

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3853
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.03.2022

“PRIORITY TO MALNUTRITION ISSUES”

3853 SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI:

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

- (a) whether the Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes under the Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme as directly targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is working on a plan to make the country malnutrition-free in a given time frame; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Government has accorded high priority to the problem of malnutrition in the country. Anganwadi Services under Umbrella ICDS Scheme (earlier known as ICDS) was launched in 1975, as one of the flagship programmes of the Government of India and represents one of the world's largest and unique programmes for early childhood care and development. It is the foremost symbol of the country's commitment to its children and nursing mothers, as a response to the challenge of providing pre-school non-formal education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality on the other. The beneficiaries under this scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Total number of beneficiaries are:

Beneficiaries under Anganwadi Services (As on 30.06.2021)	
No of children aged 6 months - 6 years	7,36,91,025
No. of Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers	1,69,25,928
Total No of Beneficiaries (Children 6 months-6 years plus PW&LM)	9,06,16,953

The objectives of the Scheme are:

- i. To improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group of 0-6 years;
- ii. To lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- iii. To reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropouts;
- iv. To achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- v. To enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

Under the Scheme following six services is provided through the platform of Anganwadi Centres to the eligible beneficiaries:

- i. Supplementary Nutrition (SNP)
- ii. Pre-school Non-formal Education,
- iii. Nutrition & Health Education,
- iv. Immunization,
- v. Health Check-up, and
- vi. Referral Services

Three of the six services, viz., Immunization, Health check-up and Referral Services are related to health and are provided through NRHM & Public Health Infrastructure.

Supplementary Nutrition: In order to eradicate malnutrition among pregnant women and lactating mothers and children, supplementary nutrition is provided as per the nutritional norms given below for 300 days in a year:

S. No.	Categories	Types of food
1.	Children (0-6 months)	Exclusive Breast feeding for first 6 months of life.
2.	Children (6-36 months)	Take Home Ration containing 500 calories of energy and 12-15 gms of protein in the form that is palatable to the child.
3.	Severely mal-nourished children (6-36 months)	Same type of food as above with food supplement of 800 calories of energy and 20-25 gms. of Protein.
4.	Children (3-6 years)	Morning snack in the form of milk/banana/seasonal fruits etc. and Hot cooked Meal.
5.	Severely mal-nourished children (3-6 years)	Additional 300 calories of energy and 8-10 gms. of Protein in the form of micro-nutrient fortified food and/or energy dense food.
6.	Pregnant women & Nursing mothers	Take Home Ration in the form of micro-nutrient fortified food and/or energy dense food.

The Scheme today operates through a network of 7075 fully operational Projects and 13.89 lakh AWCs to 906.17 lakh beneficiaries of which 736.91 lakh are children under six and 169.26 lakh are pregnant women & lactating mothers. Till June 2021, a total number of 200.44 lakh children of 3-6 years were covered under pre-school education of which 102.40 lakhs were boys and 98.04 lakhs were girls.

POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched on 8th March 2018 with an aim to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children under 6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach.

Further, Mission Poshan 2.0, an integrated nutrition support programme which subsumes Supplementary Nutrition Programme and POSHAN Abhiyaan, has been announced in budget 2021-2022 for all States/UTs to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes with focus on developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition. Steps have also been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under Poshan Tracker a robust ICT enabled platform, to improve governance with regard to real time monitoring and provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervisions and management of services. The Abhiyaan empowers Anganwadi workers and Lady Supervisors by providing them with smart phones, and Growth Monitoring Devices (comprises of Stadiometer, Infantometer, Weighing Scale for Infant and Mother & Child). Further, Guidelines were issued for transparency and accountability in delivery of supplementary nutrition and to track nutritional outcomes on 13.01.2021.
