

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1789

ANSWERED ON:10.03.2017

Food Fortification for Children

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

- (a) whether packaged fortified food, which showed remarkable result in treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) in Africa has proved less effective in trials conducted in India and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the experts have been cautioning against 'quick fixes' of buying commercial products instead of focusing on sustainable measures such as care support for mothers, clean drinking water and food security to treat malnutrition, if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government has set up a scientific panel on 'food fortification and nutrition' to help fight malnutrition in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the progress made on the front and the time line for its operationalisation; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government for the awareness of malnutrition and for protective method to eradicate this problem?

Answer

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

(a) Under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme of the Ministry, Supplementary Nutrition is provided in the form of Take Home Ration to Children 6 months to 3 years of age, pregnant and lactating women and Morning Snacks and Hot Cooked Meals to Children from 3 to 6 years of age as per the nutritional norms provided under Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013, which is as under:

Sl. No. Category Nutritional Norms

(per beneficiary per day)

Calories

(K Cal) Protein

(g)

1. Children (6-72 months) 500 12-15
2. Severely malnourished children (6-72 months) 800 20-25
3. Pregnant women and Nursing mothers 600 18-20

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SSupplementary nutrition is given in order to bridge the gap between the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) and Average Dietary Intake (ADI). The Revised Nutritional and Feeding Norms for Supplementary Nutrition in ICDS Scheme issued by the Ministry on 24.2.2009 provide for fortification of supplementary foods with essential micro-nutrients up to 50% of the RDA. Further, this Ministry is not aware of any such scientific trial.

(b) The scheme does not provide for "quick fix" commercial products. However, since malnutrition is a multi-faceted problem and cannot be addressed by a single sector alone, steps towards care and support of mothers, provision of clean drinking water, household food security, coverage of health services are essential.

(c) & (d) The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has set up a Scientific Panel on "Food Fortification and Nutrition" comprising of distinguished experts and scientists as member in order to inter alia identify critical nutritional gaps in Indian diet in general population as well as in specific target groups based on diet surveys and credible scientific evidence, define strategies to address nutritional needs of the general population and vulnerable groups, review the standards for all suitable food vehicles and regulatory and other related technological issues for nutrient fortification.

(e) The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through States/UTs to address one or other aspects related to nutrition. This Ministry is implementing Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Scheme for Adolescent Girls (Sabla) and Maternity Benefit Program (MBP) as direct targeted interventions.

Food and Nutrition Board of the Ministry, through its regional field units, is engaged in conducting training programmes in nutrition, advocacy towards generating awareness through nutrition education programmes on the importance of healthy balanced diets especially through the use of locally available foods, mass awareness campaigns and use of electronic and print media.

The main aim of all these activities is to improve nutritional outcomes and bring down the level of malnutrition in the country.
