

Summary

The availability of food grains is not a sufficient condition to ensure food security to the poor. It is also necessary that the poor have sufficient means to purchase food. The capacity of the poor to purchase food can be ensured in two ways – by raising the incomes or supplying food grains at subsidised prices. While employment generation programmes attempt the first solution, the PDS is the mechanism for the second option.

Generally, the risk of child malnutrition is high among the poor households where mothers have poor nutritional levels. The performance of food-based interventions needs to be improved by making them more demand driven. Merely scaling up the coverage of the programmes without improving their quality may not be the best way to reduce malnutrition.

While ICDS covers the nutritional needs of children of 6 months- 6 years' age, pregnant and lactating mothers, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Adolescent Girls covers the nutritional and non-nutritional components for adolescent girls. Under these schemes, age appropriate supplementary nutrition is provided to the beneficiaries at the Anagnwadi Centres spread across the country.