

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:272

ANSWERED ON:19.08.2011

STUNTED/UNDER WEIGHT CHILDREN

Joshi Shri Pralhad Venkatesh;Yadav Shri Ranjan Prasad

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

(a) whether the Government has taken note of a study conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which states that India accounts for more than three out of every ten stunted children in the world;

(b) if so the details thereof alongwith the facts in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has also conducted a survey to find out the percentage of stunted/under weight children below the age of three years in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to address these problems?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 272 FOR 19TH AUGUST, 2011

(a) & (b): Yes Madam, as per UNICEF report 2009, it is estimated that India has 61 million stunted children thus accounting for more than 3 out of every 10 stunted children in the developing world. Stunting affects approximately 195 million children under 5 years old in the developing world. Of the 10 countries that contribute most to the global burden of stunting among children, 6 are in Asia. The prevalence of stunting in these countries is : Bangladesh (43%), China (15%), India (48%), Indonesia (37%), Pakistan (42%) and Philippines (34%). The countries with highest prevalence of stunting are Afghanistan (59%), Yemen (58%), Madagascar (53%) and Ethiopia (51%).

(c) Yes, Madam, three National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) have been carried out in 1992-93, 1998-99 and 2005-06 to collect data on population, health and nutrition for States/UT in the country. The proportion of children under three years of age who are stunted decreased from 51 percent in NFHS 2 in 1998-99 to 45 percent in NFHS 3 in 2005-06. The proportion of children under three years of age who are underweight decreased from 43 percent in NFHS-2 to 40 percent in NFHS-3.

(d) Statewise details of the percentage of stunted/underweight children under three years of age in the country as per NFHS III (2005-06) are at Annexure.

(e) Malnutrition is a multifaceted, multidimensional and multi-sectoral problem. Government has taken various measures to improve the health and nutritional status of vulnerable population that include:

1. Various strategies of Reproductive Child Health Programme under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) such as :

Emphasis on appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding

Treatment of severe acute malnutrition through Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers (NRCs) set up at public health facilities.

Specific Programme to prevent and combat micronutrient deficiencies of Vitamin A, Iron & Folic Acid. Vitamin A supplementation for children till the age of 5 years.

Iron & Folic Acid syrup to children from the age of 6 months to 5 years. Iron & Folic Acid supplementation to pregnant and lactating women also.

2. National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP) for promotion of consumption of iodated salt at household level.

3. Nutrition Education to increase awareness and bring about desired changes in the dietary practices including the promotion of

breast feeding and dietary diversification is being encouraged under both Integrated Child development Services Scheme (ICDS) and National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).

4. Other schemes targeting improvement of nutritional status include:

- (a) Integrated Child Development Services Schemes (ICDS).
- (b) Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls [RGSEAG] – (SABLA).
- (c) Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)
- (d) National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Programme)
- (e) Availability of essential food items at subsidized cost through Targeted Public Distribution System.