

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

Un-Starred Question no. 2082
To be answered on 31.07.2026

Nutritional Diet for Children

2082. Shri Selvaganapathi T.M.:

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

- (a) whether a substantial proportion of children between aged 6 to 23 months are still not getting an adequately nutritional diet, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether Indian toddlers are still missing out on the diverse/frequent meals required for healthy growth and brain development, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether children may be receiving enough calories but are not getting enough proteins, micronutrients and nutrient rich foods essential for development, if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures proposed in this regard?

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

(a) to (c): In order to bridge the gap between the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) and Average Daily Intake (ADI), Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 has provisioned Supplementary Nutrition to all beneficiaries including Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls (14-18 years). It is provided in the form of Take-Home Ration (THR), Morning Snacks and Hot Cooked Meals. To ensure nutrition of children between aged 6 to 23 months, THR is distributed to the mother/parents of the children at Anganwadi Centers using Facial Recognition System (FRS). A normal child is provided 200 Kcal and 08–10 gram protein for 6-12 months; 400 Kcal and 15–20 gram protein for 1-3 years; and 400 Kcal and 15–20 gram protein for 3-6 years, along with recommended 7 essential micronutrients.

The THR is provided to the beneficiaries in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in revised Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013 in January 2023. Additional Nutrition is also provided to Severely Acute Malnourished (SAM) children (6 months to 5 years) in form of Take-Home Ration (THR). The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised

norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality 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).

The Ministry has recently issued the Comprehensive Guidelines for Supplementary Nutrition which emphasize on improving the quality, diversity and acceptability of Supplementary Nutrition, adherence to prescribed nutritional norms and quality standards.

To improve acceptability and consumption of Supplementary Nutrition, States and UTs have been given full flexibility to design menus and recipes based on local food habits, cultural preferences and availability of indigenous ingredients. Supplementary nutrition incorporates locally available cereals, millets, pulses, vegetables, nuts and other nutrient-rich foods, thereby promoting dietary diversity while ensuring greater acceptance among beneficiaries.
