Challenges in National Nutrition Mission

India grapples with a malnutrition crisis despite having more than 30 government programmes and schemes for maternal and child health, and nutrition.

- **National Nutrition Mission (NNM)** aims to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, and anaemia among young children, women and adolescent girls, besides reducing low birth weight. More than 100 million people are expected to benefit from NNM,
- NNM is backed by a National Nutrition Strategy prepared by the NITI Aayog with the goal of attaining **"Kuposhan Mukt Bharat" or malnutrition-free India,** by 2022.
- The policy aims to map various schemes that address malnutrition and set up a robust convergence mechanism, and an information and communications technology-based real-time monitoring system, besides incentivising states and Union territories to meet the targets.
- It will also incentivise Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) for using IT-based tools, social audits and setting up of nutrition resource centres involving the masses.
- The intent of the policy is clear, but the implementation could be a challenge.

  - Malnutrition is a complex and multi-dimensional issue:

    - It is primarily caused by several factors, including poverty, inadequate food consumption, inequitable food distribution, improper maternal, infant and child feeding, and care practices, inequity and gender imbalances, poor sanitary and environmental conditions, and restricted access to quality health, education and social care services.
    - Various ministries and departments related to healthcare often operate in isolation.
  - The scheme also suffers from under-utilisation of allocated funds (only 16% of allocated resources for 2018-19), just like many other government programmes.
  - Lack of real-time data monitoring, sustainability and accountability may impact the National Nutrition Mission (NNM), Thus there is a need to strengthen monitoring and delivery systems.

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