

Concept Note for Panel Discussion on

# Post-COVID Restoration of NUTRITION AND NUTRITION-RELATED SERVICES

Population Research Centre, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi

Improved nutritional status is a key to sustainable development. Adequate and sustained investment in nutrition and nutrition-related services is important for achieving integrated and universal transformation of nutritional status of the population, including ending hunger and malnutrition. In 2015, India committed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of zero hunger. As a step towards meeting the targets by 2030, the Government of India launched the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition (POSHAN) Abhiyaan in 2018. Targets were set to reduce stunting, under-nutrition and low birth weight by two per cent each and anaemia by three per cent by 2022.

After the implementation of POSHAN *Abhiyaan*, the initial progress on delivery of health and nutrition services was remarkable. But, unfortunately, Covid-19 pandemic disrupted programmatic efforts as well as livelihood strategies thus posing an elevated risk of malnutrition among children in India. Important nutrition interventions such as delivering food entitlements for women and children through Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) under ICDS *Anganwadi* Services and school-based Mid-Day Meal Programme are yet to be fully restored across several states. In addition, public health interventions delivered through the public healthcare system such as Iron and Folic Acid supplementation, prevention and treatment of childhood diarrhoea, and tracking and treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) were also severely disrupted specially during the first wave of COVID-19. Limited access to community service platforms such as VHNDs have also deprived mothers and young children of the vital nutrition services.

The economic uncertainties unfolded by the pandemic is also likely to have long term impact on food intake and dietary diversity. These can lead to a surge in infectious diseases and can cause infant and under-five deaths along with adverse effects on cognitive development and physical growth of children. Therefore, it is important that the gains made in the past few years prior to the pandemic are consolidated upon by immediate attention on policies and strategies on population health and nutrition.

Against this backdrop, the Population Research Centre (Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi) has scheduled a webinar to delve on concerns, strategies, alternatives for Post-COVID restoration of nutrition and nutrition-related services in India. The webinar aims to elicit facts and provide evidence on strategies to support nutrition interventions and programmes to bolster progress under POSHAN *Abhiyaan*.



SEPTEMBER 10, 2021  
3:30 PM–5:00 PM

## AGENDA

🕒 (90 MINUTES)

- Welcome note by 🕒 05 min  
**Prof. Suresh Sharma**  
 Professor and Head, PRC-IEG
- Opening Remarks from the Chair 🕒 10 min  
**Dr. Sila Deb**  
 Additional Commissioner  
 (CH & I/C - Nutrition)  
 Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW)
- Presentation by Panellists 🕒 45 min  
**Dr. Purnima Menon**  
 Senior Research Fellow,  
 International Food Policy Research Institute  
**Ms. Mini Varghese**  
 Country Director of India,  
 Nutritional International  
**Dr. Shrabanti Sen**  
 Associate Director, Evidence Action
- Q & A Session 🕒 15 min
- Concluding Remarks by the Chair 🕒 05 min
- Vote of Thanks 🕒 10 min  
**Dr. William Joe**  
 Assistant Professor, PRC-IEG

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