A Plan to Scale-up Nutrition

Investing in the Survival, Health and Productivity of India’s Most Vulnerable

Presentation to
The Planning Commission, Government of India
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www.micronutrient.org

Nutrition is Key to Health and Productivity

• Without micronutrients – essential vitamins and minerals – the human body does not grow and function properly

• More than 1/3 of child deaths and 10% of the global disease burden is due to maternal and child undernutrition

• Poor fetal growth or stunting in the first two years of life leads to irreversible cognitive damage

• Investing in micronutrients makes economic sense: identified as world’s most cost-effective development investment and can increase a country’s GDP by 2-3% annually
Positive Impact of Micronutrients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MN</th>
<th>Impact of micronutrients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vit A</td>
<td>Significantly improves child survival rates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>Reduces frequency &amp; severity of diarrhoea, a major cause of child mortality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iodine</td>
<td>Lowers rates of miscarriage, stillbirth and neonatal deaths and improves mental health function.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>Improves maternal survival rates</td>
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**Micronutrients and MDGs:** Major impact on MDGs 4 (reduce child mortality) and 5 (improve maternal health). MDG 1, 2 and 3 also impacted.

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**Nutrition in India: Need for Action**

- Undernutrition drains India's human, economic and national potential
- Simple low-cost high impact solutions are available and affordable and do-able
- GOI has made improved nutrition a priority
- Despite progress, 40% of the 8.9 million child deaths and undernourished globally are India's children
Need to Accelerate Survival by Scaling up Nutrition

Under 5 mortality rate

Deaths per 1,000 live births

Year

Maternal mortality ratio

Deaths per 1,000 live births

Year

Source: SRS

The 11th Plan’s 5-pronged Approach is Still Relevant!

Dietary Approaches: Micronutrient-rich foods in adequate quantities

Supplementation: Tablets, capsules and syrups to vulnerable groups

Horticultural interventions: Nutrient-rich crops, including green leafy vegetables

Public Health Measures: Controlling diseases (malaria, measles, diarrhea) and parasitic infections to help the body absorb and retain essential vitamins and minerals

Fortification: Adding vitamins and minerals to foods or condiments regularly consumed
Progress to Date

- To reduce anemia by 50% among women and girls
  Coverage still remains poor
- IFA for infant and young children in syrup form, and adolescent girls through weekly iron supplements
  IFA syrup in Kit A, last supplied in 2009; weekly IFA supplements to adolescent girls in 200 districts
Progress to Date

• All children 9 – 59 m to receive Vit A; Coverage to be 90% by 2009
  VA 1\textsuperscript{st} dose coverage – 64\%, 2\textsuperscript{nd} dose coverage – 36.8\%

• Promotion of breastfeeding will be taken up for prevention of VAD
  Initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth: 33.5\%; exclusive breastfeeding – 56.8\%

Source: CES 2009

Progress to Date

• DLHS will recognize malnutrition including micronutrient as a serious public health problem…
  Last survey in 2007-08 where VA and IFA coverage were assessed

• …and monitor prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies on priority
  Did not monitor prevalence of MN deficiencies
Progress to Date

- NNMB of ICMR will be expanded to all States/UTs to assist in monitoring micronutrient deficiencies through existing programmes
  Still confined to few states
- Research and studies to be undertaken on micronutrients
  Some results available; holistic view still unattained

Progress to Date

- A vigorous awareness campaign in the form of *Poshan Jagriti Abhiyan* will be launched utilizing all available channels of communication
  Still awaited
- A high level inter-agency coordination mechanism will be set up to enable policy directions to the concerned sectors
  Still awaited
Achieving the Goals: Key Enabling Factors

- High-level political commitment
- A coordinated approach with time-bound targets against which performance is reviewed regularly by an independent multi-stakeholder body
-Allocation of additional resources linked to the performance targets

Recommendations

- GOI has made improved nutrition a national priority – now it is time for action. Significant progress can be achieved by 2015.
- Need to function in a high level mission mode (for an initial time period of up to five years) with specific budgetary allocations
- Identify lead ministry and a strong coordination mechanism under the PMO or the Planning Commission
- Key Stakeholders (including civil society and the private sector) to be co-opted into the program through partnership, legislation and regulation