



Adopting a whole of Government approach, both Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare undertake targeted interventions to improve health and nutritional status of children in the country

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Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition in the country and has taken several initiatives to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition. Adopting a whole of Government approach, both the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) undertake targeted interventions to improve the health and nutritional status of children in the country, including identification and management of children with Severe Acute Malnutrition.

Primarily, MoHFW keeps record of children and women suffering from anaemia. State-wise, data on prevalence of anaemia among children and women in the country under National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5 is available at the given link: <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR375/FR375.pdf>. As per the Cause of Death Report (2021-23) released by the Sample Registration System-Registrar General of India (SRS-RGI), malnutrition has not been identified as a direct cause of death in children under 0-4 years in the country. The details are available here at the given link: <https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog/46176>.

Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) is an ongoing Centrally Sponsored umbrella Mission of MoWCD wherein children under 6 years of age, Pregnant women, Lactating mothers and Adolescent girls (age 14-18 years, in Northeastern States and Aspirational Districts) are the beneficiaries covered in the whole country. The responsibility for implementation of various activities under the Mission lies with the States and UTs. The umbrella Mission has subsumed; Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls.

Under the Mission Poshan 2.0, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to the beneficiaries in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act 2013. These norms have been revised and upgraded in January 2023. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides for quality protein, healthy fats and 7 essential micronutrients (Calcium, Zinc, Iron, Dietary Folate, Vitamin-A, Vitamin-B6 and Vitamin B-12).

One of the major activities undertaken the Mission is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy to educate people on nutritional aspects. State and UTs are conducting and reporting regular sensitisation activities under Jan Andolans during Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada celebrated in the months of September and March-April respectively. Also, Community Based Events (CBEs) have served as a

significant strategy in changing nutritional practices and all Anganwadi workers are required to conduct two Community Based Events every month. A total of 9.8 crore CBEs and more than 150 crore Jan Andolan activities have been conducted since 2018 through 15 Jan Andolans.

Ministry has also introduced Poshan Tracker digital application an ICT based Governance tool. This technology is being leveraged for dynamic identification of stunting, wasting, underweight prevalence among children. It has facilitated near real time data collection for Anganwadi Services such as, opening of AWCs, daily attendance of children, ECCE activities, growth measurement and monitoring of children, provision of Hot Cooked Meal (HCM)/Take Home Ration (THR).

This information was given by the Minister of State for Women and Child Development Smt. Savitri Thakur in Rajya Sabha in reply to a question.

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