

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2560**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.03.2020

**MALNOURISHMENT AMONG WOMEN**

2560. DR. UMESH G. JADHAV:

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

- (a) whether the incidence of malnourishment among women and children is higher as compared to men and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the incidence of malnourishment among children is largely under reported in many parts of the country and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the faulty methods employed to diagnose malnutrition has led to poor detection of cases of malnutrition and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of efforts made by the Government to prevent malnutrition among women and children in the country?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (d) Data on nutritional indicators is captured under the National Family Health Surveys conducted periodically by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, with International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) being the nodal agency for conducting the surveys using a standardized methodology.

As per the report of National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 4 conducted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2015-16, prevalence of underweight among children under 5 years of age is 35.7% and 22.9% among women, whereas among men it is 20.2%.

Under-nutrition 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, inequitable food distribution, improper maternal infant and child feeding and care practices, inequity and gender imbalances, poor sanitary and environmental conditions; and restricted access to quality health, education and social care services.

The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through States/UTs to address various aspects related to nutrition. This Ministry is implementing POSHAN Abhiyaan, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Anganwadi Services and Scheme for Adolescent Girls under the Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS) as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition among children and women in the country.

Government has set up POSHAN Abhiyaan on 18.12.2017. The goals of POSHAN Abhiyaan are to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner with fixed targets as under:

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Target</b>
1.	Prevent and reduce Stunting in children (0- 6 years)	@ 2% p.a.
2.	Prevent and reduce under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) in children (0-6 years)	@ 2% p.a.
3.	Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among young Children(6-59 months)	@ 3% p.a.
4.	Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among Women and Adolescent Girls in the age group of 15-49 years.	@ 3% p.a.
5.	Reduce Low Birth Weight (LBW).	@ 2% p.a.

The Abhiyaan aims to reduce malnutrition in the country in a phased manner, through a lifecycle approach, by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach. The Abhiyaan has mechanisms for timely service delivery and a robust monitoring as well as intervention infrastructure. The major activities undertaken under this Abhiyaan are ensuring convergence with various other programmes; Information Technology enabled Common Application Software for strengthening service delivery and interventions; Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy leading to Jan Andolan to educate the people on nutritional aspects; Capacity Building of Frontline Functionaries, incentivizing States/ UTs for achieving goals etc.

Further steps taken under the National Health Mission (NHM), a flagship programme of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, to address malnutrition *inter alia* include promotion of appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices, Anaemia Mukh Bharat, Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation, de-worming, promotion of iodized salt, Vitamin-A supplementation, Mission Indradhanush to ensure high coverage of vaccination in children, conducting intensified diarrhoea control fortnights to control childhood diarrhoea, management of sick severely malnourished children at Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers, monthly Village Health and Nutrition Days, Home Based Newborn Care (HBNC) and Home Based Young Child Care (HBYC) programmes, Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram, etc.

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