

2. Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey

Prelims: Governance- Rights Issues, Social Issues, Health

Mains: GS-II- Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector or Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

GS-II- Issues relating to poverty and hunger.

Why in News?

- ▶▶ The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey released by the government recently has highlighted the glaring contrast existing in nutritional level between rural and urban areas.

About the Survey:

- ▶▶ The MoHFW along with UNICEF has conducted a comprehensive survey to assess the nutritional status of more than 115,000 children and adolescents (aged 0-19 yr) in all States of India. The main objective of this survey is to report the micronutrient deficiencies, overnutrition and nutritional risk factors for non-communicable diseases among the above-mentioned age group in India.

Gist of the Report:

- ▶▶ Malnutrition among children in urban India is characterised by relatively poor levels of breastfeeding, higher prevalence of iron and Vitamin D deficiency as well as obesity due to long commute by working mothers, prosperity and lifestyle patterns.
- ▶▶ Rural parts of the country see higher percentage of children suffering from stunting, underweight and wasting and lower consumption of milk products.

Major Highlights of the Report:

- 1. Breastfeeding:** The report shows that 83% of children between 12 and 15 months continued to be breastfed, a higher proportion of children in this age group residing in rural areas are breastfed (85%) compared to children in urban areas (76%).
 - ▶▶ Breastfeeding is inversely proportional to household wealth and other factors influencing this trend may include working mothers who have to travel long distances to reach their workplace.
- 2. Diversity in Food:** It also noted that rural children receive meals more frequently in a day at 44% as compared to 37% of urban children. However, a higher proportion of children residing in urban areas are fed an adequately diverse diet as compared to those in rural areas.

- 3. Iron Deficiency:** Children and adolescents residing in urban areas also have a higher (40.6%) prevalence of iron deficiency compared to their rural counterparts (29%).
- 4. Obesity:** Children in urban areas are also overweight and obese as indicated by subscapular skinfold thickness (SSFT) for their age. While 14.5% of children in the age group of 5 to 9 years in cities had higher SSFT than 5.3% in rural areas, 10.4% of adolescents surveyed in urban areas in the age group of 10-19 had higher SSFT than 4.3% in rural areas.
- 5. Vitamin D Deficiency:** Wealthier households in urban areas and sedentary lifestyle of children may also be responsible for higher deficiency of Vitamin D in urban areas (19%) as compared to rural areas (12%), though the study shows that 74% of children living in cities consume dairy products as compared to 58% in Rural Areas.
- 6. Zinc Deficiency:** Rural children lag in intake of zinc which causes diarrhoea, growth retardation, loss of appetite and impaired immune function. Among children aged 1-4 years, zinc deficiency is more common in rural areas (20%) compared to urban areas (16%).
- 7. Stunting and Malnutrition:** Rural areas also witness higher prevalence of stunting (37% in rural versus 27% in urban), underweight (36% in rural versus 26% in urban) and severe acute malnutrition.

Government Interventions with respect to Malnutrition:

- ▶▶ POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)
- ▶▶ Anganwadi Services
- ▶▶ Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY),
- ▶▶ Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)
- ▶▶ Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)
- ▶▶ National Health Mission (NHM)
- ▶▶ Swachh-Bharat Mission
- ▶▶ Public Distribution System (PDS)