

6.8 National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)

6.8.1 A lump sum cash assistance of Rs.500 is provided to pregnant women of households below the poverty line up to the first two live births provided they are of 19 years of age and above. The maternity benefit is to be disbursed in one installment, 12-8 weeks prior to the delivery. In case of delay it can be disbursed to the beneficiary even after the birth of the child.

6.8.2 The NSAP is implemented by the State/UT Governments with assistance from Panchayats and municipal functionaries. Each State/UT has a nodal department identified for implementing the scheme. In the districts, there are District Level Committees on NSAP.

6.8.3 The Gram Panchayats/Municipalities has an active role in the identification of beneficiaries under NSAP. The State Governments communicate targets for the three components of NSAP to Panchayats/municipalities so that identification of beneficiaries can suitably be made by Gram Panchayats/Neighbourhood/Mohalla Committees in line with these targets. In case of cash disbursement, the payments are to be made in public meetings preferably of Gram Sabha meetings in villages, and of neighbourhood/mohalla committees in urban areas. The Panchayats/Municipalities are responsible for disseminating information about NSAP and the procedures for obtaining benefits under it. In this task, the Panchayats and Municipalities are encouraged to seek the involvement/cooperation of voluntary agencies to the extent possible for identifying beneficiaries and persuading them to avail of the benefits intended for them.