

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5986
ANSWERED ON:03.05.2013
FAO REPORT ON MALNUTRITION
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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note/cognizance of the report of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) wherein twenty percent of the country's population is reported to be malnourished;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the appropriate steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to address the problem of malnutrition in the country?

Answer

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

(a): We are not aware if the number quoted is reported in any recent FAO report. In 2012 FAO "the State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012" report indicates that 17.5 percent of India's population was estimated to be undernourished in 2010-2012. (down from 19.0 percent in 2007-2009 and 20.9 percent in 2004-2006)

(b): According to "the State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012" report, there is a reduction of 34.9 percent in prevalence of undernourishment from 1990-1992 to 2010-2012 (down from 26.9 percent in 1990-1992 and 17.5 percent in 2010-2012)

The problem of malnutrition is complex, multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature and cannot be improved by a single sector alone. 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.

(c): The Government 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 (MDM), 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. Several of the schemes namely, ICDS, NRHM, MDM, SGSY have been expanded post 2005-06. All these schemes have potential to address one or other aspect of Nutrition.

Nutrition has been receiving attention at the highest levels. Recent decisions of Government inter alia, include (i) strengthening and restructuring of the ICDS with special focus on pregnant and lactating mothers and children under three. (ii) a multi-sectoral programme to address the maternal and child malnutrition in selected 200 high-burden districts. (iii) A nationwide information, education and communication campaign (iv) bringing in strong nutrition focus in Ministries dealing with Health, Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, School Education, Agriculture and Food & Public Distribution. (v) programmes such as the ICDS and Midday meal shall use iron fortified iodized salt (Double fortified salt).

The main schemes/programmes of Ministry of Women and Child Development which have a bearing on the nutritional status includes the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme which provides a package of six services namely supplementary nutrition, pre-school non-formal education, nutrition & health education, immunization, health check-up and referral services. ICDS Scheme has since been universalized with effect from 2008-09.

Recently Government has approved the strengthening and restructuring of ICDS with special focus on pregnant and lactating mothers and children under three. The restructured and strengthened ICDS has been rolled out in three phases with focus on the 200 high burden districts for malnutrition during 2012-13 and additional 200 districts in 2013-14 including districts from the special category States and North Eastern Region (NER) and the remaining districts in 2014-15.

Additionally, Government has launched an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign against malnutrition for generating awareness on key nutrition issues with effect from 28th December, 2012.

The proposed National Food Security Bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha will also contribute towards food security. Government has also announced a pilot programme on Nutri-Farms for introducing new crop varieties that are rich in micro-nutrients such as iron-rich bajra, protein-rich maize and zinc-rich wheat.