

Q As the world's largest provider of early childhood services, there is a need to revamp anganwadis across India. Elaborate (200 words).

'Anganwadi' literally means 'courtyard shelter' in Hindi, part of the Integrated Child Development Services it plays a crucial role in providing childcare by supporting health, nutrition and education of children.

Need to revamp anganwadis

- ICDS covers 88 million children aged 0-6 yrs in India the largest in the world.

- According to NITI Aayog 59% of anganwadis had adequate seating for children and more than half were unhygienic.

- NEP 2020 - puts anganwadis at the centre of early childhood care and education (ECE):

- Anganwadi workers lack key knowledge in nutrition.

- As per NEHS - 5 less than 15% of 5yrs old attended any pre-primary school at all.

Steps to be taken to revamp anganwadis

- Prioritise core services like pre-school and nutrition.
- Providing adequate knowledge and training to anganwadi workers.
- better infrastructure and hygienic environment.
- expanding duration of daycare.
- linking anganwadi and primary school.
- improve career incentive and remuneration for anganwadi workers.

As the world's largest early childhood service provider, anganwadis perform a crucial role in contributing to life outcomes of children. To improve these outcomes we need to invest more significantly in anganwadis with proven interventions.