

Powering Up Rice For A Healthier India

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A full meal with rice as staple. If rice is fortified with micronutrients it would help overcome deficiencies. Image Source: Wikimedia Commons

 Food fortification has been a popular public health intervention across the world for well over a century.

Given that despite best efforts, it might be difficult to overcome the delivery constraints of existing nutrition programs in totality, food fortification can be adopted as a cost-effective strategy in India for tackling micronutrient deficiencies.

As a large-scale public health strategy, it can help to strengthen the nutritional intake of vulnerable groups.

To tackle malnutrition holistically, deficiencies of micronutrients such as Iron, Zinc and Vitamin A need to be addressed in addition to calorific insufficiency. According to the National Family Health Service-4, the prevalence of anaemia in children between 6 to 59 months remains high at 58 per cent in 2015-16, although it has declined from 69 per cent in 2005-06. Similarly, one in every two women between the ages of 15 and 49 years continues to be anaemic. Other emerging economies like Brazil and China fare much better than India on nutrition indicators.