

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1435
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.07.2023

STATUS OF MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN

1435 SHRI RAJVEER DILER:

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

- (a) the details of existing programmes to deal with malnutrition amongst children in the age group of 0-5 years in the country;
- (b) the details of the problems faced in availing the benefits of schemes being implemented to deal with malnutrition;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to make serious efforts to ensure benefits of the said schemes reaches the affected people so that the problem of malnutrition amongst children can be eradicated; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country. Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (henceforth 'Mission Poshan 2.0') is an Integrated Nutrition Support Programme that was launched in 2021 to address the challenging situation of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. The mission aims at developing India's human capital and integrates three existing schemes (Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent Girls), adopting a lifecycle approach to malnutrition reduction. It shifts focus from calorific sufficiency alone to practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity. In order to achieve holistic nutrition among the target groups, the mission focuses on the following: Infant and young child feeding practices (including breastfeeding and complementary nutrition), Maternal and adolescent nutrition, Treatment of malnourished children or children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)/Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM), and Promotion of AYUSH practices

(b) to (d) Anganwadi Services is a self-selecting scheme. Government has placed a great deal of importance on generating behaviour change and people's movement for good health and nutrition. Under Poshan Abhiyaan, large scale and continuous behaviour change communication has been carried out through *Jan Andolans* (or mass

movements for behaviour change) with annual Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada celebrations which have been institutionalised with over 60 crore activities carried out from September 2018 onwards. Further, over 3.7 crore Community Based Events have been carried out for behaviour change in women, husbands and families.

The Mission raises communities' awareness on good nutrition behaviours for themselves and their children. It promotes access to nutritious, affordable and locally available diets through the plantation of Poshan Vatikas or nutri-gardens at Anganwadi Centres and other interventions such as the promotion of kitchen gardens in AWCs and homes. To encourage diet-diversity and consumption of wholesome local produce, around 6.42 lakh Poshan Vatikas have been developed at AWCs. It helps meet gaps between average diets and required diets by providing Supplementary Nutrition to pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 6 months to 6 years of age.

Steps have been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing in accredited labs, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under Poshan Tracker to improve governance. Technology under Poshan Tracker is being leveraged for dynamic identification of stunting, wasting, under-weight prevalence among children across the country.

Migration facility for pregnant women and lactating mothers from one AWC to another within and outside a State, and from one category to another category of beneficiary is also available on the Poshan Tracker to ensure continuity in service delivery. Further, Beneficiary Redressal Mechanism is an integral part of Poshan 2.0. Poshan Tracker has a web based and an application based facility to raise a concern. Further, Poshan Helpline operationalised in November 2022 has been made available for a beneficiary to raise a concern or a query about the services offered under Mission Poshan 2.0. The helpline facilitates monitoring gaps in services (if any) for identified malnourished children. Further, to ensure last mile tracking of service delivery, SMS alerts to registered beneficiaries has been introduced, on delivery of Take Home Ration (not raw ration).
