

Food and Nutrition Security

Policy Asks from Odisha Vikash Conclave

- 1. Spell out a State Nutrition Policy:** The government may come out with a clear nutrition policy which covers all kinds of nutrition including geriatric nutrition and nutrition for the disabled. Set right the institutional arrangement and set up an Empowered State Food and Nutrition Commission and institutions at village level with active participation of local government besides a National Centre for Excellence on Sick Cell Anaemia for anaemia management in Odisha. Odisha may start a Nutrition Department. Nutrition has to be the heart of the entire development planning process. Convergence of the many other offices involved – NRHM, livelihood etc, should be ensured at three levels - availability, accessibility and utilization, between government departments, CSOs and corporate.
- 2. Solve nutrition quagmire by addressing six basics needs:** Expand the micro-village area; Ensure every family gets the Antodaya Card; Every eligible person should have a voter identity card, ration cards, health cards and NREGA job cards and ensure the proper implementation of MDM.
- 3. Emphasise on Nutrition Behaviour Change:** Despite many programmes run by the government – ICDS, health, etc, there is a high burden of undernourished children. One of the reasons is that nutrition behaviour change is not adequately emphasised in programming. This has to be complemented by advocacy, mass communication, capacity building on inter-personal communication strategic use of data. As tried in Bihar, Social Behaviour Change Communication works for Nutrition. This may be replicated in Odisha.
- 4. Promote Millet for a nutritious Odisha:** A policy breakthrough is required in revolutionising dry land agriculture. Millets must be promoted and MSPs for millets should be twice the procurement price of rice. ₹ 1,500 crores was state budget burden for PDS but it has been reduced to ₹ 1000 crores following implementation of the National Food Security Act 2013. The funds thus available can be utilised for meeting the nutrition needs. One of the ways this can be achieved is by including millet in the PDS which is justified by the NFSA, but no state has considered or included millets.
- 5. Emphasise on Climate smart agriculture:** Climate-smart agriculture needs to be pursued to address nutrition needs along with an outreach strategy through collectivisation like Farmer Producers Organisations as platforms with additional focus on nutritional aspects at the family level like Kitchen Gardening, Efficient ways for Water usage, Mitigating risks keeping in mind drought, flood, cyclone etc. and Cluster development programmes.
- 6. Nutrition literacy and monitoring should be linked to participatory planning:** Nutrition agenda must have the ownership of the Gram Sabha and for this, there has to be a persistent effort to raise nutrition as an issue at the Gram Sabha level. Also, the need for social audit provisions to monitor the government's own action plan through community monitoring for food security will transform the community empowerment process.

Innovations like Grain bank by Agramee, Chattisgarh's Phulwari model – anganwadi cum crech etc may be replicated in the state.

The power of nutrition data has not been realised by the Government of Odisha which lacks proper nutrition data-both physical and budget.

On the problems plaguing Odisha's PVTGs – the issue of identifications. PVTGs need to have Antodaya Cards but this is difficult as identification cards not available to them, especially to those living outside the village/project area boundaries defined by the government of Odisha. Also applies in the case of migrating population.