

# INITIATIVES TO CURB CHILDHOOD MALNUTRITION

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of Children - Schemes & their Performance, Mechanisms, Laws Institutions and Bodies

In order to address the problem of malnutrition in the country, including the stunting and wasting in the children of age group under 5 years of age, Government implements several schemes and programs like Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana under the Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services Scheme as direct targeted interventions. Government has also set up POSHAN *Abhiyaan*, which aims to prevent and reduce prevalence of stunting, underweight and anaemia among children (0-6 years) and reduction in prevalence of low birth weight in the country through *Jan Andolan* involving panchayati raj institutions/village organizations, etc.

Government has taken further measures to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes with focus on developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition. Steps have also been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under the Poshan Tracker, a robust ICT enabled platform, to improve governance with regard to real time monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervisions and management of services.

Government has advised States/UTs to ensure that the quality of supplementary nutrition conforms to prescribed standards laid down under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and regulations made thereunder and also to promote use of AYUSH systems for prevention of malnutrition and related diseases. A programme to support development of Poshan Vatikas at Anganwadi centres to meet dietary diversity gap leveraging traditional knowledge in nutritional practices has also been taken up.

Mission Poshan 2.0, an integrated nutrition support programme, has been announced in Budget 2021-22.

Govt. has allocated around (RE) Rs. 17852.31 Crore and spent approx Rs. 14790.96 Crore during 2020-21 on nutrition related schemes/programmes to curb childhood malnutrition, stunting and wasting.

This information was given by the Union Minister of Women and Child Development, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

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