GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:27
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2009
MALNUTRITION
Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun;Gandhi Smt. Maneka Sanjay

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

(a) whether the Government has conducted any study to identify the level of malnutrition among the children in rural and urban areas in the country including Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the outcome of such study and the follow up action taken in this regard;

(c) the number and percentage of children suffering from malnutrition in the country including Jharkhand; State-wise;

(d) whether the percentage of malnutrition in children has not declined despite various initiatives taken by the Government;

(e) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(f) the action proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) to (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRD TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (f) of LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.27 TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.11.2009 BY SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI & VARUN GANDHI REGARDING MALNUTRITION.

(a, b & c) Government of India conducts the National Family Health Surveys which provide information on undernutrition, fertility, mortality, health and health care etc in different states/UTs of the country. As per National Family Health Survey (NHFS) 3, (2005-06), the percentage of children below five years of age who are underweight in the country, is 42.5% and that for children under 3 years of age is 40.4%. In the state of Jharkhand, it is 56.5% and 54.6%, respectively. The percentage of underweight children under age of five years in urban and rural areas is 32.7% and 45.6% respectively. State- wise prevalence of under nutrition among children under 5 with Rural / Urban spread, including Jharkhand is at Annexure I.

The state−wise information on malnutrition for under 3 children including urban and rural spread is at Annexure II. The detailed report is available at www.nfhsindia.org/nfhs_3national_report.html.

(d), (e) & (f) The under nutrition in children (below3 years) has declined from 43% as per National Family Health Survey (NHFS)-2, 1998-99 to 40% as per NHFS-3 (2005- 06). The nutritional status of the population is the outcome of complex and inter-related set of factors and cannot be improved by the efforts of single sector or action alone. The problem of malnutrition is multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, the determinants of which include household food insecurity, illiteracy and lack of awareness especially in women, access to health services, availability of safe drinking water, sanitation and environmental conditions and purchasing power etc. Besides early age at marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the newborns, poor breastfeeding practices, poor complementary feeding practices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections further aggravate the malnutrition amongst children. Tackling malnutrition amongst children requires an integrated approach. Prevention of early marriage, appropriate spacing in pregnancy, better Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices including exclusive breast feeding, age appropriate complementary feeding, better hygienic conditions, immunization, Vitamin A supplementation, deworming, Oral Rehydration, Zinc supplementation during diarrhea, timely and quality feeding for acute malnutrition conditions, improved nutrition for adolescent girls, prevention of anemia, improved food and nutrient intake during pregnancy and lactation, better information and awareness about nutritional needs & behaviors and prevention and control of diseases would need to be promoted for mitigating the impact of malnutrition. All these need to be addressed in a holistic manner by effective intersectoral coordination, convergence and improved systems of delivery of services under different schemes and programmes of central and state governments.