

The case of India: Why a rapidly developing nation has persistent problems with under-nutrition?

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Of the eight countries categorized under South Asia, India is by far the largest. Although the region suffers from many issues of under-nutrition, in India, the issue of food insecurity may exacerbate the problem. Food security is defined as the availability of food and one's continued access to it. One of the first Millennium Development Goals is to achieve 50% reduction among the hunger-affected population by 2015. India has a lot further to go in ensuring the reduction of under-nutrition in its children. There exists a major problem in storage and distribution of food which has resulted in food wastage and rotting. In spite of the existing problems, and without addressing the rampant corruption, the country is moving forward to expand the availability of food through the National Food Security Bill. It is a proposed entitlement policy that will require sizeable expansion of storage and distribution network, among other measures for it to be successful in addressing hunger.

This study postulates that to solve the persistent problem of under-nutrition among children in India, food access and security are key factors. In order to isolate this relationship, a mixed effects model will be utilized with lagged indicators for utilization of warehouse capacity and improvement in storage facilities. A database has been constructed using secondary data from key national sources, the Government of India, and global data sources including WHO, FAO and OECD. The objective will be to recommend policy initiatives unique to India that can help the country moderate the instance of severe under-nutrition in children.

Biography

Harsh M. Shah has completed his M.B.B.S from Gujarat University in 2010 and is currently earning his Master of Public Health from the University of North Texas Health Science Center's School of Public Health. He has worked as a Research Assistant at the Department of Health Management and Policy since 11 months, from the beginning of this project. He has research interests in global health, maternal and child health issues, policy analysis and legislative advocacy.