

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:791

ANSWERED ON:01.03.2013

PROBLEM OF MALNUTRITION IN CHILDREN

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**Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

(a) whether India has the highest number of children suffering from malnutrition in comparison to other countries of the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the funds sanctioned, released and utilised by the State Governments under the various schemes to tackle the problem of malnutrition during the 11th Five Year Plan?

**Answer**

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

(a):As per the National Family Health Survey-3 (NFHS-3), 2005-06, in India 42.5% children under 5 years are underweight and 69.5 % are anaemic. Malnutrition levels in some regions/countries of the world is at Annex-I.

(b):The problem of malnutrition is complex, multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, and cannot be improved by a single sector alone. The causes are varied and include inadequate consumption of food, frequent infections, lack of availability of safe drinking water and proper sanitation, illiteracy specially in women, poor access to health services, low purchasing power, socio-cultural factors such as early marriages of girls, lack of care during pregnancy and infancy, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children etc.

The approach to deal with the nutrition challenges has been two pronged: First is the Multi-sectoral approach for accelerated action on the determinants of malnutrition in targeting nutrition in schemes/programmes of all the sectors. The second approach is the direct and specific interventions targeted towards the vulnerable groups such as children below 6 years, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating mothers.

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. The schemes/programmes include the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Schemes for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG) namely SABLA, Indira 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), Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, National Rural Drinking Water Programme etc. All these schemes have potential to address one or other aspect of Nutrition.

(c):The details of the funds sanctioned and utilized by the State Governments under some of the schemes implemented by Ministry of Women & Child Development namely, the ICDS, SABLA and IGMSY during the 11th five year plan are at Annex-2A, 2B, 3 & 4.