



CHILD CARE IN THE DELHI MASTER PLAN 2041



Photo credits: Mobile Creches

There are 2 million children under 6 years of age who are our future citizens. Getting a good start in terms of adequate nutrition, good health, environment and safety is very important for their holistic development and to emerge as the productive human resource. Quality child care is also central to women's livelihood and children of economically vulnerable families fall behind in key human development indicators. The Delhi Master Plan can be a key instrument to improve child care in terms of provision of land for public child care services, removing inequalities in access to quality child care, and envisioning child-friendly spaces in the city.

MBD is a people's campaign aiming to envision and enable a more inclusive city. It is a collective of civil society organisations, activists, researchers and others who work on diverse issues of housing, livelihood, gender and other rights.

YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE CITY

Early Childhood is the period when the foundations for cognitive, physical, socio-emotional, language development and personality are laid. It is also the period of maximum vulnerability - any deprivation can lead to irreversible repercussions. Since development is interdependent and synergistic in nature, inputs pertaining to different components need to be provided simultaneously to the child and across the sub-stages of early childhood.

Children of poor families face many disadvantages in accessing their needs. It is estimated that a large number of children (up to 17 lakhs) are out of school, with many remaining on the street or involved in child labour (Alliance of People's Rights). Children in informal settlements which lack access to even basic services suffer in terms of health, education and care needs.

There is a great deficit in adequate child care infrastructure in Delhi. There are around 10785 Anganwadi centres which cater to around 6.5 lakhs children when the population of children below 6 is as much as 19.80 lakhs. The services required for children with disabilities is also vastly inadequate.

Crimes against children is a ghastly reality, and spatial planning can address it in important ways by ensuring child-friendly spaces throughout the city.

27% children in Delhi are underweight and 30% are not immunized (NFHS IV 2015-16)

Everyday 17 children are missing (NCPCR)

47% children in Delhi are not getting pre-school education

It is also a reality that mothers are the primary caregivers. This disproportionate burden of child-rearing responsibilities has a huge impact on women's workforce participation, with Delhi having one of the lowest rates. A study conducted by SEWA showed that the provision of high quality, full day childcare was responsible for more than doubling women's incomes. Greater access to high-quality child care and early learning programs will support mothers so they can work and will benefit children, leaving them better prepared for pre-school and to be productive citizens when they grow up.

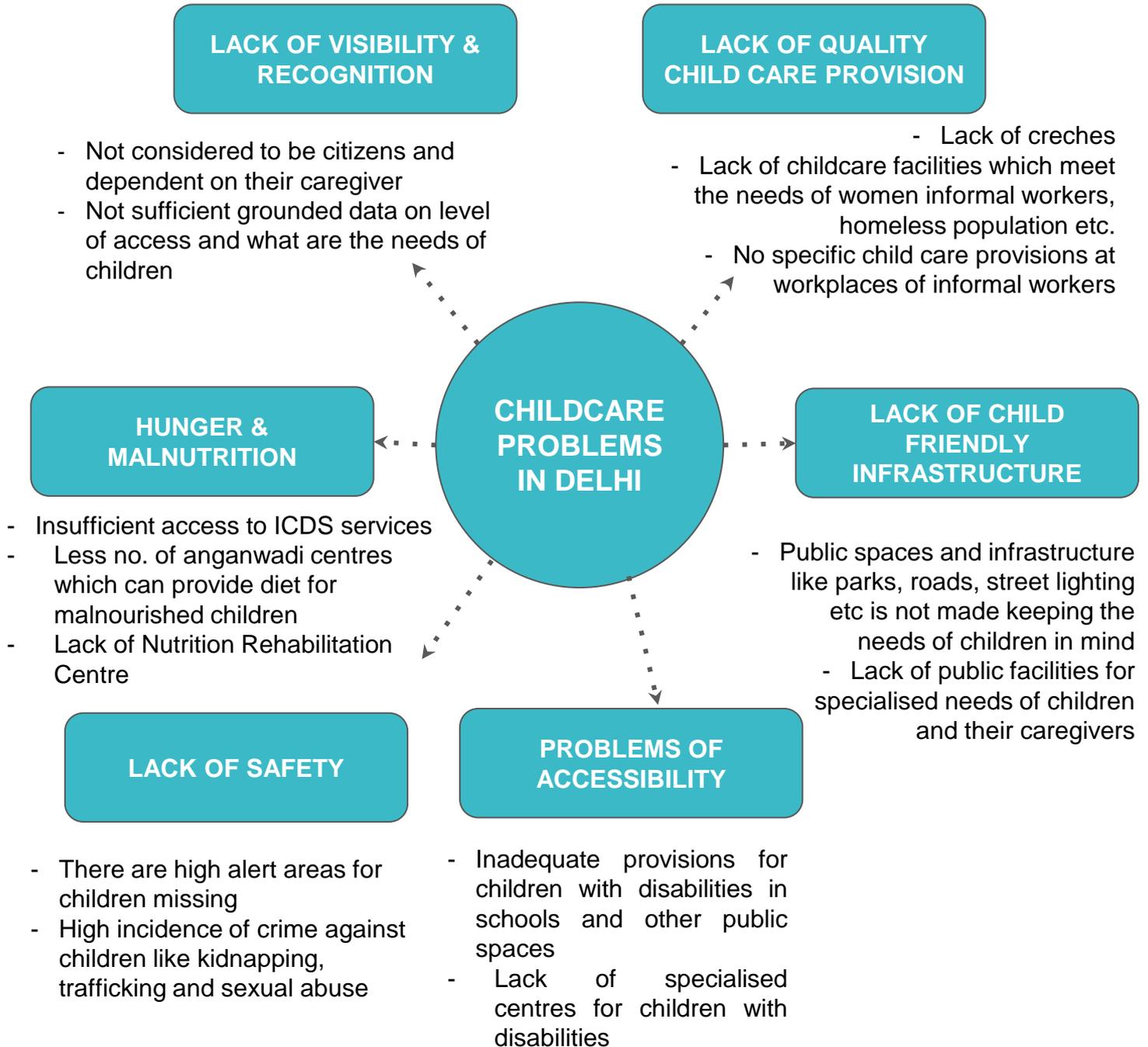
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CITY

Future productive human resource

Happy and vibrant environment- children bring joy and positivity to spaces

Every Re.1 invested in period of early childhood yields a return of Rs.25

KEY ISSUES



WHAT CAN MPD '41 DO FOR CHILDREN?

1 IDENTITY & RECOGNITION

- Recognize as citizens with all human rights to be protected
- Collect or collate data, with special focus on particularly vulnerable children
- Mapping of existing child care services to better plan future investments
- Participation and involvement

2 ENVISIONING CHILD FRIENDLY SPACES

- Child friendly spaces like breast feeding zone in public spaces, transport hubs, safe pedestrian infrastructure, public washrooms etc.
- Open and closed playing areas for children in all neighbourhoods

3 ENSURE QUALITY CHILD CARE CENTRES (Creche, Anganwadis etc.) ACROSS THE CITY

- Every settlement, irrespective of tenure or other socio-economic status, should have provision of creches
- Child care facility should be near both home as well as workplaces- onsite near construction sites, vending places, shelter homes, etc.
- In cases of housing relocation, there should be allocations for child care services
- Ensure access to quality physical infrastructure and basic services
- Child care can be linked to other social services through multipurpose centres to encourage convergence

4 ENSURE ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR NEEDS OF MOTHER AND CHILD

- Allocated spaces for daycare facilities as per ECCE policy for the young children . It should be accessible and safe for mother and child.
- Extension of ICDS services through anganwadis
- Increase allocations in a decentralised way for wellness centres, schools for children with disabilities, de-addiction centre, rescue homes etc.

5 SAFE AND QUALITY PUBLIC SPACES FOR ALL CHILDREN

- Child should be safe and protected in public spaces where they can fearlessly play and learn from the stimulating environment.
 - Safety measure against crime and abuse should be in place
 - Adequate street lighting with CCTV to ensure safety in public spaces.
 - Pollution-free city with green spaces in all neighbourhoods
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