

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3050
ANSWERED ON:19.08.2011
HARVARD SCHOOL REPORT ON MALNUTRITION
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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the report on India published by the Harvard School of Public Health according to which the country has failed to save the children belonging to impoverished families from the ill-effects of malnutrition despite achieving an impressive economic growth rate;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has reviewed the programmes implemented to curb malnutrition in view of the analysis of the above report; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the changes proposed to be affected during the Twelfth Five year Plan in this context?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) to (d): The Harvard study based on analysis of data from three surveys of National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 1, 2 & 3 conducted in 1992–93, 1998–99, and 2005–06 respectively concluded that they fail to find consistent evidence that economic growth leads to reduction in childhood undernutrition in India. They further suggested that direct investment in appropriate interventions may be necessary to reduce childhood undernutrition. It is also indicated that direct investments in preventive programmes has been less than adequate which calls for a greater investment for the purpose.

Government has accorded priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/ programmes of different Ministries/Departments through State Governments/UTs Administrations which directly or indirectly have an impact on the nutritional status of the children. Some of the direct interventions on nutrition are (i) Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme (ii) Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDM) (iii) National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) (iv) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) (v) Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), namely SABLA, and (vi) Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) – The CMB Scheme on pilot basis in 52 districts initially. Besides these, schemes such as National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) etc. indirectly impact the nutrition of children.

Upon review of programmes, it has been found that many of these schemes namely, ICDS, NRHM, MDM and MGNREGS have been expanded only in recent years to provide for increased coverage and improved services, which would further improve the nutrition status.

Some of the recent decisions by the Government to improve the nutrition situation have been to (i) strengthen and restructure ICDS with special focus on pregnant and lactating mothers and children under three (ii) prepare a multi-sectoral programme to address the maternal and child malnutrition in selected 200 high-burden districts (iii) launch a nationwide information, education and communication campaign against malnutrition and (iv) bring strong nutrition focus in programmes in sectors like health, drinking water supply and sanitation, school education, agriculture, food & public distribution. These decisions become the inputs for 12th Five Year Plan under consideration.