

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:375
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2009
WHO NORMS FOR MALNUTRITION
Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram

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

- (a) whether the World Health Organization (WHO) has proposed new norms to curb the problem of malnutrition;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has studied these norms;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has accepted the norms as prescribed by the WHO; and
- (e) if so, the difference between the norms prescribed by WHO and Indian norms?

Answer

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

(a) to (c): WHO has suggested new WHO Child Growth Standards for monitoring growth of children.

The implementation of these standards result in change of current estimates of undernutrition as follows:

- (a) increase in total normal weight children,
- (b) increase in severely underweight children,
- (c) increase in underweight children (mild/moderate and severe) in age group of 0-6 months.

(d): Yes, Sir. The Government has adopted the new norms w.e.f. 15th August 2008 for monitoring growth of children under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).

(e): The new WHO standards are based on breastfed infants while earlier National Centre for Health Statistics (NCHS) standards were based on breastfed as well as artificially fed children. Breastfed children provide the best standard for measuring healthy growth.

The new standards show that all children across all regions can attain a similar standard of height, weight and development with correct feeding practices.