

PREFACE

Nutrition Foundation of India has been deeply interested in the impact of ongoing developmental transition on nutritional status of the population. At the request of the World Health Organisation (SEARO), Dr Gopalan, President of Nutrition Foundation of India had investigated and reported nutritional impact of the ongoing developmental transition in SE Asian countries in early nineties. His report (Regional Health Paper SEARO No 21) had received global recognition.

During the last two decades the pace of developmental transition has quickened. India is currently undergoing rapid developmental transition with substantial changes in socioeconomic, demographic, health and nutritional status. In 2001 the country has become a population billionaire. While growing young population will provide human resource needed for accelerating economic growth and human development, there are concerns about declining sex ratio and growing population of elderly needing care. India has become one of the fastest growing economies in the world, but is still the country with largest number of people living below poverty line.

With globalisation and accelerated economic development there has been rapid changes in dietary intake and lifestyles of the population. While the country is yet to overcome poverty, under-nutrition and communicable diseases, it is increasingly facing problems related to rising prevalence of over-nutrition and associated non-communicable diseases. Even more worrying is the findings from some of the long term follow up studies which suggest that under-nutrition may predispose to later development of over-nutrition and risk of non-communicable diseases. Henceforth the country will have to gear itself to prevent, detect and manage dual nutrition and health burden across all socioeconomic groups.

Nutrition Foundation of India in collaboration with WHO-SEARO organized a Symposium to discuss the ongoing developmental transition and its impact on health and nutritional status of the population. Eminent experts discussed the ongoing developmental transition, its impact on health and nutritional status of the population and suggested ways to combat dual nutrition and health burden. It is hoped that the deliberations from the Symposium will provide useful leads for drawing up effective intervention programmes.

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