

93 LAKH MORE CHILDREN LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM WASTING BETWEEN 2020-2022: STUDY

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

Representative Image: An additional \$1.2 billion per annum will be needed to overcome the consequences of COVID-19 on maternal and child under-nutrition. File Photo.

An additional 93 lakh children under five are likely to suffer from wasting, 26 lakh more from stunting, while there will be an estimated 1.68 lakh additional under five deaths in the first three years of the post COVID-19 world, estimates a new study.

Data | [Progress on child nutrition derailed as wasting and stunting increases in several States](#)

The paper is an assessment of the combined effects of economic, food and health systems disruptions on multiple forms of maternal and child under-nutrition between 2020 and 2022.

The study is authored by Saskia Osendarp from Micronutrient Forum, Jonathan Akuoku from World Bank, Robert Black, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Lawrence Haddad from Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, among others, including from IFPRI. It is at preprint stage and is under consideration for publication at *Nature Research Journal*.

It provides projections for three scenarios — optimistic, moderate and pessimistic. This article uses figures from the moderate scenario.

The study shows a large chunk of the 1.68 lakh additional deaths are likely to be in South Asia (38,900) and sub-Saharan Africa (57,200).

Also read: [Discouraging numbers: On National Family Health Survey 2019-20](#)

The moderate scenario estimates an additional 2.1 million pregnant women with any anaemia in the 118 countries in 2020-2022 compared to 2019.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has created a nutritional crisis in LMICs. Without swift and strategic responses by subnational, national, regional and international actors, COVID-19 will reverse years of progress and exacerbate disparities in disease, malnutrition and mortality and jeopardise human capital development and economic growth for the next generation,” says the study and urges countries to remain committed to investing in nutrition.

The authors also provide a sense of associated human productivity losses and estimate that the additional burden of childhood stunting and child mortality “would result in future productivity losses between the ages of 18 and 65 years of \$29.7 billion in the moderate scenario. Additional cases of anaemia during pregnancy would result in \$79 million in lost productivity”.

They estimate that an additional \$1.2 billion per annum will be needed to overcome the consequences of COVID-19 on maternal and child under-nutrition.

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The World Health Organization's (WHO's) chief scientist warned that even as numerous countries start rolling out vaccination programmes to stop

Regulators are not taking any shortcuts on ensuring safety of COVID-19 vaccine, says NTF member N.K. Arora.

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