

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 149**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.12.2022

**“STATUS OF MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN”**

149 SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has prepared any index to study the status of hunger in the country, if so, details thereof;
- (b) year-wise data on child wasting, child stunting and undernourishment in the country during the last five years;
- (c) whether Government intends to incorporate a social audit mechanism for the existing nutritional schemes; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) The Ministry is developing a National Nutrition Index to measure the annual national performance and the performance of States and Union Territories (UTs) on a select set of relevant indicators categorized in the domains of (i) Nutrition Outcomes, (ii) Service Coverage and (iii) Resources and Inputs. The National Nutrition Index will rank the States/UTs and help them identify specific areas of improvement.

(b) The estimated number of underweight, malnourished and severely malnourished children under 5 years of age is obtained under National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. As per the recent report of NFHS-5 (2019-21), the nutrition indicators for children under 5 years have improved as compared with NFHS-4 (2015-16). Stunting has reduced from 38.4% to 35.5%, Wasting has reduced from 21.0% to 19.3% and Underweight prevalence has reduced from 35.8% to 32.1%.

(c) & (d) The efforts under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme under Anganwadi Services and POSHAN Abhiyaan have been aligned under ‘Saksham Anganwadi and

POSHAN 2.0' (Mission Poshan 2.0) which seeks to address the challenges of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery and by creation of a convergent eco-system to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity. Technology has been leveraged under the 'Poshan Tracker', a robust ICT enabled platform to improve governance with regard to real time monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervision and management of services.

Government has released Streamlined Guidelines dated 13.1.2021 for greater transparency, accountability and quality in the nutrition support programme and service delivery. The Streamlined Guidelines provides for involvement of AWC level management committees, village communities, Mothers Groups and Panchayati Raj institutions (Gram Panchayats) to bring about community ownership and encourage accountability in the local anganwadi programme.

The scheme guidelines of Mission Poshan 2.0 focuses on converting the agenda of improving nutrition into a Jan Andolan through involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions/Village Organizations/SHGs/volunteers etc. and ensuring wide public participation. Under the guidelines, the Gram/Poshan Panchayat and VHSNC shall meet once a month at least to discuss specific reasons for malnutrition specific to their jurisdiction and facilitate necessary community/social support mechanism. The meetings of the Gram/Poshan Panchayat shall be attended by local stakeholders, including Mothers Groups', SHGs, AWWs, AWHs, Lady Supervisor and the CDPO. The quarterly reports of the Poshan Panchayats shall be made available to the CDPO and DPO. If required, the Poshan Panchayats shall present these reports in the meetings of the District Nutrition Committee chaired by the DM/Collector.

Poshan Panchayats, with mandatory representation of vulnerable communities shall thus act as facilitators for "Peoples Audit" to improve bottom-up accountability of service delivery at Anganwadi Centres.

Besides ensuring uptake of nutrition seeking behaviors and disseminating information on access to good health and nutrition services, it is envisaged that the Panchayat level committees will undertake spot checks to check provision of THR and other nutrition services at the Anganwadi Center. The Gram /Poshan Panchayat has been assigned the mandate of oversight services with regard to receipt of Take Home Ration (not raw ration), quality thereof and distribution to all beneficiaries.

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