

NEWSLETTER



Sri Aurobindo Society

ACPN

AURO CENTRE FOR PUBLIC NUTRITION
PUBLIC HEALTH & PUBLIC POLICY

KNOWLEDGE | ACTION | PUBLIC GOOD

Newsletter January - June 2026

Auro Centre for Public Nutrition, Public Health and Public Policy (ACPN)

A vertical of Sri Aurobindo Society (SAS) Pondicherry. ACPN was established in November 2021.

Sri Aurobindo Society was started by the Mother on 19th September 1960 and is one of the most renowned charities in India and internationally.



*We believe in working among the most deprived sections of society
and the most backward areas of the country*

Marketing VitaPoshan

Marketing without Money!

Our young students continue to be our most effective Marketing Kitty!

Placing VitaPoshan in shops close to schools has resulted in better demand and consumption
Students feel more energetic and active after consuming it.

And they love the new taste of our nutrient dense, fortified VitaPoshan Crisps!



They also enjoy their studies and play much more

Marketing VitaPoshan Yuva to reach students



Shops near schools in Balichakra Village, Yadgir Taluk selling VitaPoshan

Some very encouraging comments from our colleagues

"Strong work and a meaningful model for public health nutrition delivery. What stands out is the combination of affordability, acceptability, and local systems. This is exactly the kind of approach that can be adapted across regions."

"This is a wonderful example of how affordable, nutrient-dense fortified foods can be successfully brought to children. The field reports of children choosing and enjoying it as a tasty alternative to junk food are especially heartening. This case study deserves to be widely shared and adapted so similar efforts can take root across more states in India and even internationally. I salute you for the passion, persistence, and results — our children, our true demographic dividend, are the real winners here."

"This initiative highlights the power of community-driven marketing—creating demand without expensive promotional campaigns. By partnering with local shopkeepers and engaging directly with children, we are building healthy eating habits where they matter most."

**We thank Team BAIF for ordering VitaPoshan
For their Health, Development and Training Projects across different locations**



BAIF Lakkiahalli Gramodaya Training Centre, Tiptur Taluk, Tumkur District

Yadgir District had a very distinguished visitor on June 4, 2026

Hon'ble Union Minister, Finance and Corporate Affairs, Ms. Nirmala Sitaraman

visited Baddepalli Village, Gurmitkal Taluk, for inauguration of Groundnut Oil Processing Unit, Farmer Training Centre and Common Agri Facility Center at Baddepalli Village.

VitaPoshan manufacturing SHG Mailaralingeshvar Mahila SHG Hattikuni showcased VitaPoshan at the District Exhibition.

Hon'ble Minister interacted with the SHG women. She enquired about the ingredients and nutritional content of VitaPoshan and expressed her appreciation. The SHG women feel so motivated

Our grateful thanks to Hon'ble Minister for her encouragement



Our special thanks also to

- Yadgir District authorities
- Ms. Kaveri, Project Director, NRLM
- Team BAIF

Our thanks to Dr G Madhavi Latha,

Chairperson, Centre for Sustainable Technology (CST), Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

for organizing a talk on "Public Health, Public Nutrition and Human Capital"

by Ms Veena S Rao, IAS (Retd)



It was wonderful to see the interest shown by the students and faculty and the very relevant questions asked by them.

We look forward to a very productive relationship with Dr Madhavi and CST for bringing green technology to the most backward areas of our country.

INTERVIEW- POLICY EDGE

Dr Vikash Gautam, Founder of The Policy Edge, interviews Ms Veena S Rao

Interview Highlights

- The importance of investment in Human Capital and Demographic Dividend.
- How intergenerational nutritional status forms the foundational layer of healthy human capital – both cognitive and physical.
- Scientific evidence linking nutritional status of adolescent girls to maternal health, foetal development, early childhood nutritional status and brain development.
- How these early-life conditions, in turn, shape adolescent learning capacity, future skills, earning potential, and the strength of the demographic dividend.
- Restructuring development programmes to address this life-cycle convergence effectively in implementation and creating minimal convergence at household level.

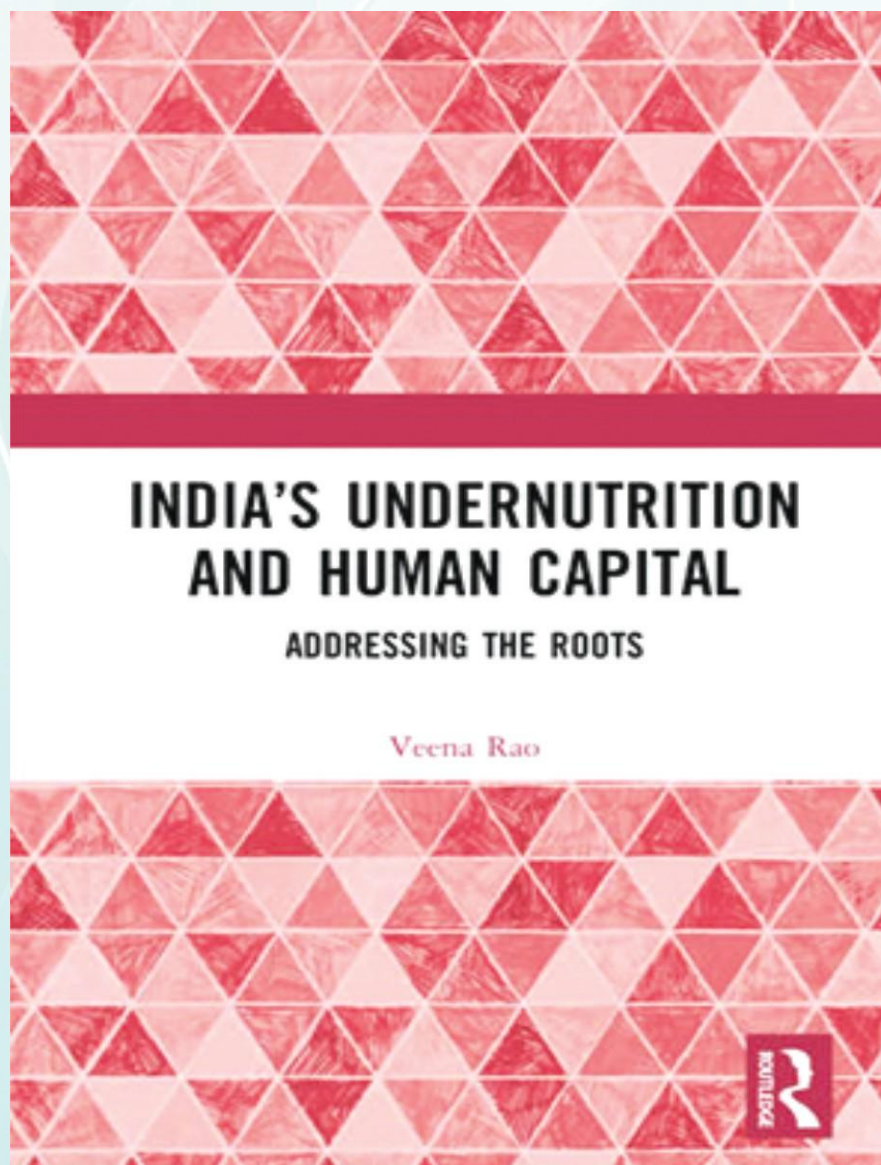
<https://www.policyedge.in/p/interview-with-ms-veena-rao>

Publication

**"India's Undernutrition, Dietary Deficit and Human Capital: Addressing the Roots",
Veena S Rao, February 2026, Routledge**

"Veena Rao's book on India's Under nutrition, Dietary Deficit and Human Capital marshals' impressive evidence to describe the state of under nutrition in India. The book shines when it discusses the efficacy of the multi-pronged approach involving families, community workers, private sector and government sector for nutritional monitoring, food fortification and increasing access to food for the poor and the vulnerable. A go-to book for anyone seeking to understand and address India's under nutrition."

Dr Sonalde Desai, *Professor and Centre Director, National Data Innovation Centre (NCAER NDIC). National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi, Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland College Park, former President. Population Association of America.*



Implementing multi-sectoral interventions to address India's complex inter-generational under nutrition is indeed a very difficult task, as it requires simultaneous interventions covering health and nutrition services, water and sanitation, care providers, and reduction in income poverty. It becomes doubly difficult in India because multiple ministries are involved - health, women and child development, water, sanitation, agriculture, food processing. Veena Rao demonstrates through her practical work and research in India's Under nutrition and Human Capital: Addressing the Roots that implementing multiple sectoral interventions is possible and they have quick, positive impact. Government policy makers must take note."

Dr Santosh Mehrotra, *PhD (Econ) Cambridge, Visiting Professor, Centre for Development Studies, University of Bath, UK, Visiting Senior Fellow, Centre for Economic & Social Studies Hyderabad.*

"Nutrition policy in India has proved consistently unequal to the enormity of the problem. In recent years, it has lost its way in a maze of cosmetic initiatives, even as essential nutrition schemes -from school meals to maternity benefits - were being starved of funds. In this insightful book, Veena Rao presents an inside view of the maze and important pointers to the way forward."

Jean Dreze, *Honorary Professor, Delhi School of Economics*

<https://www.routledge.com/Indias-Undernutrition-and-Human-Capital-Addressing-the-Roots/Rao/p/book/9780367643065>

ANNOUNCEMENT

Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Govt. of India
has recently approved a new innovative, inter-sectoral project
which we believe will positively impact Human Development in Yadgir District.

"Setting up Skill Satellite Centre for providing Vocational Skills and employment
to Women Self Help Groups through Sustainable Technology in Food Processing
and Value Added Farm Produce in Aspirational District Yadgir"

**This unique project will be implemented in collaboration with
Centre for Sustainable Technology, Indian Institute of Science,
Bangalore.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our grateful thanks to

**Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited, (MRPL)
Mangaluru,**

**for their continued support for providing affordable, healthy, nutritious
food to the most backward communities in Karnataka.**

Leadership

Shri Vijay Poddar, Chairman
Dr R Sankar, Advisor Eminent Public Health/Nutrition Expert
Dr Kush Verma, IAS (Retd.) Advisor Public Policy
Ms. Rina Ray, IAS (Retd.) Advisor Education
Dr Nagesh K N, Advisor, Public Health
Dr M N Usha, (Retd.) Professor of Nutrition
Dr Ajit Sabnis, Director, SAS
Shri Kaushal Sharma, CFO, SAS

Our Team

Smt. Veena S Rao,
IAS (Retd.) Director
Shri. M K Nanjunda,
Financial Advisor
Ms. Arti,
Finance Assistant
Ms. Sneha M V,
Project and Research Assistant

CONNECT WITH US

We believe that partnerships can create sustainable
impact for India's most backward communities.
To know more about our work or to partner with us,
write to us at

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Website: <https://publicnutrition.aurosociety.org/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/auro-centre-for-public-nutrition-public-health-and-public-policy/>

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