European Journal of Business & Social Sciences
Available at https://ejbss.org/
ISSN: 2235-767X
Volume 07 Issue 01
January 2019

Food Security to Neutrition Security: Learning From Asian Countries

ANIL KUMAR
LECT. IN CHEMISTRY, GHS TIGRA
VILLAGE-MANDLANA THE.- NARNAUL
DISTT.- MAHENDERGARH(HARYANA)
PIN CODE-123001
CONTACT NO.- 9467851733
Email- yadavakmandlana@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

Hunger affects the whole existence of a person and restricts his capacity for development. India has the world's highest number of malnourished children and has fared poorly in tackling hunger among its citizens. In this context it is important to analyze the methods and strategies of similarly placed countries like India and learn from them.

KEY WORDS :-

Stunted, malnourished, undernutrition, anaemia, immunisation, sustainable, iodisation, , fortification

INTRODUCTION

While India has seen impressive economic growth in recent years, the country still struggles with widespread poverty and hunger. India's poor population amounts to more than 300 million people, with almost 30 percent of India's rural population living in poverty. The good news is, poverty has been on the decline in recent years. According to official government of India estimates, poverty declined from 37.2% in 2004-05 to 29.8% in 2009-10. Rural poverty declined by 8 percentage points from 41.8% to 33.8% and surban poverty by 4.8 percentage points from 25.7% to 20.9% over the same period (World Bank 2012).

India is home to 25 percent of the world's hungry population. An estimated 43 per cent of children under the age of five years are malnourished (WFP 2012). India remains an important global agricultural player, despite the fact that agriculture's share in the country's economy is declining. It has the world's largest area under cultivation for wheat, rice, and cotton, and is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices (World Bank 2012). Nearly three-quarters of

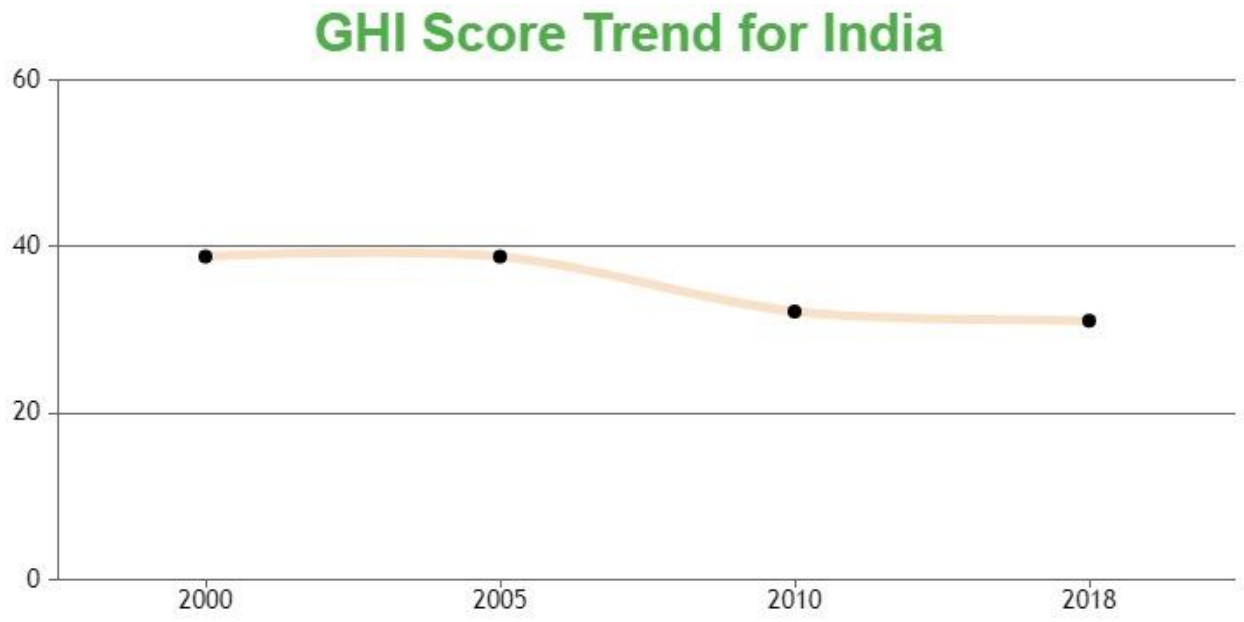
ISSN: 2235-767X
Volume 07 Issue 01
January 2019

India's households are dependent on rural incomes. Agricultural productivity in the country's semi-arid tropical region is impeded by water shortages and recurrent drought, while environmental degradation and vulnerability to weather-related disasters pose challenges to the country as a whole.

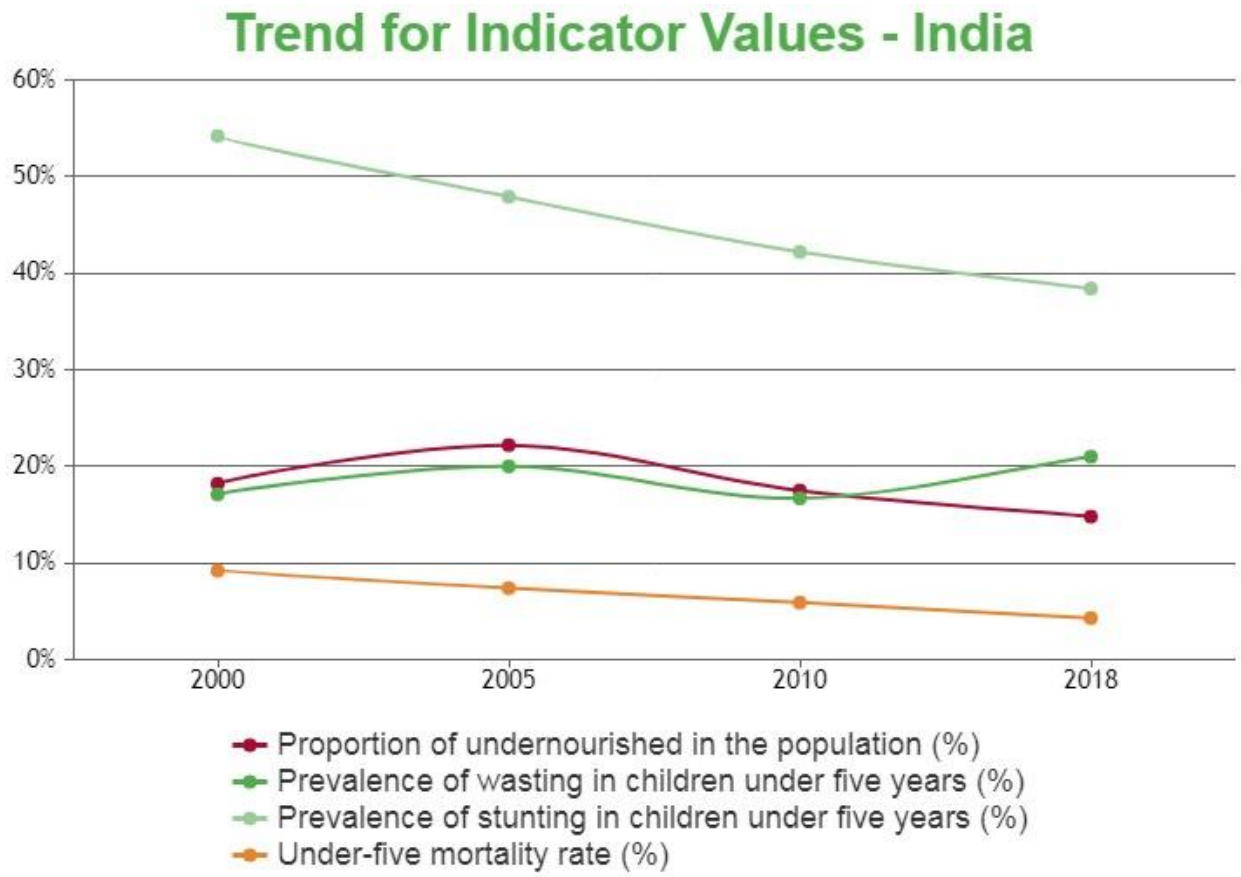
Poor populations also face a lack of access to productive assets, financial resources, education, health care, and basic social services. The government has recently begun to focus on microenterprise development as a way to address these challenges, as well as initiatives to bring basic services to the rural poor. With the country's population and economy continuing to grow, huge demands will be placed on critical infrastructure in the coming years. It is estimated that US$1 trillion will be needed to meet India's infrastructure needs in the next five years (World Bank 2012).

Why there is a need to move towards nutritional security in India :-

- India is one of the most malnourished countries in the world. According to a recent report by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), India ranked 100 in a list of 119 countries in the 'Global Hunger Index' (GHI). India fared only better than Afghanistan and Pakistan in Asia.



ISSN: 2235-767X
Volume 07 Issue 01
January 2019



- Nearly one-third of adults in the country have a body mass index (BMI) below normal just because they do not have enough food to eat.
- Open defecation, which is exceptionally widespread in India, can account for much or all of the excess stunting in India.
- India is facing a serious threat of undernutrition where more than half of the women of reproductive age suffer from anaemia. Iron deficiency is a significant cause of child stunting in India.
- On one hand, there is hunger and malnutrition and, on the other, an increase in the number of obese people.

ISSN: 2235-767X
Volume 07 Issue 01
January 2019

- **Disease spread:-**
    - Most child deaths in India occur from treatable diseases like pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and complications at birth. The child may eventually die of a disease, but that disease becomes lethal because the child is malnourished and unable to put up resistance to it.
- **Poverty:-**
    - The staff of ICDS places part of the blame of malnutrition on parents being inattentive to the needs of their children, but crushing poverty forces most women to leave their young children at home and work in the fields during the agricultural seasons.
- **Lack of nutrition:-**
    - Significant cause of malnutrition is also the deliberate failure of malnourished people to choose nutritious food.
    - An international study found that the poor in developing countries had enough money to increase their food spending by as much as 30 per cent but that this money was spent on alcohol, tobacco and festivals instead.

Lessons to be learnt from Asian countries :-

- **Bangladesh has an enviable record in universal health coverage.**
    - The country focussed on steep and sustained reductions in birth rate and mortality with a pluralistic health system that has main stakeholders pursuing women-centred, gender-equity-oriented, highly focussed health programmes in family planning, immunisation, oral rehydration and child health, tuberculosis, vitamin A supplementation
    - It achieved better health parameters by focusing on girls education, sanitation and moving its diet away from rice to fish, fruits and vegetables
- **Vietnam:-**
    - The Vietnamese, with their intervention programmes aimed at nutrient enhancement, have managed their growth process ensuring a positive association between reduction in expenditure-based poverty and calorie-based under-nutrition.
    - in Vietnam there have been several private and public initiatives to enhance food security in the 1990s. For example, the government of Vietnam formulated

ISSN: 2235-767X
Volume 07 Issue 01
January 2019

in 1990/91 a new socio-economic strategy for the period up to 2000 designed to improve the nutritional levels for the whole community.

- **Thailand:-**
    - Thailand has been focussing on nutrition-based poverty reduction for decades unlike many countries. While most countries turned their attention to income generation to reduce poverty, Thailand, through community participation, put its focus on nutrition, sanitation and health to bring down poverty levels.
    -

Way forward:-

- While countries like India continue to produce rice and wheat, focus should be given to produce more fruits, vegetable and animal products.
- India is facing a double-burden of malnutrition: Over-nutrition and under-nutrition existing simultaneously, there is a pressing need for a multi-sectoral approach along with nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions to address the problems holistically.
    - For this, there is a need to reiterate the priorities which may include, spreading of knowledge and awareness regarding safe food, diversifying food baskets, putting women and children at the centre of any nutritional intervention and leverage on modern technologies to impart nutrition-linked messages and sustainable agricultural practices.
- **Extend coverage of food fortification of staples**:-
    - Currently, fortification of staples is limited to the mandatory iodisation of salt. However, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is in the process of formulating draft standards for the fortification of foodgrains which will add to the nutrient value.
    - This would help in providing sufficient calories and micronutrients to a large number of children under-five.

- **Target multiple contributing factors**, for example, WASH – The underlying drivers for India's 'hidden hunger' challenges are complex and go beyond direct nutritional inputs. The push for toilet construction must be combined with a strategy for behavioural change.

ISSN: 2235-767X
Volume 07 Issue 01
January 2019

- **Align agricultural policy with national nutritional objectives** – Agriculture policy must be brought in tune with nutritional policy, with incentives provided for encouraging the production of nutrient-rich and local crops for self-consumption.

BIBLOGRAPHY

1. Global hunger index report 2018
2. Sustainable development goal report
3. Data.gov.in