

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 633
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2026

EFFECTIVENESS OF POSHAN ABHIYAAN

633. SHRI IMRAN PRATAPGARHI:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that a significant proportion of children under five continue to be underweight, stunted and wasted, despite implementation of Poshan Abhiyaan and allied schemes;
- (b) what were the annual and cumulative targets set under Poshan Abhiyaan and what are the actual outcomes achieved till date, year-wise and State-wise;
- (c) what evaluation has been conducted to assess the effectiveness of nutrition interventions, including ICDS and supplementary nutrition;
- (d) the States/UTs which are consistently underperforming and what accountability mechanisms exist; and
- (e) what corrective steps, timelines and budgetary changes are proposed to urgently address persistent child malnutrition?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (e): The Poshan Tracker Application data of malnutrition indicators on underweight, stunting and wasting among the children under five attending Anganwadi Centres and receiving Anganwadi services at home in the country for the last 3 years is as below:

Period	December-2022			December-2023			December-2024			December-2025		
	Stunted (%)	Wasted (%)	Underweight (%)	Stunted (%)	Wasted (%)	Underweight (%)	Stunted (%)	Wasted (%)	Underweight (%)	Stunted (%)	Wasted (%)	Underweight (%)
India	40.92	8.82	19.27	37.83	6.3	16.64	39.69	5.49	17.22	31.92	4.58	13.47

Further details are available at <https://www.poshantracker.in/statistics>

These above figures are based on the aspirational benchmarks set by the WHO through an international study on how children should be in height and weight with respect to their age when kept in best growth conditions. The figures show consistent improvement on all the three parameters.

Poshan Abhiyaan, was launched on 8th March, 2018 to improve nutritional outcomes for children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The Abhiyaan had a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery by creation of a convergent eco-system to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity. To accelerate improvements in nutrition, Poshan Abhiyaan prioritised on the first 1000 days – A critical window of opportunity, Ensuring Access to Essential Services, Jan Andolan for behaviour change, multi-sectoral convergence and Service delivery through technology. Poshan Abhiyan has been subsumed under Mission Poshan 2.0. from 2021. The details of malnutrition outcomes among those children from 6 months to 6 years who attend Anganwadi's/ receive Anganwadi services at home, across the country are available at <https://www.poshantracker.in/statistics> which shows improvement in malnutrition indicators in children across the country.

In 2021, the World Bank conducted a survey on Poshan Abhiyaan in 11 priority states. The aim of this survey was to assess the program's delivery of nutrition services, whether the nutritional knowledge of beneficiaries had improved and if they had adopted more appropriate nutrition and feeding practices.

The findings demonstrated that the services delivered through the Poshan Abhiyaan – the receipt of relevant messages, home visits by the Anganwadi Worker, and attendance at community-based events – were associated with improved nutrition behaviors. The survey also found that the program's nutrition messages reached more than 80% of women, and that 81% of women practiced exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months.

Further, a third-party evaluation and impact assessment of Poshan Abhiyaan was conducted by NITI Aayog in 2020 and also in 2025 and has found its relevance to be satisfactory for tackling malnutrition in the country.

The details of state-wise performance regarding malnutrition indicators across the country are available at <https://www.poshantracker.in/statistics>

- Regarding accountability mechanisms, Poshan Tracker an ICT tool has been implemented for monitoring and tracking of all AWCs, AWWs and beneficiaries on defined indicators in all States/UTs. Technology under Poshan Tracker is being leveraged for dynamic identification of stunting, wasting, under-weight prevalence among children. It has facilitated near real time data collection for Anganwadi Services.
- For last mile tracking of delivery of nutrition, the Ministry has launched Facial Recognition System (FRS) for the distribution of Take-Home Ration to ensure that benefit is given only to the intended beneficiary registered in Poshan Tracker also to remove duplication and risk of leakage of benefits and to make the scheme more transparent.

- The Nominee Module has been introduced in Poshan Tracker to ensure uninterrupted delivery of Take-Home Ration (THR) to Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers, and Adolescent Girls under Saksham Anganwadi and Mission Poshan 2.0. If due to any reason, the registered beneficiary (Pregnant Women, Lactating Mother and Adolescent girl) is unable to visit the Anganwadi Centre to receive their THR through FRS, she can nominate a nominee on her behalf to receive her THR. Nominee has to undergo e-KYC only ONCE. But face matching will be done every time for receiving THR on behalf of the beneficiary. Even after addition of the nominee, beneficiary can still receive the THR at the Anganwadi Center if the nominee has not received it already.

To address the challenge of malnutrition, Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (14-18 years, in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region) have been subsumed under the umbrella Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0). It is a Centrally Sponsored Mission, where the responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and UTs. This Mission is a universal self-selecting umbrella scheme open to all eligible beneficiaries, i.e., Children under 6 years of age, pregnant women, lactating mothers till 6 months after childbirth and adolescent girls (14-18 years of age) in Northeastern States and Aspirational Districts of the country. The Mission is being implemented across the country. The objectives of Mission are as follows:

- To contribute to development of human capital in the country;
- Address challenge of malnutrition;
- Promote nutrition awareness and good eating habits for sustainable health and wellbeing

Under Mission Poshan 2.0 a new strategy has been made for reduction in malnutrition and for improved health, wellness and immunity through activities like community engagement, outreach, behavioural change and advocacy. It focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)/ Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and wellness through AYUSH practices to reduce prevalence of wasting, stunting, anaemia and being underweight.

Under this Mission, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. These norms have been revised in January 2023. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides for quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients (Calcium, Zinc, Iron, Dietary Folate, Vitamin A, Vitamin-B6 and Vitamin B-12). Extra Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Severely Acutely Malnourished (SAM) children as per National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).

Further, Fortified rice is being supplied to AWCs to meet the requirement of micro-nutrients and to control anaemia among women and children. Greater emphasis is being laid on the use

of millets at least once a week for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take-Home ration at Anganwadi Centers.

Ministry vide notification dated 12th September 2022 issued Integrated Nutrition Support Programme- Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan (2.0), Rules 2022 to regulate the entitlements specified under the provisions of National Food Security Act, 2013 for every pregnant woman and lactating mother, till six months after childbirth and every child in the age group of six months to six years.

Further, Ministry of Women & Child Development and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have jointly released the protocol for Community Management of Malnutrition (CMAM) to prevent and treat severely acute malnutrition in children and for reducing associated morbidity and mortality. The community-based approach involves timely detection and screening of children with severe acute malnutrition in the community, management for those without medical complications with wholesome, local nutritious foods at home and supportive medical care. The CMAM protocol includes an appetite test and screening process for children aged 6 months to 6 years who are severely acute malnourished (SAM) or severely underweight (SUW). Post-screening, such children are referred to Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers (NRC) or hospital facilities for further care.

To encourage diet-diversity and consumption of wholesome local produce, Poshan Vatikas have been developed at AWCs. Poshan Vatikas helps to meet the important dietary diversity gap that has been repeatedly revealed in different surveys by providing different fruits, nuts, herbs, medicinal plants and vegetables round the year.

Under this Mission, one of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of good nutrition habit requires sustained efforts for behavioural change. State and UTs are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under Jan Andolans during Poshan Maahs and Poshan Pakhwadas celebrated in the months of September and March-April respectively. Community Based Events (CBEs) have served as a significant strategy in changing nutritional practices and all Anganwadi workers are required to conduct two Community Based Events every month.

The Suposhit Gram Panchayat Abhiyaan was launched in December 2024. This initiative aims to improve nutritional outcomes and well-being through strengthened nutrition services, community participation, and multi-stakeholder convergence. The top 1000 Gram Panchayats will be awarded an incentive of Rs. 1 lakh. These incentives will be utilized to motivate the Anganwadi workers & helpers to help improve service delivery, as an incentive to the Gram Panchayat to improve community mobilization & increase enrolment and help nutrition related initiatives such as development of Poshan Vatikas, SNP value addition, etc.

The budget for Saksham Anganwadi and Mission Poshan 2.0 has been increased year on year basis as below:

S. No.	Year	Budget Allocation (RE) Rupee in Crore
1.	2020-21	17252.31
2.	2021-22	19999.55
3.	2022-23	20,263.07
4.	2023-24	22022.99
5.	2024-25	21035.12
6.	2025-26	20949.47
