

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:28

ANSWERED ON:13.02.2009

WHO NORMS ON MALNUTRITION

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

- (a) whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended new norms on malnutrition;
- (b) if so, the details and the implementation status thereof; and
- (c) the extent to which these norms are beneficial and different from the existing norms?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. It has been decided to follow the new WHO Child Growth Standards for monitoring growth of children through the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) w.e.f. 15.8.2008.

(c)

(i) the New WHO Growth Standards have resulted in change in current estimates on;

- (a) increase in total normal weight children,
- (b) increase in severely underweight children,
- (c) increase in underweight children (mild/moderate and severe) in age group of 0-6 months.

(ii) Correct assessment of underweight children shall be beneficial for timely interventions which in turn will help in improving the nutritional status.

(iii) As per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-III, the percentage of malnutrition and severely malnutrition children under 5 years of age is 42.5% and 15.8% respectively.

(iv) Difference between new standards and old standards are as follows:

(a) The new Standards are based on SD (Standard Deviation) Internationally accepted classification as compared to Harvard Standards which were being used hitherto in Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme.

(b) New Standards are gender specific while old standards are unisex.

(c) New Standards have prescriptive approach while old standards have descriptive approach.