

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:344

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2012

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;
- (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 formulated any mechanism to check high incidents of malnutrition among children in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to deal with malnutrition among the children in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (ABU HASEM KHAN CHOUDHURY)

(a) & (b). The data on deaths in children on account of malnutrition is not available as malnutrition is not a direct cause of child deaths, though it can increase morbidity and mortality by reducing resistance to infections

(c) to (e). Yes. The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition in the country and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through State Governments/UT administrations, as follows:

1. Under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and within its umbrella, the Reproductive & Child Health Programme, the following interventions are being undertaken for management of malnutrition in children:

Vitamin A supplementation for children aged 9 months to 5 years.

IFA Supplementation programme: All children in the age group of 6 months- 5 years receive Iron and Folic Acid syrup for prevention of anaemia.

Promotion of optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices.

The weekly iron-folic acid supplementation Scheme or WIFS has recently been launched targeting adolescent girls in order to decrease prevalence of anaemia.

Treatment of children with severe acute malnutrition at special units called the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs), set up at public health facilities. Presently 594 such centres are functional all over the country.

Deworming: Children under 5 years of age are provided deworming tablets/ syrups twice a year.

Growth monitoring of children up to three years by promoting use of Mother and Child Protection card.

Health and nutrition education during Village Health and Nutrition Days (VHND) to promote dietary diversification, inclusion of iron folate rich food and increase in awareness to bring about desired changes in the dietary practices including the promotion of breastfeeding.

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

2. Other schemes/programmes include the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG) namely SABLA, India Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojna (IGMSY) as direct targeted interventions. Besides, indirect Multi-sectoral interventions include Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), National Horticulture Mission, National Food Security Mission, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Total Sanitation Campaign, National Rural Drinking Water Programme etc. All these schemes have potential to address one or other aspect of Nutrition.