

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6915  
ANSWERED ON:18.05.2012  
UNDERWEIGHT AND ANAEMIC CHILDREN  
Rama Devi Smt.

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

- (a) whether it is true that 78 per cent children under 4 years of age are underweight, 68 per cent of women and children are suffering from anaemia in Bihar;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any measures to address the problem of malnutrition in the State; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the corrective steps to be taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY)

(a) & (b) As per the data available through National Family Health Survey (2005-6), 56 per cent children under the age of five years in Bihar are underweight and 78 per cent children under five years and 64 per cent women in age group 15 -49 years have anaemia.

(c) & (d). Government has taken the following measures to improve the health and nutritional status of vulnerable population of the country including the State of Bihar:

1. Under National Rural Health Mission, funds are provided each year to the State of Bihar for carrying out following set of activities:

# Promoting appropriate infant and young child feeding practices that include early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding till 6 months of age.

# Management of malnutrition and common neonatal and childhood illnesses at community and facility level by training service providers in Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses (IMNCI) training.

# Treatment of children with severe acute malnutrition at special units called the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs) set up at public health facilities. Presently 34 NRCs are operational in the State.

# Specific program to prevent and combat micronutrient deficiencies of Vitamin A and Iron & Folic Acid. Vitamin A supplementation for children till the age of 5 years and Iron & Folic Acid supplementation for children 6 to 60 months.

# Weekly Iron Folic Acid Supplementation Programme for adolescents.

# Nutrition Education through Village Health and Nutrition Days to increase the awareness and bring about desired changes in the dietary practices.

2. Other schemes targeting improvement of nutritional status are as under:

# Supplementary Nutrition Programme under the Integrated Child Development Services Schemes (ICDS) which inter alia provides for supplementary nutrition, tracking the nutrition status of children of 0-6 years age group and nutrition education.

# National Programme of Nutritional Support to Elementary Education (Mid Day Meal Programme).