

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1088

ANSWERED ON:08.02.2019

Packaged Fortified Food for Children

Shrirang Appa Barne

- (a)whether the number of underweight children in India is almost double the number in Sub-Saharan Africa and if so, the details thereof;
- (b)whether food fortification has proved to be one of the most effective ways to supplement the nutrition needs of the population across the world and if so, the details thereof;
- (c)whether a scientific panel has been set up on 'Food Fortification and Nutrition', a strategy which showed remarkable result in the treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) in Africa and if so, the details thereof;
- (d)whether the experts have been cautioning against "quick fix" of buying commercial products instead of focusing on sustainable measures such as care and support for mothers, clean drinking water and food security to treat malnutrition;
- (e)if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government in this regard; and
- (f)the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government for creating awareness about malnutrition and method to eradicate this problem?

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

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR)

(a):As per the UNICEF report entitled “The State of the World’s Children” 2016, 19% children under 5 years were underweight in Sub-Saharan Africa and as per National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 4 conducted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2015-16, 35.7% children under 5 years are underweight in India.

(b):Food Fortification is one of the strategies to tackle micronutrient deficiencies among population along with other measures like dietary diversification, supplementation and bio-fortification.

(c):The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has set up a Scientific Panel on “Food Fortification and Nutrition” to lay science based standards for articles of food in the Indian context.

(d) & (e):The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through States/UTs to address various aspects related to nutrition. This Ministry is implementing schemes like Anganwadi Services, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna under the Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services Scheme as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country. Care and support for mothers, clean drinking water and food security are some of the components to treat malnutrition.

(f):Government has set up POSHAN Abhiyaan, under which well-researched, designed and tested communication plan & IEC materials have been developed and intensive Mass Media Campaign is conducted through various mass media channels like radio, television, social media, etc. Also, during the home visits conducted by AWWs, through the use of ICDS-Common Application Software (ICDS-CAS), the beneficiaries are counselled on nutrition related issues like breastfeeding, complementary feeding, infant and young child care, etc. ICDS-CAS has embedded videos related to Infant and Young Child care and nutrition for educating the beneficiaries.

Food and Nutrition Board under this Ministry, through its regional field units, is conducting training programmes in nutrition and generating awareness through nutrition education programmes on the importance of healthy balanced diets especially through the use of locally available foods, mass awareness campaigns and use of electronic and print media.
