

## Strengthening the Anganwadi Worker, Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has a state-run decentralised system, with a cascading training model. The trainers are officials working in the field as well. Supervisory and training cadre are not split. The state training centre does capacity building for district officers, the Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) and Grade One supervisor. They, in turn, train the AWW and the AWH. Training for Grade Two supervisors is conducted by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Experiences and challenges from the field are shared, thus making these sessions enriching. These trainings are participatory in nature, i.e., sessions are conducted using games, role play and other participatory methods. Various methods deployed for training are:

- **Exposure visits:** AWWs, block and district level officers of ICDS Tamil Nadu go for exposure visits to other parts of the state and occasionally to other states. This helps in promoting peer learning among functionaries.
- **Guest lectures:** Officials from the health department, government functionaries, motivational speakers, trainers in personality development and distinguished people from various fields are invited for guest lectures as part of training. Issues like stress management and soft skill training are addressed through these sessions which may be outside the scope of regular trainers.
- **Role play:** Through role play, the AWW is trained for community mobilisation and fund mobilisation from panchayats and multinational companies. She is trained using the technique of live demonstration to deploy various strategies on field while conducting these activities.

The Anganwadi worker is also trained on mobilising community, fund raising, generating awareness, engaging with the community and inculcating a feeling of ownership among them. Support in day-to-day activities of the AWC is also provided by the community.

- **Mother's support group:** An AWW identifies proactive mothers in the village and forms a mother's support group. These women help the AWW in community mobilisation and instilling a feeling of ownership among community members for the AWC. They also look after the children in an AWC in the absence of the AWW.
- **Funding:** Funds are mobilised by the AWW through constant interaction with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), nearby companies and parents. The AWW informs them of the needs of the AWC and prompts them to help, using corporate social responsibility funds in case of companies or unused funds of village committees. Funds are used to make a state-of-the-art AWC. All the AWWs vie for their centre to be ISO-certified, and this fund generation helps them in improving infrastructure, which is the main criterion for this certification.