.94	38,347	11,522.83
Median income	200	5,000	500	8,000	10,000	4,000

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Income of women working for pay/profit

Around half of the respondents working for pay/profit reported an annual income of INR 20,000 to 50,000, and 20 per cent reported between INR 50,000 and 1,00,000. The mean and median incomes of the women were INR 70,178 and INR 45,000, respectively. In Trivandrum, nearly half the women earned between INR 1,00,000 and 5,00,000 annually while 28 per cent earned between INR 10,000 and 20,000.

Other income sources for the household

The average income of the respondents' households in the past 12 months was INR 33,962 from salaries and wages, along with an average of INR 22,044 from government cash transfers and INR 15,758 average from the sale of assets. Only 25 per cent of the sample respondents reported nil income from any source while 17 per cent reported an income between INR 20,000-40,000.

Social group

In terms of marital status, 80 per cent of the respondents was married, 1.75 per cent divorced, separated, or deserted, and 2 per cent widowed. Around 16 per cent of the respondents was married but their gaunas¹⁸ still needed to be performed.

Table 4: Current marital status of respondents

What is your current marital status?	Frequency	Per cent
Married, gauna not performed	186	15.53
Married	963	80.38
Divorced, separated and deserted	21	1.75
Widowed	25	2.09
Refused	3	0.25
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Around half the respondents indicated that they had five to eight members residing in their homes at that time, 40 per cent had one to four members while 0.67 per cent of respondents were living in large homes with more than 12 members.

Table 5: Number of residents in the respondents' households

Total number of members residing in the house	Frequency	Per cent
1 to 4 members	483	40.32
5 to 8 members	617	51.50
9 to 12 members	90	7.51
12 to 16 members	8	0.67
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Most of the respondents were Hindus (75 per cent); 21 per cent were Christians. There were no Muslims, Sikhs, Jains or Parsis in the sample. Most of the respondents in East Khasi Hills (90 per cent) and a significant proportion in Tapi (30 per cent) were Christians. The sample consisted of 10 per cent of those who belonged to the Scheduled Caste community, 2 per cent to Other Backward Classes and 2 per cent to the general category.

¹⁸ Gaunas are ceremonies that take place 6 to 7 years after a child marriage. After this ceremony, the girl is sent to live with her in-laws after reaching puberty.

Figure 3: Religions of respondents by district

As per the data collected from our survey, every household consisted of 5.3 members (2.6 males and 2.7 females), 1.5 members aged zero to six years and 0.92 members of six to 18 years as siblings or older children.

Work status

At least 45 per cent of women said they had been engaged in paid work in the last 12 months, whereas 55 per cent said they had not been involved in any paid activity. We refer to women engaged in paid work in the past 12 months as 'mothers working for pay/profit' and those not involved in paid work over the same period as 'mothers not working for pay'.

Table 7: Proportion of respondents who have worked and not worked in the last 12 months

Have you done any work in the last 12 months?	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	535	44.66
No	663	55.34
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Of the total, 535 women had been engaged in paid work in the past 12 months. Among them, 29 per cent said they had worked only for a short duration of one to three months, while about 20 per cent said they had worked for four to six months. Only 25 per cent of these women had worked for seven to nine months and 10 to 12 months each. Most women in the age groups of 25-29 years, 30-34 years and 35-39 years were unemployed, but 60 per cent between 40 to 44 years were engaged in a paid activity. Education levels and monthly income do not affect women's work or employment status. The women who were employed were engaged as small and marginal farmers (66.54 per cent)¹⁹, in domestic work (4 per cent), as agricultural labourers²⁰ (11.78), in teaching (2 per cent), in clerical work (2 per cent), in construction (1 per cent) and as AWWs (3 per cent). The remaining women were involved in home-based work (self-owned businesses/self-employed), shop keeping and street vending, and forest work.

In Sabarkantha and Tapi, respondents were primarily engaged in farm work, 80 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively. Kandhamal had the highest proportion (42 per cent) of casual labourers or daily wage workers, while East Khasi Hills had 29 per

cent casual labourers or daily wage workers and 25 per cent domestic workers. Despite reporting low incomes, 37 per cent in Trivandrum said they were involved in simple or daily wage jobs, 24 per cent in clerical positions and 12 per cent as teachers. Daily wage workers in Kandhamal and East Khasi Hills were likely to work as forest workers while, in Trivandrum, they might be working as fisherwomen. Women working on their land (farm workers) couldn't be categorised as small and marginal or large-scale farmers because the size of their landholdings still needs to be determined.

Table 8: What type of work are the women engaged in?

What type of work are you engaged in?	Frequency	Per cent
Self Employed		
Small and marginal farmers	356	66.54
Home-based work/own business/self-employed	13	2.43
Others (shopkeeping, street vending, etc.)	34	6.36
Wage Workers		
Agricultural labour	63	11.78
Domestic work	23	4.30
Anganwadi worker or helper	15	2.80
Teacher	13	2.43
Clerical work	10	1.87
Construction work	6	1.12
Forest work	2	0.37
Total	535	100

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

¹⁹ Small and marginal farmers are women who work on their own land.

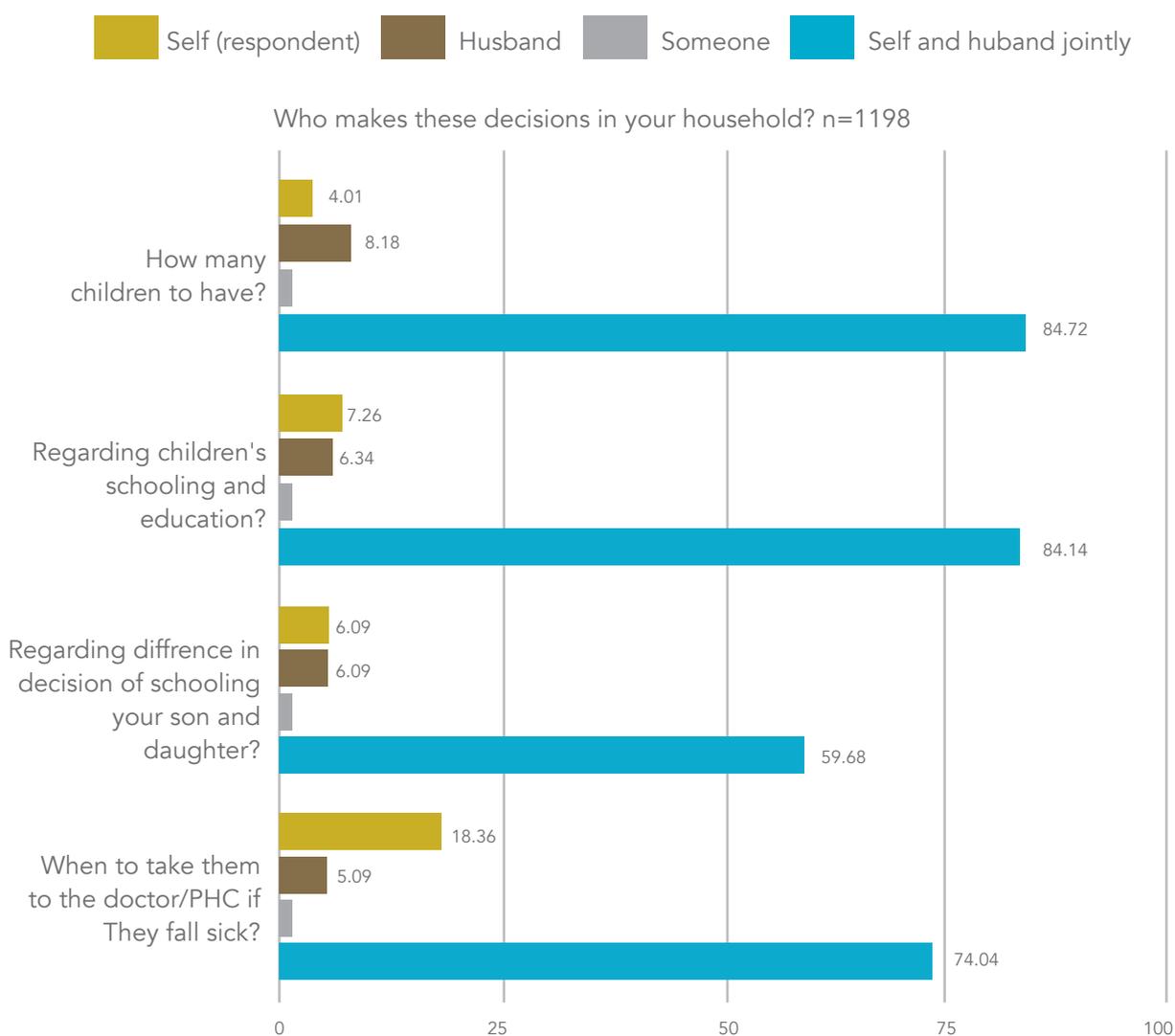
²⁰ Agricultural labourers are hired to work on other's fields.

Women engaged in farm work (both as agricultural workers and small and marginal farmers) earned INR 20,000 to 50,000 annually, 20 per cent earned INR 50,000-1,00,000, and those involved in teaching or clerical activities earned INR 1,00,000-5,00,000. Almost half (45 per cent) of women, worked as entrepreneurs or home-based workers, and made INR 50,000 to 5,00,000 and another 45 per cent earned between INR 10,000 and 50,000.

Decision-making power regarding childcare

In most households (84 per cent), childcare decisions are mostly made jointly by the child's parents, i.e., the respondent and her husband. More than 7 per cent of women made childcare decisions independently while 6 per cent said their husbands exclusively made the decisions.

Figure 4: Decision-making in households regarding childcare



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

At least 25 per cent of women indicated that distinctions were not made between the schooling of male and female children in their homes. In comparison, 60 per cent made this decision with their husbands. Only 18 per cent of women could take their children to doctors or Primary Health Centres (PHCs) if they were sick, 75 per cent made this decision with their husbands, and 5 per cent of the respondents said their husbands were solely responsible for such decisions.

4.2. Children's profile

Sample: Based on our survey, every respondent in the sample of 1,198 had at least one child aged zero to six years. The total number of children in the respondents' households aged zero to six years was 1,803 of which 48 per cent were male and 52 per cent female. Of the total, 535 women had been engaged in paid work in the past 12 months. Among them, 29 per cent said they had worked only for a short duration of one to three months, while about 20 per cent said they had worked for four to six months. Only 25 per cent of these women had worked for seven to nine months and 10 to 12 months each. Most women in the age groups of 25-29 years, 30-34 years and 35-39 years were unemployed, but 60 per cent between 40 to 44 years were engaged in a paid activity. Education levels and monthly income do not affect women's work or employment status. The women who were employed were engaged as small and marginal farmers (66.54 per cent), in domestic work (4 per cent), as agricultural labourers (11.78), in teaching (2 per cent), in clerical work (2 per cent), in construction (1 per cent) and as AWWs (3 per cent). The remaining women were involved in home-based work (self-owned businesses/self-

employed), shop keeping and street vending, and forest work.

In Sabarkantha and Tapi, respondents were primarily engaged in farm work, 80 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively. Kandhamal had the highest proportion (42 per cent) of casual labourers or daily wage workers, while East Khasi Hills had 29 per



Image Credit: Sruthi Kutty/IWWAGE

Table 9: Gender distribution of respondents' children across districts

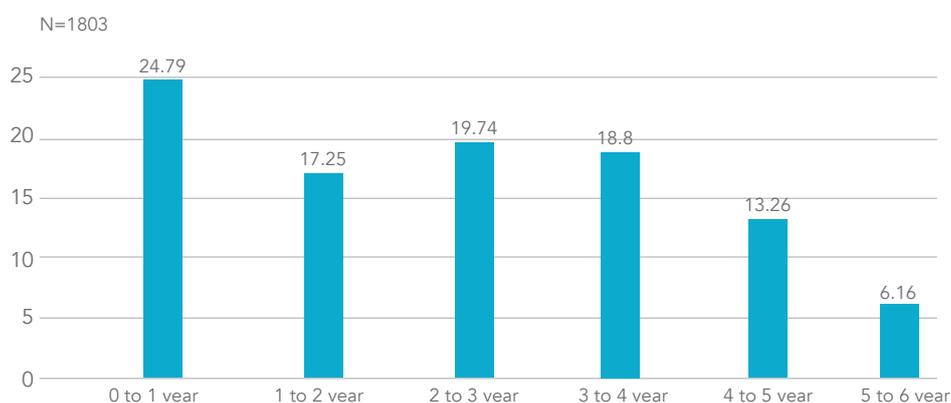
Gender	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills	Total
Male	295	61	163	198	147	864
Female	317	79	199	201	143	939
Total	612	140	362	399	290	1,803

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Age profile

In terms of age, 25 per cent of all the respondents' children were infants at zero to one years, 17 per cent were one to two years old, 20 per cent were two to three years old, 19 per cent were three to four years old, and 13 per cent were four to five years old. Only 6 per cent were in the five to six years age group.

Figure 5: Age distribution of the respondents children



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Education level

Further information was obtained on the education levels of children aged four to six years (38 per cent of all children). Among these 679 children, 32 per cent were enrolled and 68 per cent were out of school; 36 per cent could neither read nor write while 33 per cent could do both; 17 per cent could only write while 14 per cent could only read; 20 per cent had completed two to three years of schooling while 43 per cent had completed one year of education at the time of the survey; 37 per cent had never been taught. Children in Trivandrum and East Khasi Hills had higher number of years of schooling than other areas (19 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively). In contrast, in Tapi, they still needed to complete a single year of schooling, although 53 of 140 children aged four to six years were eligible for education.

Table 10: Reading and writing abilities of children

Can the child (aged four years or more) read and write?	Frequency	Per cent
Read-only	95	13.99
Write only	115	16.94
Both read and write	224	32.99
None	245	36.08
Total	679	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Table 11: Number of years of schooling of children in each district

How many years of schooling has the child completed so far?	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills	Total
0 years	40%	100%	52%	58%	24%	37%
1 year	44%	0%	28%	33%	54%	43%
2 years	8%	0%	19%	8%	18%	16%
3 years	8%	0%	2%	0%	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, 54per cent of children attended no virtual classes and 15per cent accessed pre-recorded videos; only 23per cent accessed live courses using mobile devices.

Table 12: Children's attendance in virtual classes during Covid

Since Covid, has the child been attending any virtual classes/online tutoring?	Frequency	Per cent
No, not attended any classes	119	54.34
No, but engaging in remote learning activities through SEWA/partners/ local NGOs	0	0
Yes, attending live remote classes via phone	51	23.29
Yes, remote classes conducted through pre-recorded video	33	15.07
Do not know	3	1.37
Others	13	5.94
Total	219	100.00

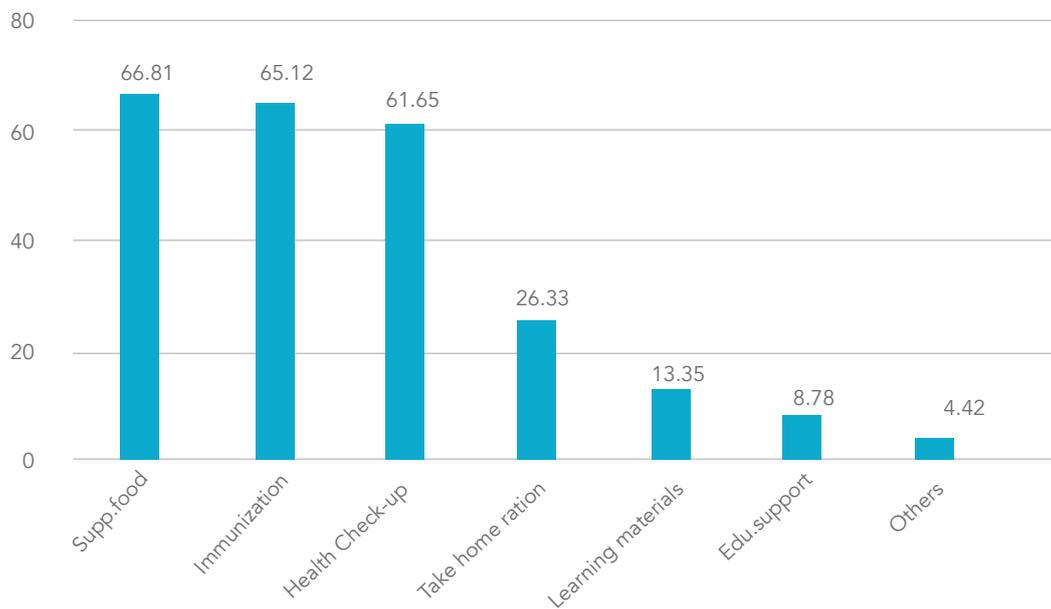
Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Most children usually spent most of their time at home (80per cent); only 13per cent went to AWCs or ICDS centres while 6per cent went to a relative's or friend's house, irrespective of the pandemic situation.

Services received through the care facility

A total of 67per cent of the women who received assistance through the care facility said they received supplementary food through AWCs or other childcare facilities over the past year, 65per cent said they received immunisation, and 62per cent reported that they received health check-ups at these centres. Only 27per cent stated that they were provided with rations to take home, 13per cent received learning materials, and 9per cent received education support.

The availability of take-home ration was highest in Trivandrum. Delivery of learning or educational support materials could have been higher across all districts.

Figure 6: Services received from AWC or other childcare facilities

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Note: Others includes clothing materials such as dresses, sweaters, shoes and socks or food items such as rice, dal, oil, eggs, vegetables, and potatoes.

Table 13: Proportion of women in every district who received services from AWCs or other childcare centres

Facility	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills	Total
Supplementary food	61%	96%	51%	90%	53%	37%
Immunisation	96%	45%	54%	35%	57%	43%
Health check-up	94%	83%	10%	57%	42%	16%
Take home ration	-	-	52%	24%	68%	4%
Learning materials	20%	28%	4%	15%	1%	100%
Educational support	13%	17%	4%	9%	0%	

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

4.3. Unmet needs for childcare of women working for pay/profit

Access to childcare facilities

Our survey collected further data from the 535 respondents engaged in paid work in the past 12 months. About 26 per cent of the respondents reported having a creche or similar care facility at their workplaces while almost 75 per cent reported the unavailability of such facilities. All states reported low availability of creches: 7 per cent in Trivandrum, 6 per cent in Tapi, 4 per cent in Kandhamal and 1 per cent in East Khasi Hills.

Table 14: Availability of creches or any other childcare facilities across districts

Does your workplace have a creche or any other childcare facility?	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills
Yes	-	6%	7%	4%	1%
No	-	94%	85%	96%	99%
Do not know	-	0%	7%	0%	0%
Total	-	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Table 15: Where the children spent their time while the mothers worked

When you are working, what do you do with your children?	Frequency	Per cent
Take them with me to work	167	31.21
Female member(s) in the house watches them	145	27.1
Husband watches them	79	14.77
Leave them with their sibling	76	14.21
Leave them at a neighbour's/friend's/relative's house	34	6.36
Male member(s) in the house watches them	21	3.93
They are at school	3	0.56
Anganwadi/balwadi centre	3	0.56
Childcare facility (other than the employer)	1	0.19
Other	6	1.12
Total	535	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

A very small number (0.75 per cent) of the respondents sent their children to AWCs and childcare facilities. This might be because the children in the sample size below three years outnumber the four to six-year-olds. Given their greater vulnerability, women trusted family members more than the AWCs or childcare facilities to look after their infants and toddlers. There was a trust deficit as well as an uncertainty about the quality of childcare the child would receive at a AWC or childcare facility. The trust perception was further reduced due to the outbreak of the pandemic.

Those who sent their children to these facilities were further asked about the distance from their homes and work sites to those centres. Sufficient data could not be gathered from our survey, and it can be concluded that there is a need to improve access to childcare facilities. About 41 per cent of women reported that they could not work outside their homes because of childcare responsibilities. Table 16 shows the kind of childcare duties that restricted these women from being engaged in paid work outside their homes.

Table 16: Why women must stay home with their children

On these days, why did you need to stay with your child?	Frequency
Child sick or injured	118
No one else to take care of the child/family members or friends not available	144
Childcare facility closed	3
Other	19
Total	284

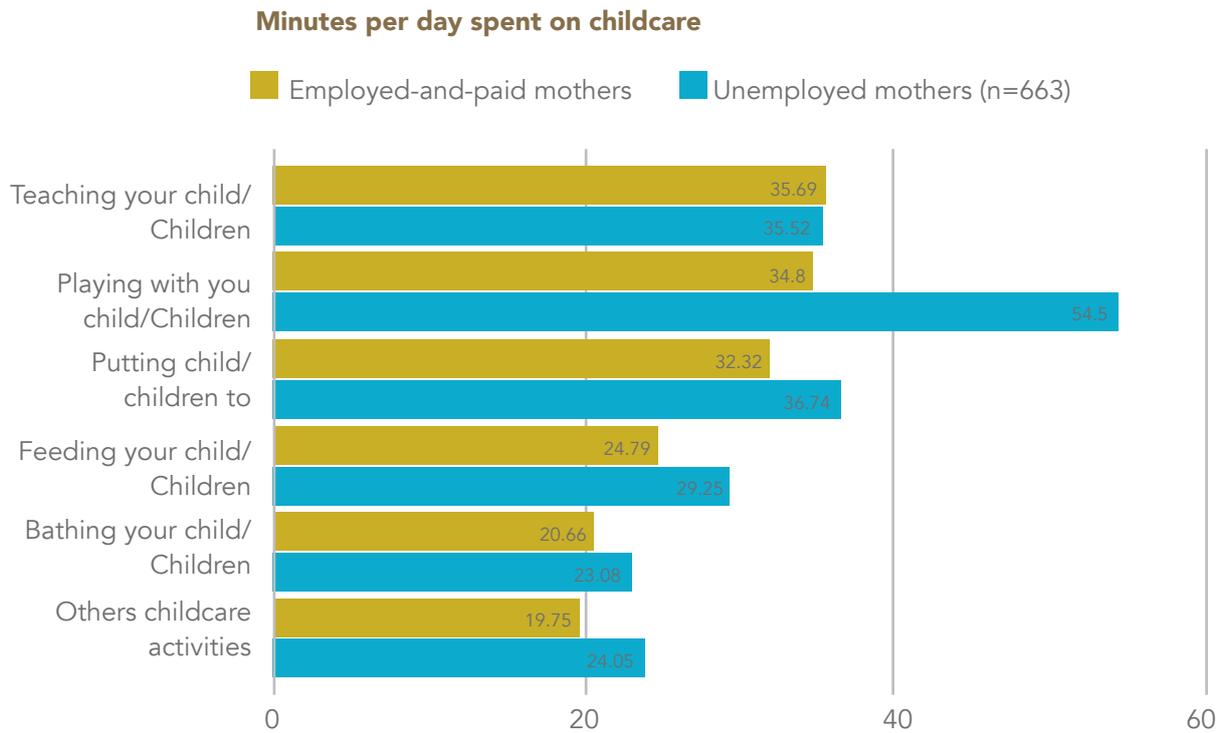
Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Time use

Mothers working for pay or profit spent 15.15 hours on various activities (economic and non-economic) while mothers not working for pay or profit spent 11.23 hours (non-economic). Time spent on activities was the same for both categories of mothers; mothers working for pay were doing excess work only while working for pay. This implies that working days were longer for mothers working for pay or profit in comparison with mothers not working for pay.

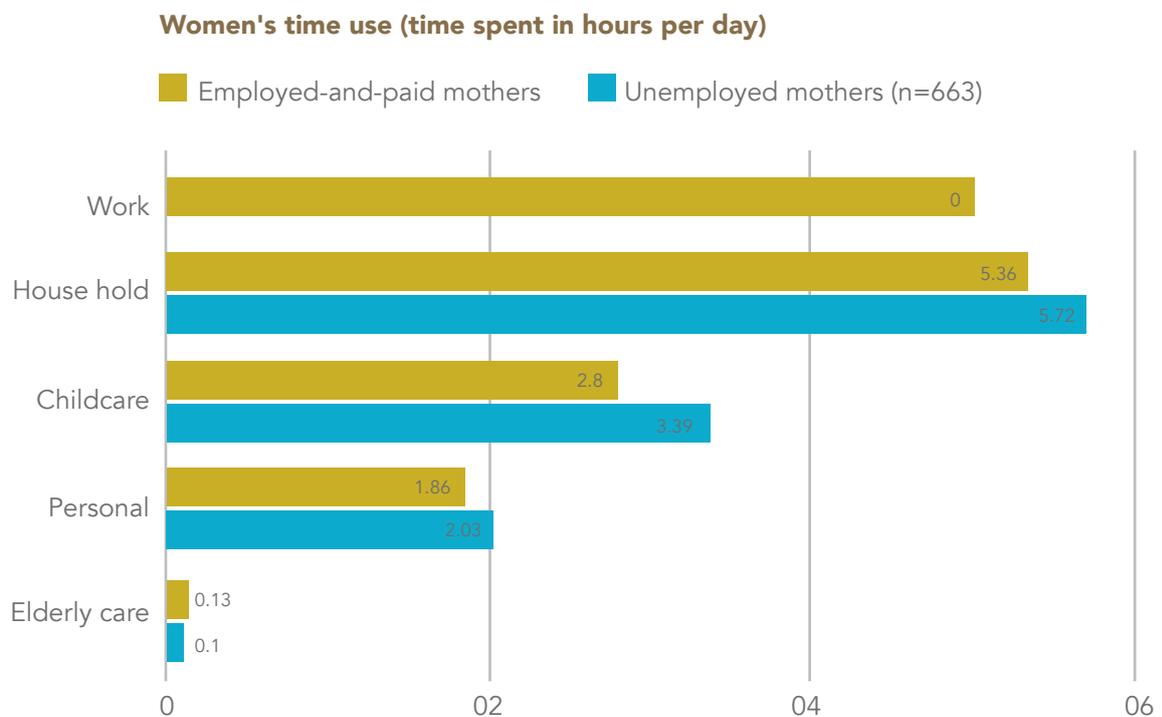
Mothers not working for pay spent 21 per cent more of their day on childcare activities such as playing with the children, putting them to bed, teaching, feeding or bathing them, which amounted to 37 minutes more time than that spent by mothers working for pay/profit on childcare activities. Mothers not working for pay spent 55 minutes per day on playing with the children while mothers working for pay/ profit spent only 35 minutes; time spent on teaching was the same for both. Mothers working for pay or profit spent equal time teaching their children versus their non-earning counterparts because they felt that it was crucial for their children's future.

Figure 7: Time spent on childcare activities by women



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Figure 8: Women's time-use per day



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

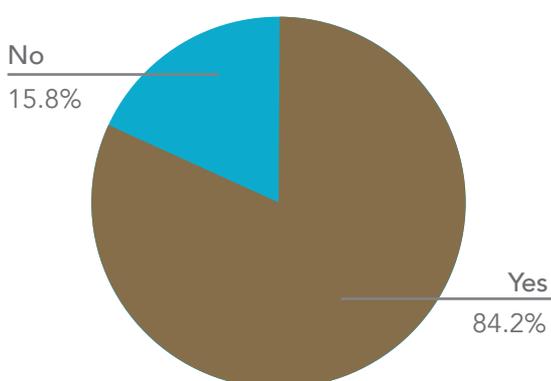
4.4. Preferences for childcare services

Willingness to pay

Given the high demand for childcare facilities, women were asked about their willingness to send their children to the free-of-cost childcare facility near their homes. A majority (84 per cent) of respondents expressed willingness to send children to these centres while 16 per cent refused. More than 90 per cent of mothers in Sabarkantha, Tapi and Kandhamal were willing to send their children to free childcare facilities while only 71 per cent in Trivandrum and 65 per cent in East Khasi Hills were willing to do so. The AWCs in Trivandrum have been newly established, and they enjoy less confidence among people compared to state government-run facilities. Mothers were also asked about their willingness to send the children to paid care facilities and 61 per cent were willing to do so. However, in Trivandrum and East Khasi Hills, 81 per cent and 56 per cent of mothers, respectively, reported unwilling to send their children to paid care centres. In Trivandrum, there are robust government-run public health facilities; therefore, we find that only 10 per cent of the children received health check-ups at the AWCs. The mothers send their children to the PHCs instead for any health issues.

Figure 9: Willingness of respondents to send children to free childcare facilities near their home

For some time every day, would you send your child there? n=1198



Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Table 17: Willingness to send children to paid healthcare facilities

Would you send children if the facility is paid?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	620	61.45
No	389	
Total	1009	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Only 616 of 1,009 respondents were willing to spend varying amounts on childcare facilities. Tables 18 and 19 show the mothers' willingness to pay for care facilities across the entire sample and districts. Irrespective of the estimated annual income of mothers, most women preferred to spend INR 51-500 per month on childcare. If the women were earning more, they were willing to spend marginally higher amounts on childcare. However, no conclusive pattern can be drawn from the data.

Table 18: Willingness to pay for childcare

How much money per month would you be willing to pay for a childcare service?	Frequency	Percent
INR 1 to 50	52	8.4%
INR 51 to 100	177	28.7%
INR 101 to 200	215	34.9%
INR 201 to 500	144	23.4%
INR 501 to 1,000	7	1.1%
INR 1001 to 2,000	5	0.8%
INR 2001 to 5,000	16	2.6%
Total	616	100.0%

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Table 19: Willingness to pay for childcare services across districts

How much money per month would you be willing to pay for a childcare service?	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills	Total
INR 1 to 50	1%	0%	0%	21%	2%	8%
INR 51 to 100	34%	12%	0%	40%	2%	29%
INR 101 to 200	40%	65%	4%	26%	16%	35%
INR 201 to 500	16%	23%	96%	11%	72%	23%
INR 501 to 1,000	0%	0%	0%	1%	5%	1%
INR 1001 to 2,000	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%	1%
INR 2001 to 5,000	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Operational aspects

Table 20 shows the duration for which mothers are eager to send their children to care facilities. It was observed that mothers seldom sent their children to the AWCs due to uncertain care quality and trust deficit in the pre-Covid situation when AWCs were operating for a maximum of four hours. An overwhelming majority of respondents (62.44 per cent) stated their willingness to send their children to childcare facilities for a duration of four to six hours.

Table 20: Duration for which mothers are willing to send their children to care facilities

How many hours would you send the child there for?	Frequency	Per cent
0 hours	4	0.40
1 to 3 hours	196	19.43
4 to 6 hours	630	62.44
7 to 9 hours	179	17.74
Total	1009	100.00

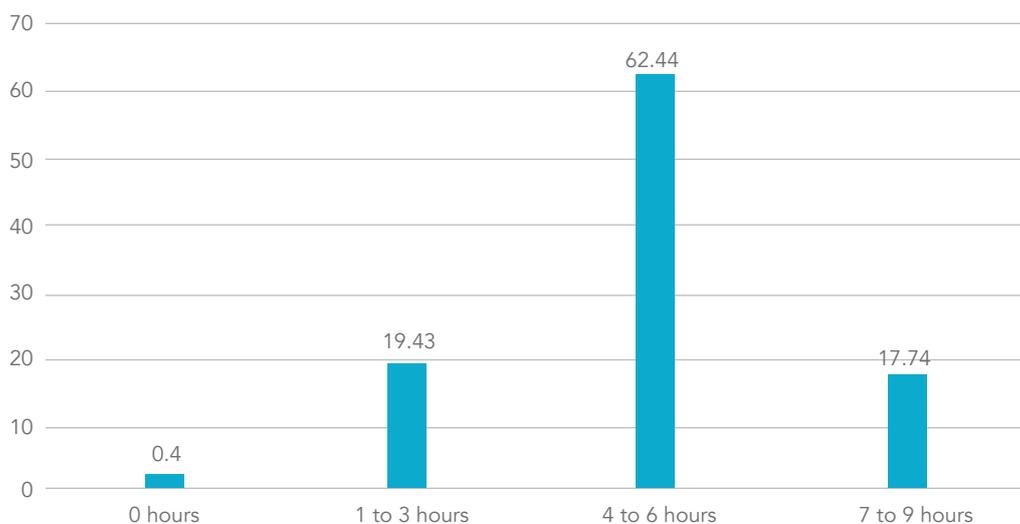
Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

At least 34 per cent of respondents preferred to drop their children at childcare centres at 10 am, 28 per cent at 9 am and one-third preferred 4 pm as the ideal time to pick them up. The time slots of 10 am to 4 pm and 9 am to 3 pm were the most preferred hours for the functioning of the care facilities as they were selected by 18 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively. Table 21 shows the drop off and pick-up times per the children's mother's preferences.

Table 21: Time preferences of respondents to drop off and pick up children from childcare facilities

At what time in the morning would you want to drop your child there?	At what time in the afternoon/evening would you find it comfortable to pick up your child from the facility?							
	Before 3 pm	3 pm	4 pm	5 pm	6 pm	Other	Refused	Total
Before 8 am	36	6	16	33	2	3	0	96
8 am	73	47	45	24	5	7	0	201
9 am	58	105	83	37	2	1	0	286
10 am	37	90	180	34	0	2	0	343
11 am	54	12	3	3	0	0	0	72
Other	0	1	1	4	0	3	0	9
Refused	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total	258	261	329	135	9	16	1	1009

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Figure 10: Operational hours of AWCs

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Reading Table 21 and Figure 11 in conjunction, it is clear that while a six-hour operational time might be most suitable for working women; the preferred time window would be different for different women depending on the nature of employment. For example, 50 per cent of the women engaged in construction work, 50 per cent of those in forest work and 36 per cent of casual workers preferred to drop off their children at the care facilities as early as 8 am, while 81 per cent of domestic workers and 44 per cent of teachers chose the 9 am slot. The rest of the respondents preferred 10 am, while self-employed women or entrepreneurs or home-based workers were indifferent to the opening time of the childcare facilities. A majority (89 per cent) of women engaged in clerical work said they preferred to pick up their children at 3 pm while others preferred 4 pm. Very few preferred 6 pm as the picking-up time.

Figure 11: Preference for timing and AWC working hours depends on nature of work

Reading Table 21 and Figure 11 in conjunction, it is clear that while a six-hour operational time might be most suitable for working women; the preferred time window would be different for different women depending on the nature of employment. For example, 50 per cent of the women engaged in construction work, 50 per cent of those in forest work and 36 per cent of casual workers preferred to drop off their children at the care facilities as early as 8 am, while 81 per cent of domestic workers and 44 per cent of teachers chose the 9 am slot. The rest of the respondents preferred 10 am, while self-employed women or entrepreneurs or home-based workers were indifferent to the opening time of the childcare facilities. A majority (89 per cent) of women engaged in clerical work said they preferred to pick up their children at 3 pm while others preferred 4 pm. Very few preferred 6 pm as the picking-up time.

8:00 AM	6 Hours				
9:00 AM		6 Hours	6 Hours	6 Hours	6 Hours
10:00 AM					
11:00 AM					
12:00 PM					
1:00 PM					
2:00 PM					
3:00 PM					
4:00 PM					
5:00 PM					
6:00 PM					

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Overall, amongst working women, 65 per cent wanted to drop their children at the AWCs before 10 am and 56 per cent preferred to pick them up in the 4-5 pm window. It is therefore very important to note that to cater to the childcare requirements of informal women workers, extension of working hours of the AWCs is necessary. This might also open opportunities for women for alternative forms of productive employment which they might not have considered yet due to time poverty.

The preference of four to six hours of AWCs operation is probably because the extension in the hours of AWC operation and its attendant advantages have not been experienced by the women as yet.

Facilities and services

As per the survey data, the respondents place importance on learning opportunities for children at childcare centres. This study has already observed that the mothers were not satisfied with the learning or educational support provided by the AWCs over the past 12 months. About 75 per cent of the women gave importance to learning services, 64 per cent to playing facilities, while accessibility and timing of the centre were less important among more than half the respondents. Table 22 shows facilities in the order of the respondents' preferences with their corresponding ranks.

Table 22: Services at childcare centres in order of mothers' preference

Preference for factors before enrolling a child at childcare facility	Frequency	Average score on a scale of 1 (most minor) to 9 (most)
Tutoring and learning	1,009	7.27
Playing facilities	1,009	6.90
Food and its quality	1,009	6.63
Nature of caregivers (AWWs and helpers)	1,009	6.06
Vaccination and immunisation facility	1,009	4.84
Affordability, if paid	1,008	4.00
Accessibility	1,009	3.46
Timing of the centre	1,009	3.20
Overall quality	997	2.58

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

4.5. Knowledge and awareness of AWC operations

With reference to anganwadis, 67 per cent of women reported that in their areas they were operational for four to six hours (most of them were open for not more than 4 hours), and 30 per cent stated they operated for one to three hours. A large number (75 per cent) of mothers in Kandhamal and 37 per cent in East Khasi Hills also indicated that their AWCs were in operation for one to three hours.

Table 23: Daily operational time at anganwadis

For how many hours in the day was the AWC open?	Frequency	Per cent
0 hours	15	1.25
1 to 3 hours	367	30.63
4 to 6 hours	806	67.28
7 to 9 hours	6	0.50
10 to 12 hours	2	0.17
Do not know	2	0.17
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Most (90 per cent) of women said that their AWCs operated for four to six days every week while 8 per cent reported one to three days as the weekly operation schedule of their Anganwadis. At least 20 per cent of respondents in Sabarkantha and Tapi said that the AWCs in their areas were operational one to three days weekly.

Table 24: Weekly operational days at anganwadis

For how many days in the week was the AWC open?	Frequency	Per cent
0 days	20	1.67
1 to 3 days	99	8.26
4 to 6 days	1,077	89.90
Do not know	2	0.17
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Asked about the staff at the AWCs, 89 per cent of women said that the AWCs had two (AWWs) each, 4 per cent stated that they had three workers while 6 per cent reported that they had one worker each.

Table 25: Number of AWWs/AWHs at anganwadis

How many workers and helpers were generally there?	Frequency	Per cent
0 workers	8	0.67
1 worker	75	6.26
2 workers	1,061	88.56
3 workers	52	4.34
Do not know	2	0.17
Total	1,198	100.00

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

Asked about the help they received from AWC staff, 92 per cent of women reported that the AWHs helped them measure the weight and height of their children regularly while 4.51 per cent said that no such activities took place in their AWCs. Table 26 shows how much help the women received from AWC workers in various childcare activities.

Table 26: How much and what kind of help was received by women in childcare activities from AWWs/AWHs

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't know (%)
Were AWWs/AWHs always present?	85.89	5.01	9.10
Did AWWs/AWHs provide meals to children regularly?	84.97	5.34	9.68
Did AWWs/AWHs take the weight and height measurements of the child regularly?	91.90	4.51	3.59
Did AWWs/AWHs ever tell you about the child's nutrition and dietary practices?	84.81	11.10	4.09
Did AWWs/AWHs ever tell you about the child's immunisation?	88.73	7.68	3.59
Did AWWs/AWHs ever tell you about maternal health practices?	80.47	15.11	4.42
For any health-related concerns, does the worker/helper direct you to the local PHC or Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)?	82.72	11.60	5.68
Do any community organisation/Self Help Group (SHG)/voluntary organisation assist in any activities of the AWC?	28.21	52.00	19.78

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations

The dissemination of information by AWWs/AWHs was relatively high in the districts.

Table 27: Dissemination of information by AWWs/AWHs across districts

Statement	Sabarkantha	Tapi	Trivandrum	Kandhamal	East Khasi Hills
The AWWs/AWHs were always present	99%	94%	62%	97%	77%
The AWWs/AWHs provided meals to children regularly	97%	94%	59%	97%	79%
The AWWs/AWHs took weight and height measurements of the child regularly	99%	96%	75%	98%	93%
The AWWs/AWHs told me about the child's nutrition and diet	91%	88%	64%	94%	89%
The AWWs/AWHs told me about the child's immunisation	99%	84%	65%	98%	94%
The AWWs/AWHs told me about maternal health practices	85%	77%	50%	97%	91%
For health-related concerns, the AWWs/AWHs directed me to the local PHC or ASHA worker	97%	77%	51%	92%	92%
I know of a community organisation/SHG/voluntary organisation that assists in AWC's activities	48%	6%	2%	47%	18%

Source: Primary Survey, Authors' Calculations



Image Credit: Suchit Nanda/Majority World/Stars Foundation

5 CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD



When the second Covid-19 wave hit India, it exposed the need to study how the pandemic affected ECD outcomes, children's health and nutrition, and the overall health and well-being of parents and caregivers in vulnerable and marginalised communities. Towards this, SEWA, in collaboration with local partner organisations, implemented a holistic set of interventions in 2021-22 to help parents and caregivers to cope with the pandemic and to continue their children's learning and support overall well-being. The services delivered included: (i) ECE support to guide parents and caregivers; (ii) awareness building on health, nutrition and hygiene of mother and children; and (iii) psychosocial support and mental well-being of parents and primary caregivers, all in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. These interventions were implemented in 44 AWCs across five districts/four states – Sabarkantha, Tapi, Kandhamal, Trivandrum and East Khasi Hills.

Towards this goal, IWWAGE conducted a qualitative initial evaluation to assess the interventions implemented across the four states to help communities ameliorate the impact of Covid-19 on the above-listed aspects. In the next phase of the study, focus group discussions were held with beneficiaries of these interventions (also mothers

of children aged between zero and six years) to: (i) understand the delivery of interventions to mothers as primary caregivers; (ii) determine the extent to which the intervention benefitted children on ECE, and health and nutrition outcomes; and (iii) understand the issues of parents' and primary caregivers' mental health.

Subsequently, in 2024, the endline round of this study will be conducted to assess the impact of a pilot project in the districts of Sabarkantha and Tapi in Gujarat. The pilot project will be implemented in 10 existing ICDS centres (four in rural areas of Tapi district and six in rural areas of Sabarkantha district). The pilot intervention will encompass multiple components to strengthen the delivery of full-day, quality childcare services to communities through a participatory and community-based approach. The intervention will include extended hours of ICDS centres, additional learning inputs for children and care providers, additional nutrition for children and an additional worker at each centre. A comparison of the data gathered in the baseline and endline survey is expected to allow us to assess the impact of the pilot intervention. The study will also help determine the cost of implementing such a programme using the existing ICDS architecture.



Appendix A: Survey questionnaire**Survey Questionnaire for SEWA's study on Quality Childcare**

Round 1: Childcare Needs Assessment						
Q. No.	Question	Code	Options	Skip Pattern/ Restriction	Definitions	Comments
MODULE 0 - INTRODUCTION AND CONSENT FORM						
0	<p><i>Consent form [Surveyor read]</i></p> <p>Hello, I am [enumerator name]. I am working on a research study by IWWAGE, a centre at LEAD at Krea University. We are conducting a study to see how Covid-19 has affected your lives and that of your children, and to better understand your childcare needs.</p> <p>This survey will take approximately 30 minutes. Your participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. If there are any questions you do not want to answer, you may refuse to answer them without any consequence.</p> <p>The data collected through the survey will be kept confidential. Your personal details will not be shared with anyone, without your prior consent.</p> <p>If you have any questions now I will answer them. If you have any questions in the future, an SMS will be sent to your number with a copy of this consent form along with our organisation's details should you consent to participate in this survey.</p> <p>Do you give consent to participate in this study?</p>	1	Yes	Audio record consent		SMS to be sent at the end of the interview

Q. No.	Question	Prefill	Code	Options	Skip Pattern/ Restriction	Definitions
MODULE A – HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFICATION						
A1	Surveyor ID	Prefill			QR code autogen, pre-allocated	Pre-allocated
A2	Household ID	Prefill			QR code autogen, pre-allocated	
A3	First and last name	Prefill	Text	Text	Single response	
A4	Phone number	Prefill	Numeric	Numeric	10 digits; Single response	
A5	State	Prefill	1	Gujarat	Single response	
			2	Kerala		
			3	Meghalaya		
			4	Odisha		
A6	District	Prefill	1	Tapi	Single response	See Appendix
			2	Sabar Kantha		
			3	Thiruvananthapuram		
			4	East Khasi Hills		
A7	Block/Ward	Prefill	5	Kandhamal	Single response	See Appendix for Blocks
Text			Text			
A8	Village	Prefill	Text	Text	Single response	See Appendix for Villages
A9	Anganwadi centre ID	Prefill	Text	Text	Single response	See Appendix for AWCs
A10	Date of visit		Date	Date	Single response	DD/MM/YYYY
A11	Interview start time		Time	Time	Single response	HH:MM
A12	Interview end time		Time	Time	Single response	HH:MM; To be filled at the end of interview

Q. No.	Question	Prefill	Code	Options	Skip Pattern/ Restriction	Definitions
MODULE B – RESPONDENT’S INFORMATION						
B1	Who is the head of the household?		1	Self	B1 = 1 or -999 □ B3; Single response	
			2	Husband		
			3	Father		
			4	Mother		
			5	Father-in-law		
			6	Mother-in-law		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
B2	What is your relationship to household head?		-999	Do not know	Single response	
			1	Wife		
			2	Mother		
			3	Mother-in-law		
			4	Sister		
			5	Sister-in-law		
			6	Daughter		
			7	Daughter-in-law		
-888	Other; Please specify					
B3	What is your religion?		1	Hindu	Single response	
			2	Muslim		
			3	Christian		
			4	Sikh		
			5	Buddhist		
			6	Jain		
			7	Parsi		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Others; please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
B4	Which social group do you belong to?		1	General		
			2	Other backward class		
			3	Scheduled Caste		

			4	Scheduled Tribe	B4 < 4 ☐ B6; Single response	
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Others; please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
B5	Which tribal group do you belong to?		1	Dungri Bhi	Single response	
			2	Dabhi		
			3	Parmar		
			4	Kateria		
			5	Dhrangi		
			6	Gamar		
			7	Gamit		
			8	Bhil		
			9	Kani		
			10	Adivasi- Kandha		
			11	Adivasi- Ganda		
			12	Harijana- Pana		
			13	Harijana- Keuta		
			14	Khasi		
		-777	Refused			
		-888	Others; please specify			
		-999	Do not know			
B6	Have you ever attended school?	0	No		B6 = 0 ☐ B8; Single response	
		1	Yes			
B7	What is the highest level of education that you have completed?		1	Primary (up to 5th)		
			2	Middle (up to 7th)		
			3	Secondary (up to 10th)		
			4	Higher Secondary (up to 12th)		
			5	Graduate		
			6	Post-graduate		
		7	Vocational/technical education			

			-777	Refused		
			-888	Others; please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
B8	How old are you?		Numeric	Numeric	B8 <= 99; Single response	Age completed as of 1 October 2021
B9	What is your current marital status?		0	Single, never married	Single response	Multiple mothers in a households that have children in AWC we will take random sample from AWC. So this problem should not occur at the 'household' level: we will select respondent from the AWC list.
			1	Married, gauna not performed		
			2	Married		
			3	Divorced/separated/deserted		
			4	Widowed		
			5	Separated		
			6	Deserted		
			-777	Refused		
B10	How many male members currently reside in your house?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
B11	How many female members currently reside in your house?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
B12	How many of these members are aged 0-6 years?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	Children's roster (B26 to B26_9) to be administered for all these children, coded as B27, B28... etc.
B13	How many of these members are aged 6-18 years?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
B14	Do you have children?		0	No	B14 MUST be = 1; Single response	Basis of respondent selection
			1	Yes		

B15	How many children do you have between the ages of 0-6 years?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
B16	How many of your children are older than 6 years?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
B17	What is the current monthly household income?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
			-999	Do not know		in Rupees. Household: All people, including children, who live or have lived under this "roof" or within the same house for at least 30 continuous days in the past 1 year, and when they are together, they share food from a common source, and contribute to and/or share in a common resource pool and individuals who do not have a permanent residence outside of this household.
B18	In the last 12 months, did you receive this income in all months?		0	No	B18 = 1 or -999 ☐	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		

B19	If not, in how many months out of 12 did you receive lesser income?		Numeric	Numeric	<= 12; Single response	In number of months
			-999	Do not know		
B20	How many sources of income you're your household have?		1	Single	Single response	
			2	Multiple		
			-777	Refused		
			-999	Do not know		
B21	How much money did your household received in total in the last 12 months from the following:					
B21_1	Agricultural income		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B21_2	Income from livestock		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B21_3	Business income		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B21_5	Salaries and wages, including from manual labour in agricultural work, manual labour in non-agricultural work outside home, home-based non-agricultural work		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B21_6	Rent/lease of property (house, land, vehicle, tractor, electronic appliance, etc.)		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B21_7	Insurance payments received/ compensation payment for some injury or work-related accidents		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B21_8	Financial investments (fixed deposits, interest earned, etc., insurance maturity)		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		

B22	In the last 12 months, has your household received any cash transfers from the government, including for pensions, welfare schemes, beneficiary projects or relief projects?		0	No	B22 = 0 ☐ B24; Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
B23	How much money did you receive?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		
B24	In the last 12 months, have your household members sold any assets (gold, livestock, vehicle, etc.) for cash in return?		0	No	B24 = 0 ☐ B26; Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
B25	How much cash did you get in return?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
			-999	Do not know		

CHILD ROSTER (Repeat for number = B12): For ALL children in your household who are aged between 0 and 6 years, please share the following information with me. For every child include all details

Q. No.	Question	Prefill	Code	Options	Skip Pattern/ Restriction	Definitions
B26	Name of child		Text	Text	Single response	
B26_1	Gender		1	Male	Single response	
			2	Female		
B26_2	Age		Numeric	Numeric	B26_2 >= 0 and <= 6; Single response	Age completed as of 1 October 2021
B26_3	Prior to Covid, where did the child (B26) spend most of his/her time during the day?		1	Home		
			2	Home of relative of friend		

			3	Anganwadi centre/ ICDS centre		
			4	Community childcare facility		
			5	School		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Others; please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
B26_4	In the last 1.5 years, since Covid, where does the child (B26) spend most of his/her time during the day?		1	Home	Single response	
			2	Home of relative or friend		
			3	Anganwadi center/ ICDS center		
			4	Community child care facility		
			5	School		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Others; please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
B26_5	Which of the following has the child (B26) received through the AWC or childcare facility in the last 1 year during Covid?		1	Educational support	Select multiple	
			2	Learning materials		
			3	Supplementary food		
			4	Health check-up		
			5	Immunisation		
			6	Take home ration (THR)		
			-888	Others; please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
B26_6	Can the child (B26) read and write?		1	Read only	ask if B26_2 >= 4; Single response	
			2	Write only		
			3	Both		
			4	None		
B26_7	Is the child (B26) enrolled in a school this year?		0	No	ask if B26_2 >= 4; Single response	
			1	Yes		

B26_8	Since the school has been shut due to Covid, has the child been attending any virtual classes/online tutoring? Covid?		0	No, not attended any classes	ask if B26_2 >= 4 and B26_7 = 1; Single response	
			1	No, but engaging in remote learning activities through SEWA/partners/local NGOs		
			2	Yes, attending live remote classes via phone		
			3	Yes, remote classes conducted through pre-recorded video		
B26_9	How many years of schooling has the child (B26) completed so far?		-888	Others; please specify	ask if B26_2 >= 4; Single response	In Years
			-999	Do not know		
			Numeric	Numeric		
Q. No.	Question	Prefill	Code	Options	Skip Pattern/Restriction	Definitions
MODULE C – UNMET CHILDCARE NEEDS FOR WORKING MOTHERS						
C1	Have you done any work in the last 12 months?		0	No	C1 = 0 ☐ C11; Single response	
			1	Yes		
C2	In the last 12 months, how many months did you work for?		Numeric	Numeric	<= 12; Single response	In number of months
C3	What type of work are you engaged in?		1	Farm work	Single response	
			2	Agricultural labour		
			3	Construction work		
			4	Casual labour (not in construction)/daily wage work		
			5	Forest work		
			6	Fishing		
			7	Teacher		
			8	Anganwadi worker or helper		
			9	Clerical		
			10	Supervisory		

			11	Shopkeeping		
			12	Shop-floor worker		
			13	Street vending		
			14	Domestic work		
			15	Home-based work/ own business/Self- employed		
			16	Helper in household enterprise		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C4	In what form are you paid for your activities at work?		1	Cash only	C4 \geq 3 ☐ C7; Single response	
			2	Cash and kind		
			3	In-kind only		
			4	Not paid		
C5	How often do you receive the payment?		1	Daily	C5 $<$ 0 ☐ C7; Single response	
			2	Every week		
			3	Every 2 weeks		
			4	Monthly		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C6	At what rate (how much money) do you receive for this work (response to C5)?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	in Rupees
C7	What is the frequency of your work?		1	Throughout the year	Single response	
			2	Seasonal/part of the year		
			3	Once in a while		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C8	How far is your workplace from your home?		1	500 meters or less	skip C8 if C3 = 15; Single response	
			2	500 meters - 1 km		
			3	1 km - 5 km		
			4	More than 5 km		
C9	Does your workplace have a crèche or any other childcare facility?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		

C10	When you are working, what do you do with your children?		1	Take them with me to work		
			2	Leave them with their sibling		
			3	Husband watches them		
			4	Other female member(s) in the house watches them		
			5	Other male member(s) in the house watches them		
			6	Leave them at neighbour/friend/relative's house		
			7	They are at school		
			8	Anganwadi/Balwadi centre		
			9	Childcare facility provided by employer		
			10	Childcare facility (other than employer)		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C11	When you are busy at home with domestic errands, what do you do with your children?		1	Leave them with their sibling	ask if C1 = 0; C11 <= 6 ☑ C17; Single response	
			2	Husband watches them		
			3	Other female member(s) in the house watches them		
			4	Other male member(s) in the house watches them		
			5	Leave them at neighbour's/friend's/relative's house		
			6	They are at school		
			7	Anganwadi/Balwadi centre		
			8	Childcare facility		
			888	Other; Please specify		

C12	Do you pay for the service of the childcare facility?		0	No	ask if C10 = 8, 9 or 10 OR	
			1	Yes	ask if C11 = 7 or 8; Single response	
C13	How frequently do you have to pay for the childcare facility?		1	Daily		
			2	Every week		
			3	Every 2 weeks		
			4	Monthly		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
			-999	Do not know		
C14	At what rate (how much money) do you pay for (response to C13)?		Numeric	Numeric	ask if C10 = 8, 9 or 10 OR	
			-777	Refused		
			-999	Do not know		
C15	How far is this childcare facility from your home?		1	500 meters or less	ask if C10 = 8, 9 or 10 OR	
			2	500 meters - 1 km		
			3	1 km - 5 km		
			4	More than 5 km		
C16	How far is this childcare facility from your place of work?		1	500 meters or less	ask if C10 = 8, 9 or 10 OR	
			2	500 meters - 1 km		
			3	1 km - 5 km		
			4	More than 5 km		
C17	In the last one month, have there been occasions when you have not been able to engage in work outside home (not DOMESTIC work) because of your childcare duties?		0	No		
			1	Yes		

C18	In the past month, how many days in a month have you had to skip work because of these duties?		Numeric	Numeric	<= 31; Single response	Record number of days a month
C19	On these days, what was the reason you needed to stay with your child?		1	Family members or friends not available	ask if C18 > 0; Single response	
			2	No one else to take care of child		
			3	Childcare facility closed		
			4	Child sick or injured		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C20	On a typical day, how many minutes in a day do you spend on:					Record in number of minutes
C20_1	Paid work outside the home?		Numeric	Numeric	ask if C1 = 1; Single response	
C20_2	Travel to workplace		Numeric	Numeric	ask if C1 = 1 & C3 != 15; Single response	
C20_3	Cooking/meal preparation		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_4	Cleaning, dusting, mopping		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_5	Washing clothes		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_6	Grocery shopping/picking/gathering		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_7	Other house related work		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_8	Bathing your child/children		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_9	Feeding your child/children		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_10	Teaching your child/children		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_11	Playing with you child/children		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_12	Putting child/children to sleep		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	

C20_13	Other childcare activities		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_14	Elderly care (attending to medication, therapies, etc.)		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_15	Eating and drinking		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_16	Resting/sleeping during the daytime		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_17	Personal care		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_18	Other leisurely activities (entertainment, reading, TV, friends, WhatsApp, YouTube)		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C20_19	Other activities		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
C21	If there is a childcare facility provided free of cost near your home, where your child can be taken care of (education, nutrition, development) for some time every day, would you send your child there?		0	No	C21 = 0 ☐ C28; Single response	
			1	Yes		
C22	Would you send children if the facility is a paid one?		0	No	C22 = 0 ☐ C24; Single response	
			1	Yes		
C23	If so, how much money per month would you be willing to pay for such a service?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	In Rupees
			-777	Refused		
C24	How many hours would you send the child there for?		Numeric	Numeric	< 24; Single response	In Hours

C25	At what time in the morning would you want to drop your child there?		1	Before 8 am	Single response	
			2	8:00 AM		
			3	9:00 AM		
			4	10:00 AM		
			5	11:00 AM		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C26	At what time in the afternoon/evening would you find it comfortable to pick up your child from the facility?		1	Before 3 pm	Single response	
			2	3:00 PM		
			3	4:00 PM		
			4	5:00 PM		
			5	6:00 PM		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C27	Which of these factors do you prefer the most (1) to least (9) before enrolling your child at a childcare facility?		Rank	Food and its quality	Allow ranking	Learning and tutoring- Education: learning materials; Vaccination & immunisation (health assistance); Food and its quality: nutrition-supplementary food, take home ration, good diet; Affordability: should not be expensive, if paid Accessibility: not far from home or place of work; Timing of the centre: in line with mother's working hours; Overall quality: holistic condition
			Rank	Tutoring and learning		
			Rank	Playing facilities		
			Rank	Nature of caregivers (AWWs and helpers)		
			Rank	Vaccination and immunisation facility		
			Rank	Affordability, if paid		
			Rank	Accessibility		
			Rank	Timing of the centre		
			Rank	Overall quality		
			Rank	Other; Please specify		

C28	Who usually makes the following decisions in your household:					
C28_1	How many children to have?		1	Self (respondent)	Single response	
			2	Husband		
			3	Self and husband jointly		
			4	Someone else		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C28_2	Regarding children's schooling and education?		1	Self (respondent)	Single response	
			2	Husband		
			3	Self and husband jointly		
			4	Someone else		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C28_3	Regarding difference in decision of schooling your son and daughter?		1	Self (respondent)	Single response	
			2	Husband		
			3	Self and husband jointly		
			4	Someone else		
			5	No such distinction		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		
C28_4	When to take them to the doctor/PHC if they fall sick?		1	Self (respondent)	Single response	
			2	Husband		
			3	Self and husband jointly		
			4	Someone else		
			-777	Refused		
			-888	Other; Please specify		

Q. No.	Question	Prefill	Code	Options	Skip Pattern/ Restriction	Definitions
MODULE D – ANGANWADI CENTER OPERATIONS						
Prior to Covid times, can you please share with me the following information about the AWC near your home:					For enumerators, specify what 'prior to Covid' means: before the lockdown in March 2020	
D1	For how many hours in the day was the AWC open?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
			-999	Do not know		
D2	For how many days in the week was the AWC open?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
			-999	Do not know		
D3	How many workers and helpers were generally there?		Numeric	Numeric	Single response	
			-999	Do not know		
D4	Were the workers and helpers always present?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
D5	Did the worker/ helper provide meals to children regularly?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
D6	Did the worker/ helper take weight and height measurements of the child regularly?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
D7	Did the worker/ helper ever tell you about child's nutrition and dietary practices?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
D8	Did the worker/ helper ever tell you about child's immunization?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		
D9	Did the worker/ helper ever tell you about maternal health practices?		0	No	Single response	
			1	Yes		
			-999	Do not know		

D10	For any health-related concerns, does the worker/helper direct you to the local PHC or ASHA worker?	0	No	Single response	
		1	Yes		
		-999	Do not know		
D11	Do you know if any community organization/SHG/voluntary organisation assist in any activities of the AWC?	0	No	Single response	
		1	Yes		
		-999	Do not know		



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States	District	Block	Village	AWC ID
Gujarat	Sabar kantha	Poshina	Ganva	Ganva- 2
				Ganva- 5
			Dantral	Dantral- 1
				Dantral- 7
			Kajavas	Kajavas- 1
				Ambamahuda- 1
	Tapi	Vyara	Lakhali	Lakhali- 1
				Lakhali- 2
			Jhankhri	Jhankhri- 1
				Jhankhri- 3

States	District	Block	Village	AWC ID
Kerala	Trivandrum	Vamanapuram	Pangode	Pangode- 69
				Pangode- 70
				Pangode- 71
			Peringamala	Peringamala- 24
				Peringamala- 25
				Peringamala- 26
				Peringamala- 34
				Peringamala- 29
				Peringamala- 27
				Peringamala- 6
				Peringamala- 2
			Nanniyodu	Nanniyodu- 63
				Nanniyodu- 62
				Nanniyodu- 49
				Nanniyodu- 37

States	District	Block	Village	AWC ID
Odisha	Kandhamal	G. Udayagiri	Rattingia	Rattingia -1
				Rattingia-2
			J. Padikia	J. Padikia
			Kiramaha	Kiramaha
			Baudinaju	Baudinaju
			Burupati	Burupati
			Kalinga	Kalinga-1
				Kalinga-2
			Duguripari	Duguripari
			Sana Dakapala	Sana Dakapala
			Bada Dakapala	Bada Dakapala
			Khariapada	Khariapada-1
			Lingagada	Lingagada
			Jakamaha	Jakamaha
Nilungia	Nilungia-1			

States	District	Block	Village	AWC ID
Meghalaya	East Khasi Hills	Shillong Urban	Mawprem	Upper Mawprem Mission- 13
			Jhalupara areas	Jhalupara area Ward III - 19
			Poskeh	Pohskesh Central - No code. Estd 2006-2007
		Mawrykneng	Mawshbuit	Mawshbuit – Nongrim- 2404
				Mawshbuit – Nonglum- 5
			Pomlaher	Pomlaher- 23
		Mylliem	5th Mile	5th Mile-Section I - 1
			Pomlum	Pomlum A - 9
			Madanryting	Madanryting I - 8
		Mawkyntew	Thangsning	Thangsning - 17



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