

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1591
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.07.2023

NUTRITIONAL NEED AMONG WOMEN AND CHILDREN

1591. SHRI T.R. BAALU:

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

- (a) whether India accounts for almost a quarter of the stunted children and one-third worldwide of anaemic women in the reproductive age group; and
- (b) if so, the details of the measures taken/are being taken by the Government keeping in view the fact that food policies of the country have not been successful to adequately respond to the growing nutrient needs of the people and meet such kind of challenges of the changing times?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) Data on nutrition indicators among children and women is captured under the National Family Health Surveys conducted periodically by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. As per the recent round of NFHS-5 (2019-21), 33.8% children under 5 years of age are stunted and 57% women (15-49 years) are anaemic.

(b) Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition among women and children in the country and is making serious efforts to address this issue. Mission Poshan 2.0 announced in the budget 2021-22 is designed to address the issue of malnutrition including anaemia through transparency, accountability, balanced diets, diet diversity and quality, greater grassroots involvement and last-mile delivery of services supported by key strategies, viz., corrective strategies to address nutrition related deficiencies like anaemia, nutrition awareness strategies to develop good eating habits for sustainable health and well-being, strategies for communication and development of green eco-systems such as Poshan Vatikas. Under Poshan 2.0, focus is on diet diversity, food fortification, leveraging traditional systems of knowledge and popularizing use of millets. Nutrition awareness strategies under Poshan 2.0 aim to develop sustainable health and well-being through regional meal plans to bridge dietary gaps.

Under the Anganwadi Services Scheme, supplementary nutrition is provided to pregnant women, lactating mothers and children up to the age of 6 years as per the nutritional norms. Recently, these nutrition norms have been revised to provide balanced nutrition including quality protein, healthy fats and 7 essential micro nutrients (calcium, zinc, iron, dietary folate, Vitamin-A, Vitamin B-6 and Vitamin B-12).

Greater emphasis is being given on the use of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations (not raw ration) at Anganwadi centres for Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Children below 6 years of age, in view of their high nutrient content to address anaemia and micro-nutrient deficiencies in women and children. Under Supplementary Nutrition Programme, it is mandatory to provide millet based diet at least once a week. Further, under Mission Poshan 2.0, only fortified rice is allocated to States/UTs.

Further, the Government of India has launched Anemia Mukht Bharat (AMB) strategy with the target to reduce anemia in women, children and adolescents in life cycle approach. The 6x6x6 strategy under AMB implies six age groups, six interventions and six institutional mechanisms. The six interventions under Anemia Mukht Bharat strategy include, Prophylactic Iron Folic Acid Supplementation, Periodic de-worming, intensified year-round Behaviour Change Communication Campaign, Testing and treatment of anemia, using digital methods and point of care treatment, Convergence and coordination with other line departments and ministries for strengthening implementation etc.
