

The of rural  
development is the  
nodal agency



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The recent World Bank report on ' India: Policy to reduce poverty and accelerate sustainable development' provides a detailed account of how Indian economy s potential vulnerable sections can be uplifted through an integrated approach linking sustainable development with poverty alleviation programmes requiring sound micro-economic analysis and policy support together with open trade relations and enhanced access to human and physical capital.

In India, about 244 million people are estimated to be below the poverty-lines in rural areas. This gives an indication about the magnitude of the problem of rural poverty and deprivation; and hence the compulsion of the Indian Government to ensure food security at local, individual and household levels through poverty reduction routes. The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal agency at the apex level in so far as alleviation of poverty of rural India is concerned and the District Level Rural Development Agency (DRDA) coordinates various programmes at local levels. The schemes for alleviation of rural poverty which are being implemented under the Ministry of Rural Development can be broadly grouped into four categories, viz. wage employment scheme, self- employment scheme, area development scheme and social welfare scheme. Prominent among such schemes that directly or indirectly provide food security through the process of economic upliftment and/or employment and empowerment, especially of the vulnerable sections of the rural poor, are: (i) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, (ii) Employment Assurance Scheme, (iii) Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, (iv) Training of Rural Youth for Self- Employment, (v) Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas, (vi) National Social Assistance Programme, (vii) Annapurna

Scheme, (viii) Jawahar Gram Sambridhi Yojana, (ix) Pre-poor Initiative Programme (cosponsored by the UNDP), (x) Drought-prone Area Programme, (xi) Desert Development Programme, and (xii) Integrated Wasteland Development Programme. Besides above national level programmes, Ministry of Rural Development have forged inter- institutional linkages through programme initiatives on cross-cutting food security issues affecting Asia and Africa with two international organizations, viz.

the Centre of Integrated Rural Development for Asia and Pacific (CIRDAP) region and the Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction (AARRO), which has been recently been rechristened as Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO). Deficiency symptoms of major micronutrients and their best source of availability: Major micronutrients Best source Deficiency symptoms

**Iron** Leafy and other green vegetable, ragi, jaggery, meat, fish, poultry, dried fruits, fresh fruit juice, jamun, phalsa, karonda, plum. Anaemia, reduction of haemoglobin concentration, poor absorption of nutrients, haemorrhage, loss of blood through illness.

**Iodine** Iodised salt, sea foods, sea weeds

**Obesity**, lethargy, goitre (swelling of thyroid glands), dwarfism and crotinism or deformity in children.

**Calcium** Leafy green vegetables, curry leaves, coriander leaves, green beans, banana, apple milk and milk products, ragi, guava, wood apple, seetaphal, tamarind, citrus fruits. Bone deformities in children, stunted growth, poor digestion, poor muscular control, back and leg pain, softening of bones in women (Osteomalacia)

**Phosphorus** Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, vegetables. Poor appetite, fragile bones.

**Potassium** Green vegetables, fruits, milk. Lethargy, loss of appetite, weak bones, slow blood clotting.

**Selenium** Sea food, bread, nuts. Slow regulation of thyroid hormone,

less protection against artery clogging. ZincPumpkin seeds, eggs, oysters and other sea foods. A constituent of more than 300 enzymes so its deficiency adversely affects tissue repair, digestion, fertility, vision, cell reproduction and protein synthesis. ManganeseNuts, seeds, pineapple. Less protection from osteoporosis. MagnesiumNuts, grains, fish, meat, leafy vegetables. Lethargy, vitamins are inactivated and imbalance of insulin levels occur. VitaminsVitamin ALeafy vegetables, yellow fruits and vegetables, sweet potato, liver, eggs, cod liver oil, milk, butter cream. Rough and dry skin, susceptibility to disease, night blindness, glare blindness, retarded growth, slow reproduction. Vitamin EOil, nuts, seeds, egg yolk, leafy vegetables. Retarded vitamin A activity, prone to heart diseases, enhanced ageing, slow blood clotting. Vitamin ÑBroccoli, citrus fruits, guava, cashew apple, cherry, drumstick leaves, brussel sprouts, leafy greens, bittergourd, chillies, raw vegetables, sprouted grains. haemorrhage, weak bones, teeth and gums, lack of blood leading to anaemia, slow healing of wounds, scurvy in severe cases, prone to cancerous cells, premature ageing. Vitamin DSunlight irradiated (UV) foods, fish liver oil. Rickets, poor teeth, pigeon chest, protruding forehead, fat belly, bow leggs, slow absorption of calcium.

Major micronutrientsBest sourceDejiciency symptomsThiamine (B1)Pulses, groundnut bran, whole grain cereals, wood apple, asparagus, apple, banana, apricot, cabbage. Poor appetite, constipation, faulty assimilation of food, depression, irritability, restlessness, berberi in severe cases. Riboflavin (B2)Leafy vegetables, plum, litchi, banana, cowpea, pulses, papaya, milk and milk products, liver, meat, eggs, whole grain cereals. Pale lips, splitting at the corner of the lips, eye strain, itching and burning eyes, sensitivity to light and other eye troubles. Niacin (B5)Groundnut, meat, prawn, pulses, green

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vegetables, peach, cherry, banana, strawberry. Poor growth, lethargy, poor appetite. Folic acid Beans, meat, leafy greens, mango, raisins. Disturbed levels of homocysteine, prone to heart diseases, birth defects, improper production of haemoglobin.