

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 2071
ANSWERED ON 05.08.2026

POSHAN 2.0 AND CHILD NUTRITION INDICATORS

2071. SHRI SANJAY KUMAR JHA:

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

- (a) whether National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-6 (2023-24) indicates a decline in stunting among children under five from 35.5 per cent to 29.3 per cent, alongside a marginal change in the proportion of underweight children from 32.1 per cent to 31.8 per cent;
- (b) whether only about 12.4 percent of children aged 6-23 months receive a minimum acceptable diet; and
- (c) If so, what dietary and nutrition interventions has the Ministry undertaken to improve feeding practices and nutritional outcomes and ensure that enhanced allocations under POSHAN 2.0 translate into measurable improvements in child nutrition indicators?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (c) Malnutrition is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, affected mainly by a number of generic factors including poverty, inadequate food consumption due to access and availability issues, poor maternal infant and child feeding and care practices, poor sanitary and environmental conditions, etc.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) conducts various rounds of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) every few years which have shown improvement in malnutrition indicators in children across the country. Details of these indicators for children under 5 years of age from NFHS-1 to NFHS-6 are placed below:

NFHS Survey	Stunting %	Underweight %	Wasting %
NFHS-1 (1992-93) *	52	53.4	17.5
NFHS-2 (1998-99) **	45.5	47	15.5
NFHS-3 (2005-06) ***	48.0	42.5	19.8
NFHS-4 (2015-16) ***	38.4	35.8	21.0
NFHS-5 (2019-21) ***	35.5	32.1	19.3
NFHS-6 (2023-24) ***	29.3	31.8	19.0

* Under 4 years

** Under 3 years

*** Under 5 years

As a whole of Government approach, high priority has been accorded to the issues of malnutrition in the country. Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSE&L) and Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD), Government of India undertake targeted interventions to improve the nutritional status of children in the country.

To address the challenge of malnutrition in the country and improving Nutritional outcomes, MoWCD has subsumed Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (age 14-18 years in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region) under the umbrella of Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0. It is a centrally sponsored scheme where the responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and UTs.

Various nutrition interventions under the Mission to improve nutritional outcomes:

- Supplementary Nutrition in form of Hot cooked meal (HCM) and Take-Home Ration (THR) 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. Additional Nutrition is also provided to Severely Acute Malnourished (SAM) children (6 months to 5 years) in form of THR.
- Further to ensure nutrition of children between aged 6 to 23 months, THR is distributed to the mother/parents of the children at Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) using Facial Recognition System (FRS). A normal child is provided 200 Kcal and 08–10 gram protein for 6-12 months; 400 Kcal and 15–20 gram protein for 1-3 years; and 400 Kcal and 15–20 gram protein for 3-6 years, along with recommended 7 essential micronutrients.
- To encourage diet-diversity and consumption of wholesome local produce, Poshan Vatikas have been developed at AWCs. Poshan Vatikas or Nutri-gardens are being set up under Mission Poshan 2.0 at Anganwadi Centers across the country to encourage consumption

of local and seasonal fruits, vegetables, thereby improving diet-diversity and increase the intake of micronutrients.

- Mission Poshan 2.0 empowers the frontline functionaries by providing them with smartphones along with data recharge facility. Further, there is a provision of Growth Monitoring Devices (GMDs) such as Infantometer, Stadiometer, Weighing Scale-Infant and Weighing Scale-Mother & Child at each AWC for the regular growth monitoring of registered beneficiaries.
- One of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy in the form of Jan Andolans (Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada celebrated in the months of September and March-April respectively) to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of good nutrition habit requires sustained efforts for behavioural change.
- Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) conduct structured home visits to support pregnant women, lactating mothers, and young children (0-3 years) through nutrition counselling, caregiving guidance, and promotion of early childhood development.
- MoWCD and MoHFW have jointly released the Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children to prevent and treat severely acute malnutrition in children and for reducing associated morbidity and mortality.
