

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1156
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2026

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

1156. SHRI RAJA A:

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

- (a) whether Government has conducted any evaluation/impact assessment study on Poshan Abhiyan scheme recently to ascertain its effectiveness in improving the nutritional status of women and children in the country;
- (b) if so, the key findings of such reports along with the response of the Ministry thereon;
- (c) the details of the steps being taken under various schemes including Anganwadi services to improve maternal and child nutrition outcomes;
- (d) the details of fund allocated/spent in the Budget for these schemes, separately, during the last five years and in the current year, year-wise; and
- (e) the details of the reasons for under-utilisation of funds, if any, in certain States along with steps taken to address this issue?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (e): To address the challenge of malnutrition, Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (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). It is a Centrally Sponsored Mission, where the responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and UTs. This Mission includes beneficiaries; Children under 6 years of age, pregnant women, lactating mothers and adolescent girls (14-18 years, in Northeastern States and Aspirational Districts) of the country. The Mission is being implemented across the country. The objectives of Mission are as follows:

- To contribute to development of human capital in the country;
- Address challenge of malnutrition;
- Promote nutrition awareness and good eating habits for sustainable health and wellbeing

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, behavioural 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 Mission, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. These norms have been revised in January 2023. 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 for quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients (Calcium, Zinc, Iron, Dietary Folate, Vitamin A, Vitamin-B6 and Vitamin B-12). Extra Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Severely Acutely Malnourished (SAM) children as per National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).

Further, 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** at least once a week for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take-Home ration at Anganwadi Centers.

Ministry vide notification dated 12th September 2022 issued Integrated Nutrition Support Programme- Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan (2.0), Rules 2022 to regulate the entitlements specified under the provisions of National Food Security Act, 2013 for every pregnant woman and lactating mother, till six months after childbirth and every child in the age group of six months to six years.

Further, Ministry of Women & Child Development and Ministry of 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.

To encourage diet-diversity and consumption of wholesome local produce, PoshanVatikas have been developed at AWCs. PoshanVatikas helps to meet the important dietary diversity gap that has been repeatedly revealed in different surveys by providing different fruits, nuts, herbs, medicinal plants and vegetables round the year.

Under this Mission, one of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of good nutrition habit requires sustained efforts for behavioural change. State and UTs are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under Jan Andolans during PoshanMaahs and PoshanPakhwadas 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.

The Suposhit Gram Panchayat Abhiyaan was launched on 26th December 2024 with the objective of accelerating progress towards a malnutrition-free Bharat. States and Union Territories nominated top performing Gram Panchayats based on data available on the Poshan Tracker Application, subject to a ceiling of 10% of the total Gram Panchayats in each State/UT.

The details of the funds allocated/spent in the Budget under Mission Poshan 2.0, Separately, during the last five years and in the current year, year-wise are as below:

S. No.	Financial year	Funds released (Rupees in crores)	Funds utilized (Rupees in crores)
1	2020-21	16,105.78	17,544.87
2	2021-22	18,368.01	18,789.28
3	2022-23	19,849.82	19,346.54
4	2023-24	21,741.17	20,337.16
5	2024-25	20,904.83	-----
6	2025-26	11,862.20*	-----

*As on January 31, 2026

The Government has taken several steps to address the issue of under-utilization of funds and to ensure timely and effective utilization, which include:

- Regular review meetings with States/UTs to monitor physical and financial progress.
- Issuance of advisories and guidelines to States for timely submission of UCs and compliance with prescribed procedures.

In 2021, the World Bank conducted a survey on Poshan Abhiyaan in 11 priority states with the highest rates of anaemia and stunting. The aim of this survey was to assess the program's delivery of nutrition services, whether the nutritional knowledge of beneficiaries had improved and if they had adopted more appropriate nutrition and feeding practices.

The findings demonstrated that the services delivered through the Poshan Abhiyaan – the receipt of relevant messages, home visits by the Anganwadi Worker, and attendance at community-based events – were associated with improved nutrition behaviours. The survey also found that the program's nutrition messages reached more than 80% of women, and that 81% of women practiced exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months.

Further, a third-party evaluation and impact assessments of Poshan Abhiyaan were conducted by NITI Aayog in 2020 as well as in 2025. They have found its relevance to be satisfactory for tackling malnutrition in the country.
