

Children are the future of the country and this future is in the ever tightening grip of malnutrition. In India, for every two child births one is affected by malnutrition. This means the fate of almost 50% of the future generation is in peril. If timely and effective measures are not adopted, the future generations will be crippled at the clutches of malnutrition. If the situation worsens, it may even cause an increase in the mortality rate. It is very embarrassing that India is at number one in the list of top ten undernourished countries in the world.

What is malnutrition?

Malnutrition is a condition that develops when the human body does not receive proper nutrition. Therefore, the body weakens due to decrease of immunity, wherein the individual gets affected by the surrounding infections and suffers from various diseases. This results in a 'vicious circle' causing irreversible damage to the individual which in turn could lead to death.

CAUSES

The main causes are, lack of food and poor diet due to unemployment and illiteracy about food, hygiene and health; natural, financial and geographical calamities; diseases due to lack of potable water and proper sanitation. Food intake without hand wash leads to contracting worms and toxic diseases.

To eliminate malnutrition from the roots, Ln Bhagyashree Chounde initiated Mission Eradication of Malnutrition through her Gowardhan Women & Child Development Foundation and Gowardhan Ayurfarma. Now the Lions Clubs International gives a helping hand for this Mission.

The recent guidelines of World Health Organisation, recommend the Medicament Nutritional Therapy. This means that malnourished individuals not only need adequate nutrition to escape the clutches of malnourishment, but also require appropriate medicament support. Gowardhan Ayurfarma has already been implementing this approach since 2006.

Gowardhan Foundation not only targets children between the ages of six months to six years, school children, but also implements preventive measures for pregnant mothers from their adolescent age till their lactation period. Through this, we also ensure holistic growth of the embryo and the suckling infants. Here adolescent boys are also taken in to consideration.

One thing that needs to be understood is that, even though Public Health Centres are available in rural and tribal areas, they are located in the 20 km periphery. Some face difficulty to access the Public Transport from interior villages, while some cannot afford it. For the taking ill children for the treatment to PHCs, individuals are supposed to miss their daily wages and some cannot afford this so they try homely treatment. Because of all these reasons, individuals tend to ignore minor health issues, which turn into chronic diseases. Hence, they get stuck in the vicious circle of malnutrition. Therefore, our concept is "prevention is better than cure".

To serve the purpose, Gowardhan Foundation has developed seven types of Ayurvedic nutritious biscuits and kalpa for seven types of beneficiaries namely, children between the age group of six months to three years, children between three years to six years, school going children, adolescent boys and girls, pregnant women and through her, her the foetus and lactating mothers and through her, her infant.

The product is an enriching mix of dietary and ayurvedic elements. The dietary constituents are soya, whole wheat, ragi, til, halim, spinach, beat root, skimmed milk, vegetable oil, cow ghee and jagerry, which are common in all products. Some of the prime Ayurvedic constituents of these mixes are Shatawari, Ashwagandha, Amalaki, Vidarikand, Arjun and Haldi amongst others. Over 30 Ayurvedic Plant products are also used in various combinations in the above seven types of biscuits and kalpa, which are in accordance to the beneficiaries.

The unique quality of the products being its natural Dietary ingredients of nutritional calorific values, micro and macro nutrients, which provide proteins, calories , iron, calcium, vitamins and minerals as well as Ayurvedic ingredients, that help to fulfil the essential medicinal requirements, that too as per the needs of the beneficiaries according to the age groups and types of beneficiaries. These products relieve individuals from their numerous health issues, which could otherwise lead to malnutrition.

According to Ayurveda, the human body is made from Saptadhatu or Seven elements. This product enhances the Srothasa karya which leads to Saptadhatu Nlrmittee and Vruddhi. Children and individuals have experienced quick benefits like Increase in weight, increase in blood volume and haemoglobin percentage and increase in immunity level after consumption of these products. This is also useful for the beneficiaries for their overall growth, helps in boost the body, and strengthens bones and muscles. Apart from the physical benefits it also helps in increasing the intellectual level, concentration and grasping power. For students, increase in immunity leads to help in minimization of educational losses.

The Ayurvedic biscuits and kalpa can also facilitate intellectual growth in children. This product improves the digestive system and also prevents individuals from contracting worms. In adolescent boys and girls, the product helps in streamlining physical and hormonal changes, regularises menstruation and healthy semen resulting in a healthy progeny. In pregnant women, the product helps in reducing complications during pregnancy, delivery and ensures proper intellectual and physical growth of the embryo. In lactating mothers, the product helps in reducing post pregnancy complication and enriches quality and profuse lactation, which increases immunity of both baby and the mother.

WHY PRODUCT IS IN SOY NUTRITIOUS AYURVEDIC BISCUITS/KALPA?

With the use of these products there no need to have honey, water, ghee or butter as the vehicle medium for intake. It is in a tasty and attractive form. Being beneficiary

specific products, there is a control on distribution and consumption of the same. Easy to administer and contamination-free dosage; being a natural constituent, it is easily digestible and has no side effects. No Temperature/humidity control required for storage and has a shelf life of six months.

CLINICAL TESTS

The first baseline study was conducted on 100 children in Maharashtra. 89 had regular intake of our product and within 1 month, 13 children showed increase gradation. Increase in weight was observed in 53 children. Increase in HB % and immunity was sensed in all children.

Control-compare study was conducted for 90 days of clinical tests across Maharashtra and Gujarat. A committee consisting of doctors and observers was set up to monitor this project. In Maharashtra sample size comprised 2000 children and 500 lactating and pregnant women from 200 Aanganwadies of Jawhar project. 50 % beneficiaries were benefited from this products and the rest were non-benefited. From this sample size 40% increase in gradation was observed from the control group with 8% from the compare group which was non-benefited by these products. In Gujarat, 65% percent gradation was observed in 90 days clinical tests on 1000 children. Through Lions clubs District 323 D-2 study was conducted on 50 anganwadi children in Wagholi, Increase in BMI, immunity, gradation and HB% was observed in 94% of test sample.

Considering this, almost a 100% result of the eradication of malnutrition was observed and it was suggested that they may consume the product for 240 days or 8 months. This also covers the pregnancy terms and the lactation period.

Considering the social cause behind this mission, Gowardhan Foundation has made available these biscuits and kalpa at an affordable price which is only Rs. 360 for children aged between 6 months to one year, which amounts to just Rs. 1.50 per day. This amount is equivalent to the price of your two CCD coffees! The cost of the product is Rs. 720 for children between 1 to 6 years. That is equivalent to the price of your 1 meal of five star hotels. For adolescent boys and girls the cost of nutrition is Rs. 1080 which is equivalent to the price of your two California pizzas and the cost of the dosage of Rs 1440 for pregnant and lactating women is just one or two banquet meals. These products are also economical in comparison to products that offer similar nutritional and medical benefits of nutrients which are available in the market.

In 2006 Divisional Commissioner Mr. Prabhakar Karandikar (IAS), made Ln Bhagyashree Chounde realise the sensitivity and gravity of malnutrition and insisted her to do something about it, after which this project has become a core purpose of her life. In the last one decade, the project has been successful in touching 93,000 anganwadis of 200 villages in Gandhinagar Gujarat, 2 lac tribal beneficiaries, 10,000 victims from Nepal earthquakes and numerous individuals under the Ln district323D2.

A meeting was conducted for all clubs of District 323 D-2 for this project ; which was sponsored by American Soybean Association. Govt Officials, NGOs, CSR managing

Institutes, Senior Dignities of Lions Clubs International were present in this meeting. After the presentation all the representatives agreed together to contribute towards the eradication of severe malnutrition from District 323 D-2, and the Adarsh Anganwadi Project .

Lions Clubs International Race Day Program conducted on 27th March were for the social cause. Two Races and the Prizes were sponsored by Gowardhan Ayurfarma & Pratishthan For Eradication of severe Malnutrition and Adarsh Anganwadi to motivate the Audiences to donate for this noble cause. Because of this race day program now we are getting support from the Corporate Sector too.

Ln Ms Bhagyashree Chounde was awarded the Ranaraginchha Desh Award in the presence of the then President of India Hn Shri Pratibha Tai Patil and was honoured with various other respectable awards from various institutes and the Lions Clubs for her selfless contribution in this field.

In Lions Club, this journey has started through district 323D2 since 2014-15. PDG Ln Dr Vikrant Jadhav first created the post of District Chairperson Malnutrition. Under this post, Ln Ritu Naik headed this activity first at Wagholi District. Based on the success of this, the project was implemented by other Lions Clubs and Lion Members. The cabinet officer Ln Abhay Shastri introduced Bhagyashree Chounde to Lionism She became a president Lions club of poona kothrud in Yr 14-15, and now she is district chairperson malnutrition of District 323 D-2

Her introduction to Lionism led her to work under the able guidance of PID Ln Narendra Bhandari, this project reached the international level. Ln Dr. Neville Mehta Executive Administrator ISAAME and MJF Ln Naresh Agarwal International 2nd Vice President were the pillars of support of this project at the international level. The legal guidance regarding framework was provided by Ln Fatehchand Ranka Past Multiple Council Chairperson. Also support from IPDG MJF Ln Shrikant Soni, MJF Ln Girishji Malpani VDG-I, Ln Ramesh Shah VDG-II. Elect DG MJF Ln Chandrahas Shetty has made a wonderful plan for the implementation of the project plan and he has decided give the region wise coordinators to make this plan a fruitfull one.

For an ideal society, we need healthy, educated and well cultured individuals. 0 to 7 years is the fundamental period during which effective nurturing and development in children takes place. To cause nurturing and development on a holistic level, Ln Ms Bhagyashree Chounde has designed the Adarsha Anganwadi Project which provides nutritional support as well as children toilets, wash basins with proper sanitisation, water purifier, litter lights, educational material considering the lion quest, first aid box , blankets and kitchen garden at 100 Anganwadis. The Government of Maharashtra has agreed to implement this programme and named it "Bhagyashree Yojana." The next year being the centennial year of Lions Clubs International, it is proposed that 100 anganwadis should be taken for the implementation.

We have submitted this project to LCIF for Standard Grant Sanctioning for 100 Anganwadis. We can submit this project up to 1,33,000/- USD. Total Project layout is INR 88,44,500 OUT OF WHICH 25% MEANS INR 22,11,125/- should be raised at promoters contribution and 75% MEANS approx INR 66,33,375 could be raised from LCIF From our district we raised the said funds by contribution of participated clubs, through CSR, and CSR through Government with tri-partite MOU.

In our district 14715 children are suffering from severe malnutrition and to eradicate them out of it funds worth 90 lacs are required. These funds are being raised. This project is initiated from last 6 months and we are very near to achieving our goal. The same project could be implemented through all districts of the country.

This Project can be implemented by Lions Clubs from District 323D2 in collaboration with Government & Gowardhan Women & Child Development Foundation.

Going forward, this project will be run by signing an MOU with the Government for the use of their infrastructure. This will facilitate proper selection of the areas, beneficiaries, and their day to day feeding along with their routine health check-ups. We follow a transparent protocol through which all donors are always made aware about the allocation of their funds, area and beneficiary details. Not only that, but the products are also distributed in the presence of the donors and Government officials. Down the line, the donors can also monitor the progress of the project to which they have contributed. The records of the research, the distribution of the products and the progress reports are well documented and are conserved for future reference.

From tribal areas to the urban masses — malnutrition is engulfing the poor as well as rich. The need of the hour is to undertake this activity with the Government, corporate entities and a possible partnership with institutions, for a community - based model for managing malnutrition. This is a national and international mission in which persons from all walks of life, private sector entities, NGOs and civil voluntary organisations must all come forward.

Here we appeal the Lions club and the individual members to participate for per child and beneficiaries adoption by individual lion members, by recommending further to family members, friends and business circle and by raising funds at the club level for Anganwadi to make Adarsh Anganwadi and “Eradication of Malnutrition” for betterment of future generations which is very sensitive and important social and National cause.

APPEAL

It is therefore, a sincere appeal to all the District Governors to create a post of District Chairperson, Malnutrition, for the Scheme of Eradication of Malnutrition undertaken by the Lions Club International. The District Governor shall appoint a region wise coordinator to assist District Chairperson, Malnutrition. All the clubs are expected to participate wholeheartedly in the various programmes undertaken for the

implementation of this scheme. This is to be ensured by the Officers of the District Committees. The projects of “Maternal Child Care” and “Eradication of Severe Malnutrition” have commenced in the District 323-D2, it is envisaged that similar projects be undertaken by other districts too. In the same way the “Adarsh Anganwadi” project can be undertaken by the clubs which can be sent to LCIF through the respective districts. Any assistance needed in this regard pertaining to CSR funds and Government shall be given by the promoter of the scheme.

It is recommended that those clubs which shall adopt malnourished children and other beneficiaries should be given reward points or extra marks as incentive for the clubs. It is alarming to know that India is the first in the list of the top ten undernourished countries in the world. It is also disheartening to note that while the country is aiming to become a super power in the world by the year 2020, millions of our brethrens are still struggling to have a square meal and nourish their children healthily. It is, therefore, our foremost duty to see that while the country becomes a super power in other fields; its name also gets deleted from the list of malnourished nations.

From our country if all the district Governors of the lion club decide to undertake to implement this project then we can make our country free from the severe malnutrition definitely and make 100 ideal Aganwadi from each district.

This can be made as a unique project to be shown to the Government and in turn to all the clubs on the international level. The aim should be to raise a total project can be successfully implemented under the ‘need-based activity’ on a grand scale.

A single step taken towards the eradication of malnutrition is now on the threshold of turning into a movement. By adopting beneficiaries, through donations, CSR contributions or by individually availing the benefits of these healthy-lifestyle products, you can definitely make this movement sustainable and successful. This will help to uplift the underprivileged of our society. So let's join hands for Mission Malnutrition Eradication and Adarsha Anganwadi. This is also a grand opportunity for all lions since each can participate individually in this noble cause. So let us join hands and be an active and instrumental part of this mission of Eradication of Malnutrition.

Thank you!