

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3771
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.08.2023

ICDS PROGRAMME

3771. DR. M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI:

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

- (a) whether the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) programme addresses the present malnutrition issues all over the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government have conducted any study regarding this and if so, the details and the findings thereof;
- (c) whether the project is having several mismatches between the programme's design and its actual implementation that prevent it reaching its potential to address the issue of malnutrition;
- (d) whether the Government has undertaken any new studies to reform existing nutrition programmes or introduce new ones; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) In order to maximize nutritional outcomes, the Anganwadi Services (erstwhile ICDS Scheme), Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Poshan Abhiyaan have been re-aligned under 'Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0' (Mission Poshan 2.0) 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. The Mission is implemented throughout the country.

In order to monitor the implementation of Mission Poshan 2.0, Government has leveraged technology in the form of an ICT application, viz., Poshan Tracker, which provides near real time progress under the Mission. Poshan Tracker is being leveraged for dynamic identification of stunting, wasting and underweight prevalence among children and last mile tracking of nutrition service delivery. The application also offers counselling videos on key behaviours and services which help disseminate messages on birth preparedness, delivery, post-natal care, breastfeeding and complementary feeding. The system enables near real-time monitoring of all AWCs, AWWs and beneficiaries on the defined indicators. Beneficiary Redressal Mechanism is an integral part of Poshan 2.0. Poshan Tracker has a web based and an application based facility to raise concerns / grievances. Further, a Poshan Helpline (14408) operationalised in November 2022 has been made available for beneficiaries to register concerns / queries on the services offered under Mission Poshan 2.0.

Poshan 2.0 focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, Treatment of MAM/SAM and Wellness through AYUSH. It rests on the pillars of Convergence, Governance, and Capacity-building. Under Poshan 2.0, focus is on diet diversity, food fortification, leveraging traditional systems of knowledge and popularizing use of millets. Nutrition awareness strategies under Poshan 2.0 aim to develop sustainable health and well-being through regional meal plans to bridge dietary gaps. Further, greater emphasis is being given on the use of millets (coarse grains) for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations (not raw ration) at Anganwadi centres for Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Children below 6 years of age, as millets have high nutrient content that can help to address anemia and other micro-nutrient deficiencies in women and children. Under Supplementary Nutrition Programme of Mission Poshan 2.0, only fortified rice is being allocated to States/UTs.

Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO) under NITI Aayog has conducted Sectoral Evaluation of schemes including POSHAN Abhiyaan, wherein performance of the scheme was found satisfactory in criteria of Relevance, Sustainability and Equity. NITI Aayog assessed the implementation of POSHAN Abhiyaan since its inception and came out with the following key findings:

- Poshan Abhiyaan has helped to bring a strong focus on improving nutrition outcomes during the first 1,000 days.
- It has enabled a nation-wide Jan-andolan catalysing nutrition related behaviour change at scale for positive impact on feeding and healthcare practices.
- The Abhiyaan has demonstrated that the processes for inter-sectoral convergence are effectively operationalized through in place institutional mechanisms at multiple levels.
- Poshan Abhiyaan showed that technology can be leveraged for real-time monitoring of large scale health and nutrition programmes.
- Poshan Abhiyaan supported the resilience of health and nutrition systems during Covid-19 pandemic.

The data on nutritional indicators is captured under the National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) conducted periodically by the Ministry of Health and 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%. However, as per data recorded in Poshan Tracker, ICT application for Mission Poshan 2.0, close to 7 crore children were measured in the country in the June 2023, as per which, 7% were wasted and 19% underweight, which is significantly lower than NFHS indicators.
