Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Poverty and malnutrition create a vicious cycle, adversely affecting human capital formation. What steps can be taken to break the cycle?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2024	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

poverty, malnutrition, human capital, undernutrition, productivity, maternal health, Poshan Abhiyaan, ICDS, PM POSHAN, food security, sanitation, social protection

Model Answer

Introduction

Poverty reduces access to nutritious food, healthcare and sanitation, while malnutrition reduces physical capacity, cognitive development and productivity. This creates an intergenerational cycle that weakens human capital.

Breaking the Cycle

1. Maternal and child nutrition: Strengthen antenatal care, breastfeeding support, supplementary nutrition and micronutrient interventions.

2. Strengthen nutrition programmes: Improve implementation of **ICDS, Poshan Abhiyaan and PM POSHAN** , particularly among vulnerable populations.

3. Food security: Ensure effective access to subsidised foodgrains and diversify diets towards pulses, vegetables, fruits and protein-rich foods.

4. Healthcare and sanitation: Universalise primary healthcare, immunisation, clean drinking water and sanitation to reduce disease-related malnutrition.

5. Education: Improve school retention, nutrition awareness and early childhood development.

6. Livelihood security: Employment generation, social protection and women's economic empowerment can increase household purchasing power.

7. Convergence: Health, education, nutrition, sanitation and rural-development departments should coordinate interventions.

Conclusion

Breaking the poverty-malnutrition cycle requires a **life-cycle and multisectoral approach**, combining income security with nutrition, healthcare, sanitation and education. Investing in early childhood and maternal well-being is particularly crucial for long-term human capital formation.

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