

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2500

ANSWERED ON:04.12.2009

NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY III

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram; Gandhi Smt. Maneka Sanjay

**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

(a) whether as per the National Family Health Survey-III, quite a percentage of the children below the age of five are underweight and malnourished in the country; and

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof, and the reasons therefor State-wise?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a)to(b) As per the National Family Health Survey-III (2005-06), 42.5 percent of children under the age of five years are classified as malnourished according to the index of weight for age. The details thereof, state-wise are at Annexure.

The problem of malnutrition is multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, the determinants of which include household food insecurity, illiteracy and lack of awareness especially in women, access to health services, availability of safe drinking water, sanitation and environmental conditions and purchasing power. Besides early age at marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the newborns, poor breastfeeding practices, inadequate complementary feeding practices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections further aggravate the problem of malnutrition amongst children.