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## NOURISHING THE NEXT GENERATION: INDIA'S FIGHT AGAINST CHILD MALNUTRITION

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### ABSTRACT

For a healthy development of children, balanced diet is a significant factor. Good and proper nutrition helps the children to fuel their body. Lack of proper nutrition is the primary cause of malnutrition. According to the World Health Organisation, Malnutrition refers to deficiencies or imbalances in a person's intake of energy or nutrients. The Children's right to Nutrition is recognised universally by various International conventions like United Nation Convention on Right of Child 1989. In India, certain constitutional Articles protect the right of children against malnutrition such as Article 21 which protects right to adequate food and Article 47 which mandates the State to provide early childhood care. Child Malnutrition continues to be a challenge for India to surmount. It is significant to reduce the malnutrition among the children because of the impact it creates on child's physical and emotional well-being. Some of the profound effects on child due to this malnutrition are emotional distress, impaired cognitive development, mental health disorders and social challenges. Various Government initiatives were introduced by the Government of India to surmount the crisis of child malnutrition. Some of the key initiatives are ICDS Scheme, PM POSHAN 2.0, POSHAN ABHIYAAN, MID-DAY MEAL scheme, SWACHH BHARAT MISSION. Albeit introducing several malnutrition free initiatives, still the child malnutrition is a growing crisis in India. Though the child malnutrition is a challenge in India but according to the latest Poshan Tracker Data, which shows lower rate of stunting, wasting and underweight among children as compared to NFHS-5 survey. This paper aims to study on the India's progress on child malnutrition, key initiatives introduced by Government to preclude this growing crisis and analyses about the rights of children against malnutrition.

**KEYWORDS** – Child Malnutrition, WHO, Rights, Progress, PM Poshan

### I INTRODUCTION

For the healthy development of children, balanced diet is a significant factor. Essential nutrients are important for the children to grow, thrive and survive. Eating a regular and a balanced diet is nutrition. Good and proper nutrition helps to fuel the body. Lack of proper nutrition is the primary cause of malnutrition. According to the **Global Hunger Index 2025**, India ranks **102<sup>nd</sup>** out of 123 countries. India's level of hunger is in serious with a score of **25.8**. Poverty, food insecurity, healthcare, gender

inequality are some of the factors which contribute to the growth of malnutrition in India.

The child's right to nutrition is recognised by the **United Nation Convention on Rights of the Child 1989**. **Article 24** of the convention recognises the right of child to highest standard of health. The Article states that the State parties to take measure to surmount malnutrition through the use of technologies, adequate nutritious food and clean drinking water. **The right to adequate food** is a universal human right recognised by the **Article 25** of Universal Declaration on Human Rights and

**Article 11** of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights. This right to food includes right to access nutritious food. The paper analyses about the India's progress on child malnutrition, various key government initiatives in India to tackle the crisis of child malnutrition and how constitutional rights protects the children against malnutrition.

## II UNDERSTANDING MALNUTRITION

According to **World Health Organisation**, malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy or nutrients. Malnutrition occurs as a consequence of diet which contains too much or insufficient nutrients. Malnutrition is a condition in which a body lacks the nutrients like vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates and proteins which is necessary to live.<sup>1525</sup> The malnutrition constitutes three forms,

- **Under nutrition** – the undernutrition includes stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height) and underweight (low weight for age).
- **Micronutrient deficiencies** – according to **WHO**, micronutrients refers to vitamins and minerals required by our body to produce enzymes and hormones for normal growth and development. Inadequate intake of the micronutrient leads to major threat to human health. The WHO states that deficiency of Iron, vitamin A and iodine are more common among the children.<sup>1526</sup>
- **Obesity and diet related communicable disease** – According to the **UNICEF report 2025**<sup>1527</sup>, obesity becomes the most prominent form of malnutrition than undernutrition. It affects one in ten children and adolescents. Diet related communicable disease like heart disease, stroke is also a form of

malnutrition. These diseases arises as a result of unhealthy diet and poor nutrition.

## III INDIA'S PROGRESS ON MALNUTRITION

The WHO extended the **global nutrition target 2025** on 78<sup>th</sup> world health assembly 2025. The target was extended from 2025 to 2030 in order to improve the nutrition of young children, maternal and infants. Initially the world health assembly on 2012 endorsed six global nutrition targets for 2025.<sup>1528</sup> The member states of UN in 2015 adopted 17 sustainable development goals in 2030 agenda on sustainable development goals. The **Goal 2.2** which deals with a goal to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030. The Goal also aims to achieve the target of stunting (target 1) and wasting (target 6) in children under 5 years of age.<sup>1529</sup> The joint child malnutrition estimates 2025 states that the progress of countries towards the global nutrition target 2025 and sustainable development goal 2.2 is insufficient.<sup>1530</sup>

## A THE GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX 2025

The global hunger index act as a tool to track the progress of countries on achieving hunger related SDG. The global hunger index is calculated from four indicators. The four indicators includes undernourishment, child stunting, child wasting and child mortality. Since the index includes four indicators, it provides the holistic view of malnutrition. According to **Global Hunger Index 2025**, India's ranks **102<sup>nd</sup>** among 123 countries and the GHI score of India is 25.8 which is at **serious (20.0 – 34.9)**.<sup>1531</sup> India's hunger score is decreased from 29.3 in the year of 2016 and 27.3 in 2024 to 25.8 in 2025, which reflects India's improvement towards hunger. But India is still in the category of serious. According to **GHI report**, the child

<sup>1525</sup> Malnutrition, WHO, (Mar. 1, 2024) <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malnutrition>

<sup>1526</sup> Micronutrients, WHO, [https://www.who.int/health-topics/micronutrients#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/micronutrients#tab=tab_1)

<sup>1527</sup> Obesity exceeds underweight, UNICEF (sept. 9, 2025), <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/obesity-exceeds-underweight-first-time-among-school-age-children-and-adolescents>

<sup>1528</sup> Global Nutrition Target 2030: to improve maternal, infant and young child malnutrition, WHO, (2025), <https://www.who.int/teams/nutrition-and-food-safety/global-targets-2030>

<sup>1529</sup> Zero hunger, The Global Goals, <https://globalgoals.org/goals/2-zero-hunger/>

<sup>1530</sup> Joint child malnutrition estimates 2025, WHO, (21 July 2025), <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/>

<sup>1531</sup> Global Hunger Index, Digital Current Affairs, (12 Nov 2025), <https://visionias.in/current-affairs/monthly-magazine/2025-11-12/social-issues/global-hunger-index-1>

stunting rate and child wasting rate of India is 35.5% and 18.7% which is very high globally.<sup>1532</sup>

### B GLOBAL NUTRITION REPORT 2022

The **Global Nutrition Report 2022**<sup>1533</sup> states about the India's position toward the global nutrition target 2025. In the target of reduction of stunting by 40%, India is on progress to achieve this target as child stunting of India was at 34.7%. It did not made any progress towards achieving the target of wasting, as the child wasting of India was at 17.3%.

### C UNICEF CHILD NUTRITION REPORT 2025

The report stresses the increasing obesity among the children. India's primary focus is on the undernutrition (stunting and wasting) but the obesity is mounting. The Report cautions that if India does not deal with this, then it has to tackle the three burdens of malnutrition which is stunting, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity.<sup>1534</sup>

### D NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY

The ministry of health and family welfares conduct the NFHS data which shows the malnutrition status of India. The follows NFHS data manifest the improvement against malnutrition. The **NFHS-4(2015-16) and NFHS-5(2019-21)**, the percentage of childhood stunting was reduced from 38.4% to 35.5%. But India still had large number of stunted children. The percentage of childhood wasting was 21% in 2015-16 and 19.3% in 2019-21. It shows that the childhood wasting was dwindled from 2015-16 to 2019-20. But childhood wasting in India is still in very high category. The Underweight percentage was reduced from 35.8% to 32.1%.<sup>1535</sup>

<sup>1532</sup> India's child wasting rate highest in hunger index, Times of India, (Oct. 13, 2023), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/at-18-7-indias-child-wasting-rate-highest-on-hunger-index/articleshow/104382065.cms>

<sup>1533</sup> Country nutrition profiles, Global Nutrition Report 2022, (Jan 2023), <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/southern-asia/india/>

<sup>1534</sup> UNICEF child nutrition report, vajirao and reddy institute, (Sep. 18, 2025), <https://www.vajiraoinsitute.com/upsc-ias-current-affairs/unicef-child-nutrition-report.aspx>

<sup>1535</sup> Ministry of women and child development, Govt of India, malnutrition among children, 1 (2024), [https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/266/AU1110\\_UbP65h.pdf?source=pqars#:~:text=Various%20rounds%20of%20the%20National,age%20at%20the%20relevant%20time.](https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/266/AU1110_UbP65h.pdf?source=pqars#:~:text=Various%20rounds%20of%20the%20National,age%20at%20the%20relevant%20time.)

### E POSHAN TRACKER DATA

The POSHAN TRACKER data helps to determine the malnutrition among the children. The following data shows about the percentage of childhood stunting, underweight and wasting in November 2023, June 2024 and June 2025. According to the Poshan Tracker Data on **November 2023**<sup>1536</sup> shows that the percentage of stunting, underweight and wasting among the children are 37.51%, 17.43% and 6%. In **June 2024**<sup>1537</sup>, the Percentage of stunting and underweight are 36% and 17%. The percentage of wasting was same as of November 2023. In **June 2025**<sup>1538</sup>, The Percentage of stunting, underweight and wasting among the children was 37.07%, 15.93% and 5.46%. Compared to June 2024, the underweight and wasting rate was reduced.

The **Poshan Tracker data June 2025** reveals that the malnutrition continues to be a challenge in India. Albeit various nutrition programmes like poshan 2.0 was implemented by government, many states struggles with high malnutrition rate. For example, in **Bihar** (20.98% of children are underweight and 9.31% of children are wasted) and in **Madhya Pradesh** (24.82% are underweight and 8.19% are wasted). But some state have the malnutrition rate at low percentage like **Goa** (0.78% are wasted and 1.96% are underweight) and **Manipur** (0.67% are wasted and 2.69% are underweight). But compared to data of NFHS-5, the data reflects a progress in combating the child malnutrition in India.

Over 6.44 crore children were assessed in the Latest **Poshan Tracker Data released on December 2025**<sup>1539</sup>. According to the data,

<sup>1536</sup> Ministry of women and child devpt, Govt of India, Malnutrition, 1 (2023), <https://sansad.in/getFile/loksabhaquestions/annex/1714/AU2228.pdf?source=pqals>

<sup>1537</sup> Data of Poshan Tracker June 2024, TNPSA, (July 28, 2024), <https://www.tnpsathervupettagam.com/currentaffairs-detail/data-of-poshan-tracker-june-2024?cat=national-news>

<sup>1538</sup> Vincent, Poshan Tracker data shows persisted malnutrition among children, The New Indian Express, (Aug. 5, 2025), <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2025/Aug/05/poshan-tracker-data-shows-persistent-malnutrition-among-children-central-eastern-states-worst-hit>

<sup>1539</sup> Sumit arora, India's malnutrition burden explained, Adda247, (Dec. 4, 2025), <https://currentaffairs.adda247.com/data-shows-34-children-under-five-are-stunted-indias-malnutrition-burden-explained/>

33.54% of children are stunted, 14.41% are underweight and 5.03% are wasted among the children below 5 years. Compared to NFHS-5, the data reveals a reduction in malnutrition among the children and these reductions shows the better delivery of services and behaviour change initiatives.

#### IV CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM MALNUTRITION

##### A CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

###### 1 RIGHT TO LIFE – ARTICLE 21

Right to food includes the right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of Indian constitution. Any death as a result of malnutrition or starvation violates the fundamental right to life under Article 21. In **People's Union for Civil Liberties v. Union of India & Ors (2003)**,<sup>1540</sup> the supreme court of India held that the right to food is a fundamental right. The court observed that it is the State's duty to ensure that no one dies from malnutrition or starvation. The court also directed the state to implement within the time frame of mid-day meal scheme, integrated child development service. The Death of child due to malnutrition leads to violation of Article 21. The Bombay High Court in **Dr. Rajendra Burma & Anr v. State of Maharashtra & Ors (2007)**,<sup>1541</sup> held that the state government had to ensure that no child dies by malnutrition.

###### 2 SPECIAL PROVISION FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN – ARTICLE 15

**Article 15(3)**<sup>1542</sup> states that the State have the power to make special provision for the women and children. The Article allows the States to make a special provision for children like nutrition and food programmes for their nutrition and health development and thereby the combating the crisis of malnutrition. The Article 15(3) act as a constitutional basis for the following national programmes:

The **INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PROGRAMME** which provides supplementary nutrition to children below 6 years. It is the World's largest programme to provide a holistic development of children. The objective of the Scheme is to improve the health and nutrition of children and to prevent malnutrition and deaths.

The **POSHAN ABHIYAAN** was launched in March 2018. The programme was introduced to ameliorate the nutrition of children of 0-6 years. It also intends to curtail the stunting and wasting among the children. The Scheme was implemented throughout the States and Union Territories.

###### 3 DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY

**Article 39(a)** of the constitution directs the State to ensure the adequate means of livelihood of all children thereby combating the child malnutrition. Adequate livelihood means the States through policies to ensure that the families have the sufficient means to provide the adequate nutrition to their children so as to overcome malnutrition.

**Article 39(e)** directs the States to ensure that the children's health and safety is not abused or exploited thus preventing child malnutrition. The Article mandates the State to prevent the children from entering the avocations which is beyond their age and strength. **Article 39(f)** of the Indian constitution requires the States to formulate a policy that ensures that the children are provided with opportunities and facilities to develop in healthy manner and to ensure that they are not exploited.<sup>1543</sup>

The **Article 45** of the Indian constitution mandates the State to provide to all children below six year of age, an early childhood care and education. Health and nutrition is a vital part of early childhood care. The Article 45 provides the framework of learning and development of children in their foundational stage. This Article ensures that the children below 6 years of age receive the adequate

<sup>1540</sup> People's union for civil liberties v. union of India, (2003), AIR, 2363, (Ind.)

<sup>1541</sup> Dr. Rajendra Burma & anr v. State of Maharashtra & Ors, (2007), NOC, 113, (Ind.)

<sup>1542</sup> INDIA CONST. art.1.

<sup>1543</sup> Id. art.39.

nutrition and health to prevent the condition of malnutrition.<sup>1544</sup>

**Article 47** which is a Directive Principles of State Policy deals with the State's duty to ameliorate public health and to raise the standard of living and level of nutrition. Since malnutrition is a widespread issue in India, it affects the development of children and are being exposed to various diseases. Article 47 emphasizes the importance of health and nutrition among the children for their development. Several schemes like mid-day meal scheme, Integrated child development service scheme, mission Poshan scheme.<sup>1545</sup>

## B STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

### 1 NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT 2013

The National Food Security Act 2013 intends to provide in a life cycle approach of nutritional and food security to people. The Act ensure that the people have access to sufficient quantity of quality food at affordable prices. The Act combats the malnutrition by legally entitling the nutritious programmes like ICDS Scheme, mid-day meal schemes via life cycle approach.

**Section 5**<sup>1546</sup> of the Act provides nutrition assistance to children below 14 years of age. The Section 5 mandates the State Governments to provide free meals to the children between 6 months-6years through Anganwadis to attain the nutritional standard of children. The Section also mandates that the State Government to provide free one mid-day meal to all children between age of 6-14 years in all school managed by government and government aided schools. **Section 6**<sup>1547</sup> of the Act particularly addressed the problem of malnutrition. The Section requires the state governments to identify the children susceptible to malnutrition through local Anganwadi and also to provide free meals to enhance their nutritional standard.

<sup>1544</sup> Id. Art.45.

<sup>1545</sup> Id. Art.47.

<sup>1546</sup> National Food Security Act, 2015, § 5 (Ind.)

<sup>1547</sup> Id, § 6

## V KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO COMBAT CHILD MALNUTRITION

### A INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

The ICDS Programme was operated under the ministry of women and child development to ameliorate the nutrition and health of the children of 0 to 6 years of age. The Programme also aims to enhance nutrition of the lactating and pregnant mothers. Introduced on October 2, 1975, the Programme assist in tackling the malnutrition by providing early childhood development. The Programme intends to reduce the death and malnutrition among the children.<sup>1548</sup> According to **Press Information Bureau (22 DEC 2021)**<sup>1549</sup>, The Programme provides six services through anganwadi centre for children of 0-6 years:

- Supplementary nutrition
- Pre-school non formal education
- Immunization
- Health check-up
- Nutrition and health education
- Referral services

### B SAKSHAM ANGANWADI AND POSHAN 2.0

The SAKSHAM ANGANWADI and POSHAN 2.0 was operated under the ministry of women and child development for a period between 2021-22 and 2025-26. This integrated nutrition programme combines the ICDS programme and POSHAN ABHIYAAN. The Programme intends to deal with the malnutrition among the children below 6 years of age, adolescent girls of 14 to 18 years, pregnant and lactating women. In view of **sustainable development goal 2 (zero hunger)** and **sustainable development goal 4 (Inclusive and Quality education)**, this programme contributes to the achievement of these two goals. According to the **Press**

<sup>1548</sup> ICDS Programme, Drishtias, (26 Nov 2025), <https://www.drishtias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-analysis/integrated-child-development-services-icds-programme>

<sup>1549</sup> Press release, ministry of women and child devpt, Aims and objectives of ICDS scheme, (Dec. 22, 2021), <https://www.pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1784152&reg=3&lang=2>

**Information Bureau (2 AUG 2022)**<sup>1550</sup>, the following are the goals of POSHAN 2.0:

- To Address the malnutrition
- For sustainable health and wellbeing, to foster the nutrition awareness and good eating habits
- To contribute to development of India's human capital
- To deal with the nutrient related deficiencies via key strategies.

### C POSHAN ABHIYAAN ( NATIONAL NUTRITION MISSION)

The POSHAN ABHIYAAN initiative initiated on March 8, 2018. It is an initiative of ministry of women and child development. It focuses on ameliorating the nutrition of children 0–6 years of age, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women. The Programme intends to reduce the stunting, undernutrition, anaemia and low birth weight among the children through the utilization of technology, convergence and community approach. The Programme emphasises on reducing the condition of malnutrition.<sup>1551</sup> This initiative directly supports the sustainable development goal 2 and 3. According to the **Press information bureau (7 March 2025)**<sup>1552</sup>, the implementation of this programme includes:

- Enhancing the access to health services particularly first 1000days of child life, through the schemes like ICDS, national health mission, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
- Coordinating the different ministries like sanitation, water under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Utilisation of technological tools like Poshan Tracker and ICDS-Common

Application software for monitoring and data collection

- Jan Andolan - In order to promote the sustainable nutrition, the Programme calls for a community engagement to achieve, a country free from malnutrition.

### D POSHAN PAKHWADA (NUTRITION FORTNIGHT)

The initiative of POSHAN PAKHWADA was introduced under the flagship programme POSHAN ABHIYAAN. The Programme helps in fostering awareness and increasing the community participation in combating the crisis of malnutrition. The Initiative aims to ameliorate the nutritional development of both children and women by holistic approach. According to the **Press Information Bureau (Apr 7 2025)**<sup>1553</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of this programme was organised from April 8 to April 22. PIB (Apr 8 2025) - to combat the malnutrition, the objectives of the Programme focuses on following areas:

- Focus on first 1000 days of life which is a crucial period for child's physical growth and brain development.
- Popularisation of beneficiary model in poshan tracker app
- Detection and treatment of malnourished children through Community based management Acute malnutrition (CMAM) protocol
- Dealing with childhood obesity through healthy lifestyle

### E POSHAN TRACKER INITIATIVE

The Poshan Tracker was introduced on March 1, 2021 under the ministry of women and child development. For collection of data and monitoring, the Poshan Tracker uses the ICT technology (like smart phone) and growth measuring devices at Anganwadi centres. The Poshan Tracker uses the technology to identify the stunting, wasting and underweight among

<sup>1550</sup> Press release, ministry of women and child devp, Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, (Aug. 02 2022), <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1847548&reg=3&lang=2>

<sup>1551</sup> Poshan Abhiyaan, women and child development department, (Dec 2 2025), <https://wcdhry.gov.in/schemes-for-children/poshan-abhiyan/>

<sup>1552</sup> Press release, ministry of women and child devpt, Poshan Abhiyan's Holistic Approach to Nutrition and Wellness, (Mar. 7, 2025), <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2109222&reg=3&lang=2>

<sup>1553</sup> Press release, ministry of women and child devpt, Poshan Pakhwada 2025, (Apr. 7, 2025), <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2119796&reg=3&lang=2>

the children and last mile tracking of nutrition service delivery. This Poshan Tracker helps the Anganwadi workers to adequately deliver the services.<sup>1554</sup>

### F MID – DAY MEAL SCHEME

On August 15 1995 the central Government introduced the Mid-day meal scheme which is a national programme to provide nutrition support to children of primary education. On October 2007, this mid-day meal scheme was expanded to upper primary classes. It is the World's largest programme providing free lunch to government and government aided schools.<sup>1555</sup> The Mid-day meal scheme was renamed as **PM POSHAN (PM POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN) scheme** on 2021. This centrally sponsored scheme was approved to provide one hot cooked meal from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The Mid-day meal scheme aims to provide a proper nutrition to children which is vital to reduce the malnutrition among the children.<sup>1556</sup>

On 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022, **chief minister breakfast scheme** was introduced in Tamilnadu and it is the first state to introduce such a programme. This initiative provides free breakfast to government school children of class 1 to 5. The Introduction of such programme enhance the prevention of malnutrition and to deal with the nutrient deficiencies and child hunger among the children. The scheme initially covers 1545 government schools (1.14 lakh students).<sup>1557</sup> On August 25, 2023 the scheme expanded to 31,008 government schools (to benefit 17 lakh

students).<sup>1558</sup> The breakfast scheme was further expanded on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025 to include the Urban state aided primary schools and thereby benefiting 20.59 lakh students.<sup>1559</sup>

### G SWACHH BHARAT MISSION

The Swachh Bharat Mission which was initiated in 2014 is an India's Sanitation Mission. This Mission targets to make India free from open defecation. The recent study published in **Nature** showed that the India's Swachh Bharat Mission contributed towards reducing the child mortality rates and thereby averting **60,000 to 70,000 infant lives**.<sup>1560</sup> According to the study by WHO on **health gains from India's SWACHH BHARAT MISSION (2018)**, shows that the Swachh Bharat Mission resulted in averting **300,000 deaths** by diarrhoea and malnutrition between 2014 to 2019.<sup>1561</sup>

Poor sanitation not only increases the child malnutrition but also contribute to Increase in child mortality as it indirectly affects the nutrition of children. The NITI Aayog study shows that the construction of public and private toilets under Swachh Bharat Mission plays an essential role in reducing the child mortality by reducing child stunting and underweight. The **NITI AAYOG STUDY (NOV 2024)**<sup>1562</sup> reveals that Open defecation act as a factor causing malnutrition among the children. The child stunting and underweight is higher in States which have high Population defecating in open. The States with high Population using shared toilets with improved

<sup>1554</sup> Poshan Tracker Initiative, Vajiram and ravi, (Oct. 2, 2024), <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/poshan-tracker-initiative/>

<sup>1555</sup> Chethana and Archana Prabhat, Effect of Midday meal programme on nutritional status of school children, 8, IJEEFUS, 38, (2018), [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327911561\\_Effect\\_of\\_Mid\\_Day\\_Meal\\_Programme\\_on\\_the\\_Nutritional\\_Status\\_of\\_School\\_Children](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327911561_Effect_of_Mid_Day_Meal_Programme_on_the_Nutritional_Status_of_School_Children)

<sup>1556</sup> Press release, ministry of women and child development, PM POSHAN, (Apr. 1, 2022), <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1812421&reg=3&lang=2>

<sup>1557</sup> Social welfare and women empowerment dept, Govt of Tamilnadu, Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme, (2025), <https://www.tnsocialwelfare.tn.gov.in/en/specialisationsnutritious-meal-programme/chief-ministers-breakfast-scheme#:~:text=2022%20under%20Rule110%20that%20Breakfast%20will%20be,the%20Hon'ble%20Chief%20Minister%20of%20Tamil%20Nadu.>

<sup>1558</sup> Sai charan, TN CM launches expansion of breakfast scheme across state, The Hindu, (Aug. 25, 2023), <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-cm-stalin-launches-expansion-of-breakfast-scheme-across-state-to-benefit-17-lakh-school-students/article67234202.ece>

<sup>1559</sup> CM's free breakfast scheme to be expanded to benefit 20.59 lakh students in TN, The Hindu, (Aug. 25, 2025), <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/cms-breakfast-scheme-to-be-expanded-to-benefit-2059-lakh-students-says-stalin/article69972026.ece>

<sup>1560</sup> Press release, ministry of Jal Shakthi, Global study by leading experts : Swachh Bharat Mission Drives Significant Reductions in Infant Mortality Rates in India, (Sep. 5, 2024), <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2052319&reg=3&lang=2>

<sup>1561</sup> Health gains from Swachh Bharat Initiative, WHO, (July 27, 2018), <https://www.who.int/india/news-room/detail/27-07-2018-health-gains-from-the-swachh-bharat-initiative>

<sup>1562</sup> Arvind Virmani and Shruthi Sabharwal, Child malnutrition and mortality: role of sanitation and sewage systems, NITI Aayog, (2024), [file:///D:/Vidan/Revised%20NITI%20Working%20Paper\\_1.pdf](file:///D:/Vidan/Revised%20NITI%20Working%20Paper_1.pdf)

sewage system shows a low percentage of child stunting and underweight.

## VI CONCLUSION

Albeit malnutrition in India is a growing crisis, India shows a slow decline in child malnutrition rate. According to the **Lancet Research 2013**, by improving the nutritional intervention to 90% could help to reduce the global stunting by 20% and child mortality by 15%. Various nutrition Interventions are already included in our Government Programmes like PM POSHAN 2.0, POSHAN ABHIYAAN, ICDS SCHEME to address the malnutrition in India. While these Initiatives are significant for dealing with malnutrition, but simultaneously the success of initiative can be achieved by the providing knowledge and facilitative environment to the mothers through the involvement of community and family. For improving child malnutrition, the Self Help Group act as effective mechanism because of its community based structure. The integration of Jan Andolan Strategy in POSHAN ABHIYAAN helps to create a consensus about the child nutrition at community level.

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