

# Quality Child Care for All Informal Workers

For informal women workers, child care is essential if they are to work and earn, and plan for a better future for their children and themselves. Without child care, women cannot go out to work and earn with peace of mind. They have to take them along to work, often exposing them to hazardous conditions, or they leave them in the care of an older child, frequently a daughter whose schooling then is not possible. Importantly, SEWA's studies have shown that with full-day child care, women's incomes double and they experience 'peace of mind'. For all these reasons, SEWA has organised child care through cooperatives and is now leading a national campaign for quality child care for all workers. This means full-day care, by extending the current Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and other services like crèches offered by workers' welfare boards. The campaign's demands include:

- Full-day, comprehensive child care for infants to 6-year-old children, including nutritious meals, health care, early childhood education and stimulation through play, is a right of all workers, and should be mainly funded by the government.
- Proper remuneration for the care workers, at least at minimum wage rate and with social security benefits. Recognition of such care work as decent work.
- Capacity-building and on-going training of care workers in the latest methods of child care and development.
- Maternity benefits for informal workers.
- Appropriate grievance redressal.
- Increased investment in child care by government