

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2080
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2026

INDIA'S RANK IN GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

2080. Shri. DEREK O' BRIEN:

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

- (a) the rank of India in the Global Hunger Index, the details thereof,
- (b) whether it is a fact that the largest population of hungry people live in India, the details thereof,
- (c) the rate of malnutrition among women and children in the country, especially in rural areas, the details thereof, and
- (d) the initiatives taken by Government in the last five years to combat malnutrition, the outcome thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The self-styled Global Hunger Index is a private construct 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 deeply flawed measure of 'Hunger' and does not reflect India's true position. Three out of four of its constituent indicators namely, Stunting, Wasting and Under Five Mortality Rate are actually related to health and nourishment levels in children. They do not reflect prevalence of hunger in the overall population. Only one indicator, Prevalence of Undernourishment (PoU), is related to hunger; even this indicator suffers from significant methodological and data limitations. In view of these shortcomings, the methodology adopted in the GHI is unreliable and it cannot be taken to reflect hunger in the overall population.

Government has implemented the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna (PMGKAY) in all the States/UTs, which substantially supplements the food requirements of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population. Coverage under the PMGKAY is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of society get its benefit. While Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, are entitled to 35 Kg of food grains, per household per month, Priority Households (PHH) are entitled to 5 Kg of food grains per person per month free of cost. At present, 79.09 crores beneficiaries are covered and they are getting free of cost food grains under PMGKAY.

Government of India in partnership with States and UTs implements the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN). About 11.20 crore children studying in classes Bal Vatika and I-VIII in 10.36 lakh Government and Government-Aided

Schools are covered under the scheme during 2024-25. The PM POSHAN Scheme ensures that hot cooked meals are served to all eligible students on all school days in every school across the country.

Mission Poshan 2.0 is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under M/o Women and Child Development, to address the challenges of malnutrition in the country. Under Mission Poshan 2.0, out of 8.54 crore beneficiaries, more than 5.75 crore beneficiaries were provided Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) services for at least 15 days, while more than 5.38 crore beneficiaries were provided SNP services for at least 21 days in June, 2026. The responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and Union Territories (UTs). The issue of malnutrition is being addressed under the Mission by establishing cross cutting convergence amongst more than 18 Ministries/Departments. Under the Mission Poshan 2.0, significant measures have been taken by the MoWCD to improve nutritional outcomes:

- Supplementary Nutrition in the form of Hot Cooked Meal (HCM) and Take Home Ration (THR) is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act, 2013. Additional Nutrition is also provided to Severely Acute Malnourished (SAM) children in form of Take-Home Ration (THR).
- One of the major activities undertaken is Community Mobilization and Awareness Advocacy in the form of Jan Andolans (Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada celebrated in the months of September and March-April, respectively) to educate people on nutritional aspects as adoption of good nutrition habit requires sustained efforts for behavioural change.
- Ministry of Women & Child Development and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have jointly released the Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children to prevent and treat severely acute malnutrition in children and for reducing associated morbidity and mortality.
- To facilitate digital monitoring and review of the progress of the Mission, Poshan Tracker, an ICT-enabled governance tool has been implemented to monitor nearly 14 lakh AWCs. The Poshan Tracker facilitates evidence-based decision-making by generating relevant data, providing feedback to implementing authorities, documenting programme outcomes, enabling timely corrective interventions, and supporting continuous monitoring and evaluation of the scheme.
- Ministry releases funds to all States and Union Territories for procurement of Smart Phones to Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Supervisors and Block Coordinators for registration, data entry, tracking and monitoring of all beneficiaries, in the Poshan Tracker application. Funds for Growth Monitoring Devices (Infantometer and Stadiometer for length and height measurement, Weighing Scale-Infant and Weighing Scale-Mother & Child for weight measurement of the beneficiaries) are also released to all the States and UTs.
- To encourage diet-diversity and consumption of wholesome local produce, Poshan Vatikas have been developed at Anganwadi Centres (AWCs).

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 as under:

NFHS Survey	Stunting %	Underweight %	Wasting %
NFHS-1 (1992-93)*	52.0	53.4	17.5
NFHS-2 (1998-99)**	45.5	47.0	15.5
NFHS-3 (2005-06)***	48.0	42.5	19.8
NFHS-4 (2015-16)***	38.4	35.8	21.0
NFHS-5 (2019-21)***	35.5	32.1	19.3
NFHS-6 (2023-24)***	29.3	31.8	19.0
Poshan Tracker (June 2026)***	29.0	11.0	3.0

* Under 4 years

** Under 3 years

*** Under 5 years

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare implements Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) strategy in a life cycle approach under National Health Mission (NHM). This includes interventions to address nutrition concerns among adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under 5 years, across the country. Details are placed below:

- Nutrition Rehabilitation centers (NRCs) to provide in-patient medical and nutritional care to children under 5 years suffering from Moderate and Severe Acute Malnourishment with medical complications.
- Anemia Mukht Bharat (AMB) addresses the high prevalence of anemia through the 7x7x7 strategy covering seven beneficiary age groups and seven interventions through robust institutional mechanisms.
- Mothers' Absolute Affection (MAA) Programme to improve breastfeeding coverage.
- Under National Deworming Day (NDD) albendazole tablets are administered to reduce the Soil Transmitted Helminth (STH) infestation.
- Lactation Management Centres to ensure availability of safe, pasteurized Donor Human Milk for feeding sick, preterm and low birth weight babies admitted in Neonatal Intensive Care Units and Special Newborn Care Units.
- In Vitamin A Supplementation Programme, all children age 6-59 months are administered Vitamin A every 6 months in two rounds during Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Days or in campaign approach.
- Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Days (VHSNDs) are observed for provision of maternal and child health services and creating awareness on maternal and childcare including nutrition in convergence with MoWCD.
