

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2708
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.12.2024

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

2708. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of India's ranking in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2024;
- (b) the manner in which Government explicate India's performance, vis-à-vis developing nations, including Sri Lanka and Bangladesh;
- (c) the measures Government is taking to address the underlying causes of hunger and malnutrition;
- (d) the manner in which Government ensures greater transparency in food security programs to improve the country's GHI ranking; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government for new initiatives or revising existing policies to reduce hunger and poverty rates?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (e): Global Hunger Index is published by 3 non-government organizations (viz., Welt Hunger Hilfe of Germany, Concern Worldwide of Ireland and Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict of Germany). It is a flawed measure of 'Hunger' and does not reflect India's true position. Three out of four of its constituent indicators, which are used for calculation of the index, are related to health of children. They cannot be taken to reflect hunger in the overall population. Global Hunger Index 2024 has ranked India at 105 out of 127 countries. It had ranked India at 111 out of 125 countries in 2023.

Various rounds of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare since 1992-93 have shown improvement in malnutrition indicators in children across India. Details of these indicators for children since NFHS-1 to NFHS-5 are given below:

NFHS Survey	Underweight %	Wasting %	Stunting %
NFHS-1 (1992-93)*	53.4	17.5	52.0
NFHS-2 (1998-99)**	47.0	15.5	45.5
NFHS-3 (2005-6)***	42.5	19.8	48.0
NFHS-4 (2015-16)***	35.8	21.0	38.4
NFHS-5 (2019-21)***	32.1	19.3	35.5

* Under 4 years

** Under 3 years

*** Under 5 years

The above table gives a representative picture of malnutrition indicators among all children of 0-3 years, 0-4 years and 0-5 years age at that time.

The projected population of all children up to 5 years in India for the year 2021 is 13.75 crores approximately (source: Population Projections for India and States 2011-2036, National Commission on Population, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare). However, only 7.54 crores children up to 5 years are enrolled in Anganwadis and registered on Poshan Tracker of the Ministry of Women & Child Development as per the October 2024 data. 7.31 crores of these children were measured on growth parameters of height and weight. 38.9% of these children have been found to be stunted, 17% children have been found to be underweight and only 5.2% children have been found to be wasted.

Further, the projected population of all children in India up to 6 years for the year 2021 is approximately 16.1 crores. As per the October 2024 data of Poshan Tracker, 8.82 crores children (0-6 years) are enrolled in Anganwadis out of whom 8.55 crores were measured on growth parameters of height and weight. 37% of these children (0-6 years) have been found to be stunted and 17% children (0-6 years) have been found to be underweight.

Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (14-18 years in Aspirational Districts and North-East region) were subsumed under the umbrella Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) during the 15th Finance Commission. Mission Poshan 2.0 seeks to address the challenge of malnutrition through improved nutrition content and delivery. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, where the responsibility of implementation lies with the States/UTs.

Nutritional support through Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) is one of the integral components of Mission Poshan 2.0, under which supplementary nutrition is provided to children (06 months to 6 years), pregnant women and lactating mothers (PWLM) and Adolescent Girls (14 to 18 years) in order to bridge the gap in the Average Daily Intake of nutrients as compared to the Recommended Dietary Allowances which are suggested for Indian population by the National Institute of Nutrition. The nutrition norms for supplementary nutrition are contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. In order to address the challenge of malnutrition more effectively, these norms have been revised recently to make them more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of

supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides quality protein, healthy fats and essential micronutrients.

Further, only fortified rice enriched with essential micronutrients such as iron, folic acid, and vitamin B12 is supplied under the supplementary nutrition to meet the requirement of micronutrients and control anaemia among women and children. Greater emphasis is also given on the use of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal at least once a week and Take Home ration at Anganwadi centers for beneficiaries.

Government of India accords high priority to the issue of hunger and has been providing food grains at highly subsidized prices to the targeted population through State Governments/Union Territory administrations. The Government is implementing the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) which provides for coverage up to 75% of rural population and up to 50% of urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the total population which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore. Coverage under the Act is very high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. Further, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore, the States/UTs have identified 80.67 crore persons. The Central Government, in order to remove the financial burden of the poor beneficiaries and to ensure nationwide uniformity and effective implementation of the programme for support of the poor is providing food grains free of cost to about 81.35 crore beneficiaries beginning from 1st January 2023 under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

In order to reduce anaemia and micronutrient deficiency among the targeted population, the Government of India is supplying fortified rice throughout the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme, and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and in Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) in all States and Union Territories (UTs). Custom-milled rice has been replaced with fortified rice in every scheme of the Government.
