

Status of Health and Welfare Schemes of Women in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

The Health and welfare of women constitute the most substantial contributing factor to human prosperity. According to the 2011 census of the Government of India, 67.7 percent of the total populations are women and children. India has committed to achieving the target of 2015 - United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) by 2030. Ever since, particularly in the health and welfare sector, the government has been taking various measures to attain the goal. In the case of Tamil Nadu, the government initiates and implements several social welfare schemes, programs, and protective legislative policies, mainly exclusive focus on the development of women and children in various aspects. As well, the State government introduced socio-economic development schemes for the empowerment of women and endeavors to improve their socio-economic status. This research study will examine the condition of SDG Health Index of Tamil Nadu and its achievements in recent years. The study mainly focuses on the status of women's health and welfare in Tamil Nadu and analyzes the welfare and protection schemes for the wellbeing of women.

Keywords:Sustainable Development Goal, Tamil Nadu, India, Women Health, Social Welfare, Schemes, Government Programmes.

Introduction

India has committed to achieving the 2015 - United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target by 2030. Especially in the health and welfare sector, the government has been taking various measures to attain the goal. According to the 2011 census of India, 67.7 percent of the total populations are women and children. The government of India is committed to encouraging gender equality and the welfare of children in all areas of development. The Ministry of Women and Child Development is the superior body for the formulation, administration of regulation laws related to the development of women and children in the nation. Under the ministry, the National Commission for Women constituted in 1992, and it is a national level statutory body for protecting and safeguarding the rights of women. The Commission has investigated and examines the legal safeguards support to women under the laws.

Ministry of family and welfare launched the National Health Mission (NHM) program in April 2005, to provide accessible, affordable, and quality health care to all, especially the rural population and the vulnerable people. NHM consists of National Rural Health Mission and the National Urban Health Mission. The objective of the mission is to strengthen public health systems and ensures that to access health care facilities to all and provide equitable and quality health care delivery systems at all levels.

The Health Policy of the government is to provide health for all and access to excellent health care facilities. The primary purpose of the National Health policy 2017 is to attain the maximum possible level of good health and well being through quality health care services without face any financial consequence. The NHP primarily focus on all the dimensions include developing human resource, infrastructures, financial protection strategies, access to health care services through the latest technologies, preventive mechanism and promotion of reasonable health assurance with effective health regulations. The policy also involves achieving the global goal standards in health services and assured comprehensive primary health care services through the Health and Wellness Centres throughout the country. The health policy of the nation maintains professional ethics, integrity, and commits the highest professional standards in the entire health care system. The major objective of

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the National health policy 2017 is Comprehensive public health care service; ensure to attain public health goals, improve the health status like, improve life expectancy ratio, reduce neonatal, infant and under-five child mortality rate; disease prevalence reduction and other cross-sectoral areas like reduction in the prevalence of tobacco use, access safe water and sanitation across the nation.

In the policy aspect, the national health goal ensures that to Increase the health expenditure by the government as a percentage of GDP from 1.15% to 2.5 % by 2025, and also advice to the state government to improve health sector spending. The policy ensures that to strengthen the health management information system through the electronic database in all the levels of health care services.

Research Objectives

- To examine the recent status of SDG Health Index of Tamil Nadu and its achievements.
- To analyze significant health and social welfare schemes of women and their achievements in Tamil Nadu.

Research Methodology

The research design of the study is descriptive, and all the relevant research data used in the study is secondary. It has collected from reports of government, policy notes, a primary survey from the research institutions, non - government organizations, and private agencies. The study-related information has collected from books, journals, newspapers, and online articles.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - An India's context

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) formally known as '*Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*', which came into effect from January 2016. It consists of 17 (SDGs) include good health and well being. It also addresses all significant health priorities, including communicable and non- communicable diseases, maternal, reproductive, child and women health, environmental issues like air pollution, and promotes universal health coverage access, safe, quality, effective and affordable health care facilities for all. The Government introduced various health schemes for improvement in India's health care system. For instance, *Swachh Bharat Mission* for drinking water, health, and sanitation. *Poshan Abhiyaan* is for improves nutritional outcomes for children, adolescents, and pregnant women. *eVIN (electronic vaccine intelligence network)* to track and improve immunization coverage. *Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana* for health protection scheme, which covers 500 million persons in India. These are some significant initiatives to improve health care services in India.



India is committed to accomplishing the Global Goals within the predetermined timeline. NITI Aayog acts as a nodal agency to coordinate the SDGs target at the national and sub-national levels. The state government plays a vital role in the localization of the specified goals.

Tamil Nadu in SDG Index: Goal 3 - Good health and well being

In the Indian context, the SDG goal of good health and well being has measure through eight national-level indicators to attain the 2030 target. The following Table.1 represent the index score and the actual data of Tamil Nadu in the mentioned indicators.

State	Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)	Proportion of Institutions Deliveries	Under 5 Mortality rate per 1000 live Birth	Percentage of fully Immunized children in the age group of 0 -5 Years	Total case notification rate of Tuberculosis per 1,00,000 Population	HIV incident per 1000 uninfected population	Percentage of currently married women aged 15-49 years who use any modern method of Family planning	Total physicians, nurses and midwives per 10000 population
Index Score								
India	67	27	53	53	68	95	40	83
Tamil Nadu	100	42	97	51	74	96	46	100
Target	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Actual Data								
India	122	54.7	50	59.2	160	0.07	47.8	38
Tamil Nadu	63	64.2	27	57.5	132	0.05	52.6	71
Target	70	100	25	100	0	0	100	45

Source : Niti Aayog - SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019 -2020 report

Tamil Nadu has achieved SDG goal 3 - Good health and well-being target in the indicator of Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of 63 per 1,00,000 birth. Approximately 64.2 percent of deliveries occur in health institutions in Tamil Nadu. The United Nations' target of the Under-five mortality rate is 25 per 1000 live birth. Tamil Nadu is going to achieve the goal in upcoming years; the present rate is 27 per 1000 live birth. Nearly 57.5 percent of children in the age group of 0 - 5 years immunized in Tamil Nadu. About 132 Tuberculosis cases have noted per 1,00,000 persons in the entire State. In the case of HIV the UN target of HIV incidence is zero, out of 1000 uninfected population, only 0.05 occurrences estimated. Around 52.6 percent of currently married women aged 15 – 49 years are used modern methods of family planning in Tamil Nadu. Recently the State indicated 71 per 10,000 population and achieved the target of the indicator of total physicians, nurses, and midwives.

The Government of Tamil Nadu is attempting to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in the health services, Tamil Nadu made significant strides in improving various health indicators. The following Table.2 shows that the Performance of Tamil Nadu in SDG Index: Goal 3.

State	SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being)	Composite (SDG 1 -16)
Index Score		
India	61	60
Tamil Nadu	76	67
Performance and Rank	Front Runner in health and well being performance	Front Runner in the overall performance and 3 rd in overall rank

Target	100	100
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Source : Niti Aayog - SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019 -2020 report

Health and Social Welfare of Women in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Government committed to building a healthy society by providing quality health care services in the highest possible way. Tamil Nadu emerged as a model State in the country in providing proper health care services to the people. The state-recognized one of the best health care performers throughout the nation. For instance, the child sex ratio of Tamil Nadu is 931 out of 1000, which is higher than the national ratio. The following Table.3 and 4 represents the sex ratio of Tamil Nadu since 2016, and the Total number of Health Centers functioning till March 2019.

S.No	Particulars	Total
1	Sex Ratio at Birth (HIMS, DPH) for the year 2016 -2017	911
2	Sex Ratio at Birth (HIMS, DPH) for the year 2017 -2018	921
3	Sex Ratio at Birth (HIMS, DPH) for the year 2018 -2019	931

Sl. No.	Health Centres	Total
1	Primary Health Centres (PHCs)	1,806
2	Health Sub Centres (HSCs)	8,713
3	Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) including Chennai Corporation	460
4	New Community Health Centres (CHCs) being established under NHM in Chennai Corporation	15

Source : Policy Note (2019 -2020) - Health and Family Welfare Department, Tamil Nadu

Women Health Schemes in Tamil Nadu

1. Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS)

Health insurance scheme introduced in 2012 and provide treatment to the public in the Government and private hospitals. The Government issued a smart card to avail this scheme for the annual family income is less than Rs. 72,000. Since 2012 nearly, 35.25 lakh peoples benefitted for Rs. 6,027 crore under this scheme

2. Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit Scheme (MRMBS) and Amma Maternity Nutrition Kit:

The main aim of this scheme is to provide financial assistance of Rs. 18,000 to the pregnant mother for nutritional diet and compensation for the loss of wages during pregnancy period. Under this scheme, the maternity nutritional kit provided to pregnant women and improved the infant's birth weight. For the past eight years, nearly 53.78 lakh pregnant and delivered mothers received the monetary assistance of Rs.5,233.17 crore under this scheme.

3. Other Health Schemes are:

- Menstrual Hygiene Programme has been promoting hygiene and provides priceless sanitary napkins to adolescent girls.
- Hospitals on Wheels Programme are implementation with 416 teams. Each block, nearly 40 camps conducted every month. 15.10 lakh camps undertaken so far.
- Amma Baby Care Kit schemes provide baby care kit to the post-natal mothers and newborn babies for improving the hygiene conditions. The cost of Rs.1,000/- per kit has provided to the mothers. Up to March 2019, 17,70,393 delivered mothers have received the kit.

- Amma Arokiya Thittam, the scheme provides primary health care checkup on an annual basis in Public Health Center (PHCs) for people aged above 30 years in rural areas.
- Amma Whole Body Health Check-up and Amma Women Special Check-up aims to provide whole-body health checkups for women in all Government general and multi Specialty hospitals.

4. National Health Schemes

- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY).** The primary purpose of the Scheme is to provide a cash incentive of Rs.5,000 in three installments for pregnant women and lactating mothers. The budget allocated under the PMMVY for the Financial Year 2019-20 was Rs. 2500.00 crore for all State and UT. During the period 01.04.2019 to 31.12.2019, the central government sanctioned Rs. 23.10 crore for Tamil Nadu and the number of beneficiaries under the Scheme in Tamil Nadu was 4,63,577 as of 31.12.2019.
- **102 – Drop Back Service Janani Sishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)** Scheme focus on free drop back service for the sick infants and all delivered mother in government hospitals.
- **108 Ambulance Services** scheme provides a free emergency ambulance services since 2011 in throughout Tamil Nadu. The services are accessible on a 24x 7 basis free of cost to the public for emergency health services. Nine hundred forty ambulances are functioning under this 108 ambulance service scheme. Nearly 74.09 lakh people benefited the Scheme, including 18.61 lakh pregnant mothers till March 2019. Additionally, ambulance services for Neonatal emergency also been introduced under this Scheme.
- **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)** scheme is a health screening of child and early intervention services to all the children from 0 -18 years. The mainly screening four significant diseases, namely defects at births, deficiencies, health disorders, and growth delays, including disabilities. Under this Scheme, 1.21 crore children have screened in Anganwadi centers and schools. Nearly 6,44,175 children identified with disease conditions, and 5,19,288 children were referred for treatment in a health care institution. Seven hundred seventy mobile health teams in rural blocks, fifteen in Chennai Corporation, and twelve mobile health teams in other corporations are operated under RBSK scheme in Tamil Nadu till 2019 March.

Social Welfare schemes of Child and Women in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu is a front runner in the social welfare schemes. The state government emphasizes special assistance for the development of women and children. The department initiates various social welfare schemes for the empowerment of women and the protection of children in the aspect of education, health, and proper nutritional support. Tamil Nadu government also focus on the welfare of the poor people, especially women and child, third gender, and the senior citizens. The department provides various social welfare schemes like marriage assistance scheme, free supply of Sewing machines for improving the economic status, working women hostels, and service homes for women. The department also provides special schemes for children like child adoption, cradle baby scheme for eradicating female infanticide, and chief minister girl child protection scheme, was introduced in 1992 and also associated with central government scheme called Beti Bachao Beti Padhao for education and child protection. The department also address schemes for senior citizens, and the third gender, like a daycare center, old age homes, and integrated complexes, provide a safe home for orphan children and abandoned elders: education, employment, and livelihood support for the third genders through Transgender Welfare Board.

Women Welfare Schemes in Tamil Nadu

1. Marriage Assistance Schemes

The Government provides marriage assistance during the marriage for making Thirumangalyam (8 grams 22carat Gold coin) and with cash assistance for non-graduates girls of Rs.25,000/- and graduates girls of Rs.50,000/-. Through these assistance schemes, the women are socially and economically empowered, reduction in school dropouts, and the number of girl child pursuing higher studies have increased. An initiative by the Government of Tamil Nadu, the following five marriage assistance schemes, is 1. Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Ninaivu marriage assistance scheme, especially for poor parents for girl children for the marriage. 2. Annai Teresa Ninaivu marriage assistance scheme for orphan girl's marriage. 3. Dr. Dharmambal Ammaiyar Ninaivu widow remarriage assistance scheme for widow's marriage. 4. E.V.R. Maniammaiyar Ninaivu marriage assistance scheme for poor widow's daughter's marriage, and 5. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Ninaivu inter-caste marriage assistance scheme for inter cast marriage couples. The following Table.5 shows that the total beneficiaries and budget for the Marriage assistance schemes.

S.No	Particulars	Total
1	Total Beneficiaries availed benefits under the five Marriage Assistance Schemes till 2019 March.	11,44,740
2	Total cost assistance from the year 2011-12 to 2018 -2019 for Marriage schemes.	Rs.5,452.08 crores
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5,260.72 kg. gold at the cost of 	Rs. 1,499.86 crores
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash Assistance 	Rs. 3,952.22 crores
3	Budget Allocation for the year 2019 - 2020	Rs. 726.32 crores

2. Socio-Economic Development Schemes for Women

The socio-economic development schemes of women in Tamil Nadu has implemented through Co-operative Societies. Totally 98 Industrial Women Co-operative Societies are functioning under the Social Welfare Department. These Co-operative societies are operating exclusively for the deprived section of society, especially women from the below poverty line, and provide employment opportunities for sustain throughout the year. As on 31.03.2018, a total of 83,499 members enrolled in these societies.

3. Government Working Women Hostels and Government Service Homes

Tamil Nadu Government successfully runs 28 Working Women Hostels in 18 districts. The monthly rent for working women is 300 in Chennai and 200 in other places. Working Women Hostel Scheme aims to provide secure affordable accommodation to working women. The Total Number of Beneficiaries under the scheme in Tami Nadu is around 6800. Eight Government Service Homes are functioning in Tamil Nadu to support and protection to the girls, widows, and economically weaker women. Service homes also provide vocational training like spoken English and computer training.

4. State Resource Centre for Women (SRCW)

The State Resource Centre for Women (SRCW) initiated in Tamil Nadu in 2014. The scheme aims to provide technical support to the State Administration for and effective coordination, monitoring, and review of the various government schemes and programs. Through the State Resource Centre for Women, the following schemes have coordinated.

- **Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK)** Scheme aims to empower rural women through community participation and provide opportunities in a different field such as skill development program, employment, digital literary, health and nutrition at district and block levels.
- **One-Stop Centre (OSC) scheme** is also known as Sakthi Centres. Providing integrated support to the women who affected by violence, The Government of India has fully sponsored the One Stop Centre

(OSC) in Tamil Nadu. Under the guidelines of Mahila Shakthi Kendra, the State Resource Centre for Women (SRCW) established. The facilitating services of OSC are legal, police, medical, psychological support, and temporary shelter to the affected women. Through SRCW the One-Stop Centre will support and facilitate specialized services for women are facing physical, psychological, sexual, economic abuse, trafficking, and domestic violence-related crimes. Totally 623 OSCs are functioning across the nation and support more than 2.4 lakh, women, as on December 2019.

- **Women Helpline (181) Scheme** is a 24 hours toll-free helpline (181) number for an emergency as well as non – emergency response and proper counseling service to the women affected by violence. Through this helpline, they are providing information about women's welfare schemes across the Nation. So far, the helpline number has managed more than 47.86 lakh calls.

Above One Stop Centre and Women Helpline Scheme is funded through the Nirbhaya Fund. The Ministry of Finance set-up a dedicated fund called Nirbhaya Fund. The initiative of the particular fund aimed to enhance the safety measures and security for women in the country. Since the financial year 2013-14 to 2019-20, the Government provides Rs. 4357.62 crore under the Nirbhaya Fund to all States and Union Territories (UT).

The social welfare department being the Nodal department that implements various social legislation protections and rights for women and children. The department also creates awareness about the acts and benefits from the provisions. The following social legislation to protect the women and child is:

- Dowry prohibition Act, 1961
- Domestic violence Act, 2005
- Women like child marriage prohibition Act, 2006
- Maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizen's Act, 2007 and
- Sexual harassment of women at workplace Act, 2013.
- Tamil Nadu Hostels and Homes for Women and Children (Regulations) act, 2014

Conclusion

Good quality of health care enhancing to human wellbeing and development of the nation. Proper and adequate health for women would help to healthier generations. The Government can also improve the health status of women through essential health care services, strengthening the policy, and promote educational awareness on health, nutritional, and lifestyle activities. The Government also improves the literacy rate and promotes quality education for women and provides adequate employment opportunities. In Tamil Nadu nearly 35 per cent of deliveries are not occur in health institution because of poor socioeconomic conditions and limit many women's access to adequate health care facilities. In many remote areas in Tamil Nadu, maternal mortality is still high due to lack of medical facilities. Vaccinations are one of the most effective ways to prevent diseases, especially child and women vaccine. Only 57.5 per cent of children in the age group of 0 - 5 years are immunized in Tamil Nadu. The Government is attempting to achieve health SDGs and improving various health indicators to attain the health goal through the performance of health care services. Compare to the public sector, the private sector is the leading health care provider in India, so the Government needs to ensure that the quality of medical services the provided for all in an easily accessible way. Health awareness among people in Tamil Nadu remains a significant challenge, especially the rural population and aged population. Government need to initiate various health awareness programs in the area of maternal, child and adolescent health, nutrition, lifestyle habits and mental health through health education. For the year 2019-2020, the state government allocated only Rs.12,563.83 crore for health sector. This leads to insufficient public expenditure on health. So the Government increases the budget and allocates sufficient funds to the public health sector. The social welfare department needs to enlarge the social welfare schemes for the empowerment of women, and the Government also needs to focus on the welfare of the underprivileged women and improve the social and economic status. Specialized schemes and programs have been initiated in various areas and aim to promote equity and social security. Government agencies are expanding the public-private partnership activities in the health care facilities and improve health outcomes. The State government develops collaboration with the central government institutions and acquires aid from international organizations to attain health goals.

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