Project Sampoorna : Bongaigaon's Response to Malnutrition

Why in news?

Project Sampoorna which was successfully implemented in Bongaigaon district of Assam is a model that can be easily implemented anywhere in reducing child malnutrition

What is the project about?

- The Bongaigaon district has 2,416 malnourished children, 246 cases of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 2,170 instances of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM).
- Project Sampoorna was launched to target the mothers of SAM/ MAM children with the tagline being '**Empowered Mothers, Healthy Children'.**
- It was based on the success of the community-based COVID-19 management model (Project Mili Juli).
- Under this project, the mother of a healthy child of an Anganwadi Centre was paired with the target mother and they would be **Buddy Mothers**.
- They were given diet charts to indicate the daily food intake of their children and would have discussions on all Tuesdays at the AWC.
- Since the major hindrance to the project was patriarchy, the mothers were enrolled in Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM).
- Meanwhile, 100 millilitres of milk and an egg on alternate days for the children for the first 3months were provided so that their mothers could stabilise themselves in the newly found jobs.

How was it interlinked with other programmes?

- Sampoorna is in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and those set by the UN Secretary General António Guterres in the 2021 Food Systems Summit.
- It complements in achieving the '**Kuposhan mukt Bharat'** (Malnutrition Free India) and the National Nutrition Mission - **POSHAN Abhiyaan.**
- It was during **Poshan Maah** (Nutrition Month) in September 2020 that

2,416 children were identified to be malnourished in the district of Bongaigaon.
- The National Family Health Survey (NHFS)-5) has documented the stunted, wasted, underweight and the number of anaemic women and children in the district.
- **Project Saubhagya** that was designed to reduce the maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate of the district was utilized to endorse these figures.
- A real time data sheet is updated by field-level doctors as and when a high risk pregnancy is identified, which is then followed up till safe delivery.

What was the impact of the Project Sampoorna?

- After three months of Project Sampoorna, out of 246 SAM children, 11% continued to be SAM, 11.4% improved to MAM and 76.8%became normal.
- By September 2021, 92.3% SAM and 98.9% MAM children were normal.
- Children who had not improved were checked and treated by doctors under the **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram** (RBSK).
- Project Sampoorna had prevented at least 1,200 children from becoming malnourished over the last year.
- The National Nutrition Mission and the State government recognised the project in the 'Innovation Category'.
- This model is successful in both women empowerment as well as tackling the malnutrition.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/a-vital-cog-in-bongaigaons-response-to-malnutrition/article37389071.ece

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