

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3811

ANSWERED ON:16.05.2006

UNICEF REMINDER ON MALNUTRITION

Mane Smt. Nivedita;Nahata Smt. P. Jaya Prada;Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati;Verma Shri Ravi Prakash;Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

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

- (a) whether 40 per cent of the malnourished children in the world are from India;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereon and the remedial measures contemplated by the Government to arrest this trend;
- (c) whether the Union Government has directed State Governments to speed up the implementation of ICDS in regard to UNICEF reminder; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY)

(a) As per UNICEF report titled "Progress for Children, A Report Card on Nutrition, No.4, May, 2006", 39.04% of the underweight children under 5 years in the world are from India. As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS) the extent of malnutrition among children declined from 53.4% in 1992-93 to 47% in 1998-99. Third round of NFHS is currently underway and findings are likely to be available by March, 2007.

(b) Malnutrition is a multifaceted problem which requires a series of actions in the area of food security, safe drinking water and sanitation, health care, family welfare, nutrition and poverty alleviation. The Government is already seized of the problem and has undertaken several remedial measures to arrest this trend. Some of these are as under:

- (i) Integrated Child Development services (ICDS) Scheme [Ministry of Women & Child Development];
- (ii) Reproductive & Child Health Programme including Iron and Folic Acid, and Vitamin-A Supplementation Programmes Ministry of Health & Family Welfare];
- (iii) National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme [Ministry of Health & Family Welfare];
- (iv) National Rural Health Mission [Ministry of Health & Family Welfare];
- (v) Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IMNCI) [Ministry of Health & Family Welfare];
- (vi) National Programme for Nutritional support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meal Scheme) [Department of Elementary Education & Literacy];
- (vii) Targeted Public Distribution System [Department of Food & Consumer Affairs];
- (viii) Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls in 51 districts to provide free food grains to undernourished adolescent girls and pregnant & nursing mothers [Ministry of Women & Child Development].

(c)&(d) UNICEF, an organ of United Nations Organization, works in many countries to promote development and welfare of children. However, its role is generally in the nature of advocacy and not that of a supervisory body over national Governments.

Since ICDS is a Centrally sponsored scheme implemented through State Governments, the States have been directed to operationalise all sanctioned Projects and Anganwadi Centres (AWCs); fill up all vacant posts of ICDS functionaries; ensure regular supply of supplementary nutrition as per schematic norms; make available medicine and pre-school education kits in all AWCs; ensure effective convergence of health nutrition, education and safe drinking water services under various programmes.