

Nutrition

10.78 Although the country has been able to eliminate nutritional deficiency syndrome like pellagra, beriberi, scurvy, etc., yet chronic energy deficiency among adults, under-nutrition among children and micronutrient deficiencies such as goiter, blindness due to Vitamin-A deficiency and anemia are still prevalent across all section of the population. The country has adopted a multi-sectoral and multi-pronged strategy to combat these problems and to improve the nutritional status of the population.

10.79 One half of the children under the age of five years in India are moderately or severely malnourished, 30 percent of newborn children are significantly under weight and nearly 60 percent of women are anaemic. Under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) the Department of Women and Child Development implements the food supplementation programme for improving nutritional status of mothers and children. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare implements programmes for tackling major micronutrient deficiencies such as Vitamin A and Iodine deficiency, etc.

10.80 To address the needs of undernourished infants and children below 3 years, 15 percent of the total Additional Central Assistance (ACA) are earmarked for the nutrition component under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY). ACA under the nutrition component of PMGY is an additionality for providing nutrition to children in 0-3 years. States are required to ensure that all below poverty line (BPL) children [as also unreached and marginalized] in 0-3 years are registered for PMGY and are provided

Box 10.9 : National Nutrition Mission

The Prime Minister, in his Independence Day speech on 15th August, 2001 announced the setting up of a National Nutrition Mission. Under this Mission, subsidized foodgrains would be made available to adolescent girls and expectant and nursing mothers, belonging to below-poverty-line families.

A two tier structure is envisaged for the Mission. The National Nutrition Mission would be headed by the Prime Minister and its Executive Committee would be under the Human Resource Development Minister. Composition and Terms of Reference of the Mission are under finalisation.

requisite nutrition for meeting the gap in the RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance) [in contrast with providing only normative supplementary nutrition] by supplementing the States' commitment for supplementary nutrition with adequate ACA under PMGY. During 2000-01 and 2001-02 the Department of Women and Child Development was the nodal Department for the implementation of the nutrition component of the programme. From 1st April 2002, the Planning Commission is directly implementing the scheme.

10.81 A National Nutrition Mission (Box 10.9) will soon be launched in selected nutritionally backward districts of the country to further carry forward the goals of National Nutrition Policy. The Planning Commission has allocated Rs. 103.33 crore for 2002-03, as Special Central Assistance to States to provide free foodgrains to undernourished adolescent girls and pregnant & lactating mothers in 51 identified districts. The first instalment of Rs. 53.96 lakh has been released to all States for 2002-03.