

Significant improvement in nutrition status for Maharashtra's children under-two

Preliminary results released from the Comprehensive Nutrition Survey in Maharashtra

Mumbai, 05 November 2012 - - The Honorable Chief Minister of Maharashtra, ShriPrithvirajChavan, today released the preliminary findings of a Comprehensive Nutrition Survey conducted in 2012 with a focus on infants and children under-two and their mothers. The survey has been conducted by the International Institute for Population Studies (IIPS), the same agency that has implemented the national NFHS and DLHS surveys in India in 1992, 1999, 2006 and upcoming 2013.

The preliminary findings of the survey indicate that the prevalence of stunting in children under-two decreased from 39.0% in 2006 to 22.8% in 2012. Importantly, prevalence of severe stunting in children under-two decreased from 14.6% in 2006 to 7.8% in 2012. This positive trend is seen both in rural and urban areas. In-depth analysis by geographic location and wealth quintile are awaited.

The survey selected a representative sample of children under two years of age in both rural and urban areas from each of the six administrative divisions of Maharashtra namely, Amravati, Aurangabad, Konkan, Nagpur, Nashik and Pune. Data collection took place from February to May, 2012.

Although the final report is expected by the end of 2012, the first findings seem to indicate significant improvements in the way young children are being fed, the way their mothers are being cared for and the environments where they live.

The survey findings confirm that positive change at scale for nutrition in India is possible and is actually happening.

The survey findings also provide with a good evidence for future action, particularly on the need to address diet diversity in young children to be able to continue on this positive trend. Continued strong and concerted action will be required to ensure optimal feeding of infants, as well as to break the often monotonous diet that lacks the food diversity needed to ensure that children are fed all the nutrients and vitamins they need to grow health, strong and bright.

For more information on the survey, please visit: <http://www.unicef.org/india/>