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## WOMEN NEED TO NOURISH TO MAKE SOCIETY FLOURISH - A review

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### **The First Wealth is Health- Emerson**

Adequate nutrition is cornerstone of every individual's health. The status of women's health and nutrition is central to quality of their lives because inadequate nutrition can cause havoc not only to women's own health but can be the key determinant to survival of the future generation.

Addressing women's malnutrition is important because a healthy and well nourished woman can ensure healthy nutrition to their families, give birth to healthy kids and will able to generate income for their livelihood. All these in turn can help countries to improve their socioeconomic status thus helping nations to achieve their Millenium Development Goals.

Globally, 50 percent of all pregnant women are anemic, and around 120 million women in developing countries are underweight (Geneva: ACC/SCN, 2000). In a country like India, women are more vulnerable than men for nutritional deficiencies because of their reproductive biology, low socioeconomic status, poverty and lack of education. Despite of ongoing social progress in India, women are still sailing through system of masculinity favouring society. The burden of chronic

malnutrition among Indian women across generations is still haunting us.

Diet is one of the lifestyle factor that is amenable to change. From adolescence to pregnancy and then to breastfeeding phase woman should take healthy diet. That's why focus on women food habits are seen as key to break the vicious cycle of undernutrition.

Although, India was first nation to introduce Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in 1975 but malnutrition situation in India is very staggering with reported incidence of anemia in every second woman, every third women is having low BMI and every fourth child is with low birth weight.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS....

To awake nutrition revolution in India, women's nutrition should be top priority for government.

In this regard, National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN ABHIYAAN) was launched in 2018 to address malnutrition with improviment in data collection, monitoring and its evaluation.

To combat malnutrition, National Rural Livelihood Mission initiatives are being taken at grass root level to mobilize rural women in Self Help Groups (SHG). Presently, around 5494554 self help groups are functional in our country. Programmes

like JEEVIKA in Bihar, KUDUMASHREE in Kerala and SWABHIMANN in Chattisgarh and Odisha are some of successful nutrition intervention through this platform.

Approaches like Women Dairy Cooperative, Women's Industrial Cooperative Society Limited, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Cooperatives, Simridhi Mahila Cooperative society serves better nutrition practices.

Being an agricultural country, alteration in male oriented agricultural policies in India can transform women as nutrition change leaders. Such platform can allow women

to spread message around nutrition rich cropping pattern and dietary diversity.

India should strategically enhance different platform to turn women into good nutrition practitioners and turn on auto pilot mode to bring much needed change. These initiatives can promote women empowerment and work as a vehicle to deliver effective behaviour change around health and nutrition.

TAKE HOME MESSAGE.....

**FOLLOW NEW TRADITION - IMPROVISE WOMAN NUTRITION**

