

Editor's note

The multidimensionality of poverty and its implications, in broad terms, remains one of the most intensely debated and difficult to address issue worldwide. In relation to nutritional status, poverty is known to impact adversely on child growth and development, and its consequences early in life do not only include the inability to prevent malnutrition, but also to address its reversal, to the extent possible.

The promising new programme from India on “Community-run centres improve nutrition for women and children”¹ is, therefore, of particular interest. In total, 4 200 such centres have been established across the Andhra Pradesh region of India, and reach more than 200 000 women in predominantly disadvantaged communities. The programme includes a number of “innovative approaches” such as being entirely “community-driven, community-owned and community-supervised” within a social infrastructure of self-help groups. The programme provides, in situ, pregnant and lactating women with three meals daily, thus preventing food leakage, and also caters for the women’s children younger than two years of age. The latter intervention clearly addresses the prevention of child malnutrition at an early age, during which such interventions are known to be most cost and outcome

effective. In terms of sustainability, women pay only one third of the cost of the daily meals with money they are helped to earn from “safe livelihood activities”, with the remainder of the costs being met by government subsidies derived from government-supported feeding schemes. The more stringent evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme will be of interest when it becomes available.

In the Cabinet meeting of 7 March 2012, the publication of the “Development Indicators 2011” were approved.² The report is soon to be released, and it will be of particular interest for its data on health and nutrition indicators.

Prof Demetre Labadarios

Editor-in-Chief: *SAJCN*

References

1. The World Bank. Community-run centers improve nutrition for women and children [homepage on the Internet]. c2012 [cited 2012 Mar 18]. Available from: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INDIAEXTN/Resources/295583-1320059478018/innovation-dev-ap.pdf>.
2. Presidential Hotline and Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Reports. Cabinet approval of the Development Indicators [homepage on the Internet]. c2012 [cited 2012 Mar 18]. Available from: <http://www.thepresidency-dpme.gov.za/>.