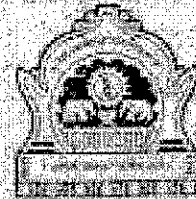


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National Nutrition Mission (NNM) : A Review

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India undoubtedly has the distinction of having one of the highest frequencies over 50% of undernutrition as calculated by stunting, wasting, and micronutrient deficiencies like anaemia, vitamin A deficiency and others, in the world. Children are more susceptible of degenerative diseases like environment-related diseases like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, CVD, and cancers if they are born with low birth weight due to intra-uterine malnutrition. Every country's development and healthcare expenses are adversely affected due to malnutrition. Undernutrition levels in India remain higher than for most countries of sub-Saharan Africa, even though those countries are currently much poorer than India, have grown much more slowly, and have much higher levels of infant and child mortality.

Malnutrition is not a direct cause of death but contributes to mortality and morbidity by reducing resistance to infections. There are a number of causes of death in children such as prematurity, low birth weight, pneumonia, diarrhoeal diseases, non-communicable diseases, birth asphyxia and birth trauma, injuries, congenital anomalies, acute bacterial sepsis and severe infections, etc. Government of India is implementing several schemes and programs under the umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) as targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country. All these schemes address one or other aspects related to nutrition and have the potential to improve nutritional outcomes in the country.

There are a number of schemes directly/indirectly affecting the nutritional status of children (0-6 years age) and pregnant women and lactating mothers. In spite of these, level of malnutrition and related problems in India is high. There is no dearth of schemes but lack of creating synergy and linking the schemes with each other to achieve common goal. NNM through robust convergence mechanism and other components would strive to create this cooperation.

This paper has tried to precisely explore the NNM's mission, its target and benefits as predicted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in India. It has specifically focused on the principles and objectives, slogan/campaigns and educating modules of the Indian Medical Research Council and National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN).

Nutritional Status in India

In India 20 per cent of children under five years of age suffer from wasting due to acute undernutrition. More than one third of the world's children who are wasted live in India.

41 per cent of Indian children under five years are underweight and 48 per cent (i.e. 61 million children) are stunted due to chronic undernutrition. India accounts for more than 3 out of every 10 stunted children in the world. Undernutrition is substantially higher in rural than in urban areas. Short birth intervals are associated with high levels of undernutrition. The percentage of children who are severely underweight is almost five times higher among children whose mothers have no education than among children whose mothers have 12 or more years of schooling. Undernutrition is more common for children of mothers who are undernourished themselves. The body mass index below 18.51 than for children whose mothers are not undernourished. Children from scheduled tribes have the poorest nutritional status on almost every measure and the high prevalence of wasting in this group (28 per cent) is of particular concern.

- India has the highest number of low birth weight babies per year at an estimated 7.4 million.
- Only half of new-borns were put to the breast within one hour of birth.
- Almost half of children (53 per cent) under six months of age are exclusively breastfed.
- Only 20 per cent children age 6-23 months are fed appropriately according to all three recommended practices for infant and young child feeding.
- 63 per cent children age 6-59 months are anaemic. Children of mothers who are severely anaemic are seven times as likely to be severely anaemic as children of mothers who are not anaemic.
- 57.8% of pregnant women (Age 15-49) are anaemic.
- 48% Non-pregnant women age 15-49 years who are anaemic.
- 46.3% of children (under 5 years) are stunted.
- Only half (51 per cent) of households use adequately iodized salt.

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- Only one third (33 per cent) Indian children receive any service from an anganwadi centre, less than 25 per cent receive supplementary foods through ICDS, and only 18 per cent have their weights measured in an AWC.
(Source NFHS 3, 2005-2006 & NFHS 4, 2014-15)

National Nutrition Mission

Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Launched in March 2018, the programme through use of technology, a targeted approach and convergence, strives to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight in children, also, focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers, thus holistically addressing malnutrition. The programme aims to ensure service-delivery and interventions by use of technology, behavioural change through convergence and lays down specific targets to be achieved across different monitoring parameters over the next few years. To ensure a holistic approach, 36 States/UTs and districts are being covered in a phased manner i.e., 315 districts in 2017-18, 235 districts in 2018-19 and the remaining districts in 2019-20. More than 10 crore people will be benefited by the programme.

NNM ensures convergence with various programmes i.e., Anganwadi Services, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) of MWCD, Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), National Health Mission (NHM), Swachh Bharat Mission, Public Distribution System (PDS), Department of Food & Public Distribution, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

The goals of NNM are to achieve improvement in nutritional status of children from 0-6 year, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers in a time bound manner during the next three year beginning 2017-18.

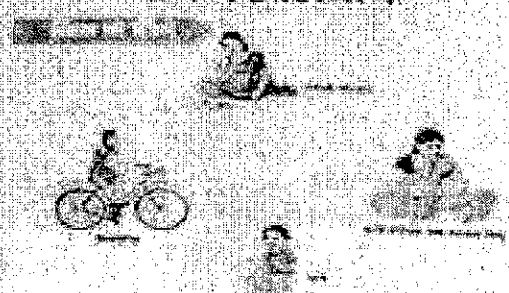
The NNM is a comprehensive approach towards raising nutrition level in the country on a cost footing. It will comprise mapping of various schemes contributing towards addressing malnutrition, including a very robust convergence mechanism, ICT based Real Time Monitoring (RTM) system, incentivizing States/UTs for meeting the targets, incentivizing anganwadi workers (AWWs) for using IT based tools, eliminating registers used by AWWs, introducing measurement of height of children at the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs), social audits, setting-up nutrition resource centres, involving masses through Janandolan for their participation in various activities of nutrition.

NNM Targets

The programme will strive to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight babies. NNM targets to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia among young children, women and adolescent girls and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively. Although the target to reduce stunting is at least 2% p.a., mission would strive to achieve reduction in stunting from 38.4% (NFHS-4) to 25% by 2022. It will create collaboration, ensure better monitoring, issue alerts for timely action and encourage States/UTs to perform, guide and supervise the line Ministries and States/UTs to achieve the targeted goals. More than 10 crore people will be benefited by this programme. All the states and districts will be covered in a phased manner i.e., 315 districts in 2017-18, 235 districts in 2018-19 and remaining districts in 2019-20.

POSHAN Abhiyaan E-Learning ICMR-NIN Modules

पोषण अभियान



Source: <http://poshan-abhiyaan.nimindia.org/>

have developed the e-learning modules on various nutritional themes, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHW) and the Ministry of Education (MEd). The modules are highly informative containing valuable scientific information on everyday nutrition. These modules are to be studied by whole population of our country. We can register ourselves to use these modules online and then take a simple test at the end to gauge our understanding of the information. These modules will empower us to eat right and lead a healthy life. On finishing the module, we can earn a certificate of appreciation from the Government of India. The NNM invites us to be a part of the NNM as a proud knowledge seeker, to be nutrition-conscious and help spread this knowledge in our neighbourhood and empower people to lead healthy lives!

Learning modules on various Nutritional themes
Basic Nutrition: Balanced diet is a prerequisite to good health. A healthy diet should contain adequate amount of all major nutrients including proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals and water. Deficiency of any of these nutrients leads to several problems. Young children, Women and Adolescents are seen to suffer from various nutrition related problems in the country.

Infant and Young Child Feeding: Sound breastfeeding practices and introduction of timely and appropriate complementary feeding practices are necessary for the healthy growth of children. Introduction of semi-solid and soft foods along with breastfeeding and child care practices ensure healthy growth of children. The quality as well as the quantity of foods during the growing years determine the overall health of children.

Mother's Health and Nutrition: Mother's nutritional status determines pregnancy outcome to a great extent. Malnourished and anaemic women tend to give birth to low birth weight babies. Such babies are prone to early mortality during early childhood and to chronic non-communicable diseases at later stages of life. Sound nutritional advice need to be given to adolescent girls and young women to ensure safe motherhood and healthy pregnancy outcome.

Iron Deficiency Anaemia: Iron deficiency anaemia is one of the major nutritional problems affecting the population groups of our country. Anaemia is seen to have deleterious impact on the physical, mental health of people. It also affects the work productivity of people as it renders them tired, weak and unproductive. Provision of easily available, inexpensive iron-rich foods and timely iron and folic acid supplementation among vulnerable segments of our population are effective ways of combating anaemia.

Jan Andolan Campaigns
Several programmes across ministries and departments have been tackling the issues of malnutrition for more than 40 years. Though these schemes have made a dent, however, these initiatives have not been able to achieve the desired goals and targets. POSHAN Abhiyaan on one hand looks to synergise all existing efforts by leveraging technology to achieve the desired goals and on the other, intends to convert nutrition into a Jan Andolan. POSHAN Abhiyaan is thus envisioned to be a Jan Andolan and a Jambhaginikari (People's Movement).

- Objectives of Jan Andolan**
1. To build recognition across sectors in the country on impact of malnutrition and 'call to action' for each sector's contribution to reducing malnutrition.
 2. To mobilize multiple sectors and communities to create intent to consume nutrient rich food.
 3. To build knowledge, attitudes and behavioural intent to practice optimal breastfeeding, complementary feeding, maternal nutrition and adolescent nutrition practices to prevent malnutrition, including SAM and anaemia.

Implementations & Conclusions
It is highly recommended to develop guidelines to properly communicate the nutritional information to general public in the current era of limitless variety of media outlets. For the guidelines to be maximally effective, there is a need for cooperation among all nutrition stakeholders viz. individuals, citizens, scientists, policy makers, the food industry, the communications industry, etc. More research studies should be undertaken for improved implementation of such schemes like NNM. Methods for effective behavioural change in specific cultural contexts are of particular significance in ethnically oriented country like ours.

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We have seen IN THIS PAPER that POSHAN Abhiyan of the National Nutrition Mission is playing a major role in improving nutrition indicators across India. Although, understanding what exactly is appropriate in incorrect nutrition has been a challenge, we can say that the components of the eLearning module and the Jan Andolan Campaign of NNM have a great potential and expects full participation of citizens for this program to improve and boost the nutritional status of women, mothers, children and adolescents of our country.

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