

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1346

ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012

DEATHS OF CHILDREN DUE TO MALNUTRITION

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

- (a) whether the number of deaths due to malnutrition is on the rise throughout the country including metropolitan cities;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has put in place any monitoring mechanism to check high incidence of malnutrition among children in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the shortcomings noticed in the implementation of Nutrition Policy; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to deal with malnutrition among the children in the country, particularly in metropolitan cities?

Answer

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

(a)&(b) Malnutrition is a multifaceted, multidimensional & multi-sectoral problem. It is not a direct cause of death but it can increase morbidity and mortality by reducing the resistance to infections. Data on death due to malnutrition is not maintained centrally.

(c)&(d) Government of India through National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) is facilitating the State Government in setting up Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers (NRCs) in district health facilities, primarily the District Hospital with priority in those districts where the prevalence of malnutrition among children is high. Growth monitoring i.e. weight for age, height for age etc. of the preschool children is done at Anganwadi Centers under ICDS Programme in the entire country. Severe Acute Malnutrition(SAM) children are referred to District Hospitals/Nutrition Rehabilitation Centers (NRCs)

(e) Government of India has taken the following steps to improve the health & nutritional status of children in the country including metropolitan cities:

1. Prime Minister's National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges was set up in October, 2008 for policy direction, review & effective coordination between Ministries which will have a sectoral responsibility for the challenge of Nutrition.

2. A National Nutrition Policy has been adopted in 1993 and a National Plan of Action for Nutrition (1995) is implemented through various Departments of Government.

3. Reproductive Child Health Programme under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) includes:

Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) to promote maternal health & institutional deliveries for better birth outcomes.

Focus on Maternal Health by promoting institutional deliveries, improved coverage and quality of ANC, skilled care to pregnant women, Post- partum care at community level.

Emphasis on appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding.

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK).

Immunization of children to prevent them from both morbidity and mortality.

Promotion of ORS with zinc supplementation for a period of two weeks during the diarrhoea management.

Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses and malnutrition.

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.

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

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

Integrated Child Development Services Schemes (ICDS).

Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY).

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

Improving the purchasing power of the people through various income generating schemes including Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Availability of essential food items at subsidized cost through Targeted Public Distribution System.

Total sanitation campaign.

National Rural Drinking Water Supply Programme.

6. Nutrition Education to increase the 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).