

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4182**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2024

**NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND SAKSHAM ANGANWADI**

4182. SHRI P V MIDHUN REDDY:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for the inadequate budget increases for nutrition-related programs such as Saksham Anganwadi and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, though 50% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition in the country; and
- (b) the plans of the Government to address above issue and improve nutrition outcomes for children in Andhra Pradesh?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) and (b) Under the 15th Finance Commission, various components like Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (of 14-18 years in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region) have been subsumed under the umbrella Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) to address the challenge of malnutrition. This mission is a universal self-selecting umbrella scheme available to all the eligible beneficiaries who enroll at the Anganwadi Centers (AWCs). It is a Centrally Sponsored mission, where the responsibility for implementation lies with the States/UTs including the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Nutrition goes beyond mere eating of food; it requires proper digestion, absorption, and metabolism which are influenced by factors like sanitation, education and access to safe drinking water. As malnutrition requires a multi-sectoral approach involving dimensions of food, health, water, sanitation and education, it is crucial to effectively address the issue of malnutrition. The challenge of malnutrition is being addressed under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 by establishing cross cutting convergence amongst 18 Ministries/Departments.

Under Mission Poshan 2.0 a new strategy has been made for reduction in malnutrition and for improved health, wellness and immunity through activities like community engagement, outreach, behavioral change, and advocacy. It focuses on Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, treatment of Severe Acute

Malnutrition (SAM)/ Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and wellness through AYUSH practices to reduce prevalence of wasting, stunting, anaemia and being underweight.

Under this scheme, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls to beat the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition by adopting a life cycle approach. Supplementary nutrition is provided in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act. These norms have been revised and upgraded last year. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients.

Fortified rice is being supplied to AWCs to meet the requirement of micro-nutrients and to control anaemia among women and children. Greater emphasis is being laid on the use of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal at least once a week and Take Home ration at Anganwadi centres.

Ministries of Women & Child Development and Health & Family Welfare have jointly released the protocol for Community Management of Malnutrition (CMAM) to prevent and treat severely acute malnutrition in children and for reducing associated morbidity and mortality.

Under this Mission, one of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy leading to a Jan Andolan to educate people on nutritional aspects. State and UTs are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under community engagement programmes during Poshan Maahs and Poshan Pakhwadas celebrated in the months of September and March-April respectively. Community Based Events (CBEs) have served as a significant strategy in changing nutritional practices and all Anganwadi workers are required to conduct two Community Based Events every month.

Various rounds of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare since 1992-93 have shown improvement in malnutrition indicators in children across India. Details of these indicators for children since NFHS-1 to NFHS-5 are given below:

<b>NFHS Survey</b>	<b>Stunting %</b>	<b>Underweight %</b>	<b>Wasting %</b>
NFHS-1 (1992-93)*	52	53.4	17.5
NFHS-2 (1998-99)**	45.5	47	15.5
NFHS-3 (2005-6)***	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

\* Under 4 years

\*\* Under 3 years

\*\*\* Under 5 years

The above table gives a representative picture of malnutrition indicators among all children of 0-3 years, 0-4 years and 0-5 years age at the relevant time.

The projected population of all children up to 5 years in India for the year 2021 is 13.75 crores approximately (source: Population Projections for India and States 2011-2036, National Commission on Population, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare). However, only 7.54 crores children up to 5 years are enrolled in Anganwadis and registered on Poshan Tracker of the Ministry of Women & Child Development as per the October 2024 data. 7.31 crores of these children were measured on growth parameters of height and weight. 38.9% of these children have been found to be stunted, 17% children have been found to be underweight and 5.2% wasted.

Further, the projected population of all children in India up to 6 years for the year 2021 is approximately 16.1 crores (source: Population Projections for India and States 2011-2036, National Commission on Population, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare). As per the October 2024 data of Poshan Tracker, 8.82 crores children (0-6 years) are enrolled in Anganwadis out of whom 8.55 crores were measured on growth parameters of height and weight. 37% of these children (0-6 years) have been found to be stunted and 17% children (0-6 years) have been found to be underweight.

The analysis of the above NFHS data and the Poshan Tracker data shows improvement in malnutrition indicators in children across India.

As per NFHS-5, the malnutrition indicators of the children (0-5 years) in Andhra Pradesh: Stunting – 31.2%, Wasting – 16.1% and Underweight – 29.6%. Whereas as per Poshan Tracker data for the month of October 2024, Stunting is 22.6%, Wasting – 5.3% and Underweight – 10.8%. The analysis of the above NFHS data and the Poshan Tracker data shows improvement in malnutrition indicators in children in Andhra Pradesh.

Grants are being released based on inputs from States/UTs including the funds requirement and the actual expenditure incurred by States, their Statement of Expenditure (SoE), Utilization Certificates (UCs) and Single Nodal Account (SNA) compliances as per guidelines. Details of funds released under Mission Poshan 2.0, during the FY 2021-22 to FY 2023-24 are as follows:

<b>Amount (in ₹ crore)</b>		
<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
18,368.01 crore	19,849.82 crore	21,741.17 crore

PM POSHAN Scheme, under Ministry of Education, is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented in partnership with the States and UTs for providing one hot cooked and nutritious meal to children studying in Bal vatika (pre-primary class) and classes I to VIII of Government and Government-aided schools on all school-working days. The National Food Security Act, 2013, Rules,

Guidelines and Instructions issued under the PM POSHAN Scheme from time to time, provides that every child attending an eligible institution is to be covered under the scheme and shall be served hot cooked nutritious meal or provided with Food Security Allowance, as applicable, on all school days. The funds are released as central assistance to cover children attending the school on all working days. Every year, Government of India has enhanced the Budget Estimate (BE) for this scheme. Though, PM POSHAN is a centrally sponsored scheme, the Central Government provides 100% cost of foodgrains including subsidy per annum through Department of Food & Public Distribution, 100% transportation cost of foodgrains from FCI depot to schools and 100% funds for Management Monitoring and Evaluation (MME).

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