

# IMPACT4Nutrition

## Using a public–private engagement approach to create a social movement in India

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### Key messages

- > The Government of India has launched a social movement, POSHAN Abhiyaan *jan andolan*, to target malnutrition.
- > IMPACT4Nutrition (I4N) is a unique public–private engagement (PPE) to bring together the diverse private-sector companies interested in contributing to the Government’s social movement.
- > All I4N tools and resources are developed around POSHAN Abhiyaan guidelines, as they target key nutrition behaviors.
- > Promoting nutrition in the workplace is the first priority identified by I4N and partnering companies because workplaces provide repeated interaction with a captive audience in a contained environment that can easily be modified.
- > The I4N platform is already reaching a combined workforce of nearly 100,000 employees and their families.

### A *jan andolan* for nutrition

Malnutrition is a major concern in India. Almost one-third of the country’s children are stunted and over 50 percent of Indian women are anemic. Undernourishment is also the leading cause

of the high mortality rate of children under 5 years of age (39.4 percent of the registered births); it is additionally the leading cause of compromised adult health for those who do survive. When the health status of an individual is inconsistent, their productivity is low. The latest Government of India data indicates that undernourishment is currently responsible for an annual loss in adult incomes of 22 percent and an annual GDP loss of some 11 percent.<sup>1,2</sup>

### “Undernourishment in India is currently responsible for an annual GDP loss of some 11 percent”

According to the Global Nutrition Report,<sup>3</sup> investing in nutrition is the best public health investment one can make: for every US\$1 of investment there is a return of US\$16, as better health leads to better employee retention, a dip in absenteeism and increased productivity. On 8 March 2018, when the Government of India launched a massive drive to tackle malnutrition in the country, it proposed to do so by way of a *jan andolan* (Hindi for social movement). The Government was well aware that its ambitious flagship program, POSHAN Abhiyaan – which aims to improve the nutritional status of children, adolescents, pregnant women and lactating mothers – could not be successful without the active and enthusiastic participation of a large stakeholder base. Right at the outset, the Government released clear guidelines on how it aims to achieve its targets by engaging players from multiple sectors and involving the masses, thereby creating a *jan andolan* for nutrition.

### Public–private engagement: the role of the private sector

In the POSHAN Abhiyaan *jan andolan* guidelines, the Government recognizes the private sector as a major driver for economic growth and its vast reach and scale as an enabler for impactful



The launch of IMPAct4Nutrition, with representatives from the Government, the private sector, institutional and technical partners, and businesses pledging their support for a healthy India

change within its ecosystem. To convene and catalyze this PPE (public-private engagement), I4N was launched by a diverse network of partners including UNICEF, *Sight and Life*, CSRBox, Tata Trusts and the Confederation of Indian Industries. According to Nutrition Connect, “a PPE has the potential to help governments deliver on their targets, harness the power and reach of businesses, and reduce the financial and health burdens that are linked to poor diets. It can only achieve these goals, however, if it is carefully designed, implemented and evaluated.”<sup>4</sup>

I4N was designed by the convening partners to be a brand-agnostic platform that would bring together, under one umbrella, the diverse businesses that are interested in contributing to the good nutrition of all stakeholders in their ecosystem. The platform aims to promote collective responsibility and meaningful exchange between businesses, so they can help build a movement to support POSHAN Abhiyaan. A PPE can take many forms such as a dialogue or a collaboration and for the I4N platform, it took the form of curation of ideas and tools leading to improved workforce nutrition (see **Boxes 1** and **2**).

The Secretariat is the administrative and program hub for the IMPAct4Nutrition platform. The Secretariat, along with the private sector, co-creates, designs and develops a robust knowledge base, prototypes of products, tools and content for nutrition literacy across the ACE card framework. This is used by companies in their ongoing corporate social responsibility initiatives and employee engagement programs. The co-created tools can be further customized according to each company’s unique requirements.

**BOX 1: Public-private engagement in action: How is IMPAct4Nutrition impactful?**

By the IMPAct4Nutrition Secretariat

IMPAct4Nutrition engages with companies in three strategic areas, which are referred to as the **ACE** card:

- > **A**ssets and core business for nutrition
- > **C**ash/**C**orporate social responsibility for nutrition
- > **E**mployee engagement for nutrition

**Government partners**



**Initiative partners**



### Pledged companies



### Why focus on workforce nutrition?

Fifty-eight percent of the world's population will spend one-third of their time at work during their adult life and have at least one meal a day at work.<sup>5</sup> Faced with a malnutrition problem on the scale that we see in India, the I4N convening partners, in accordance with the Government's guidelines, zeroed in on workforce interventions as the central theme of the PPE. As laid out in the 2019 brief, titled "The Evidence for Workforce Nutrition Programmes" released by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN),<sup>6</sup> the workplace – whether in urban or rural settings, high- or low-income contexts, corporate or supply chain businesses – offers unique opportunities to address malnutrition. Employers can play a fundamental role in

## BOX 2: Designing for a *jan andolan*: Creating a public-private engagement brand

By Anne Milan, Design Specialist, *Sight and Life*

**The design challenge:** Creating a cohesive brand identity for a multistakeholder platform.

**The process:** The branding process involved two major steps: (1) understanding the objectives of the platform, and (2) the design process. To understand the core values of the platform, a questionnaire was prepared for the partners. A good branding process helps not only in creating a strong identity but also in aligning the values of the brand internally.

'urgency,' 'community' and 'catalyst.' Translating the notion of the platform being a trusted advisor was key, as was also instilling a feeling of higher purpose in all partners. The graphical representations of 'impact' and 'action' were further developed into a motif for representing the unique selling point, the collaboration. Furthermore, the keywords were used to build the secondary iconography, which provides clarity and simplicity.

#### Mood-board



IMPAct4Nutrition is 'collaborative', it has a certain 'sense of urgency' but also has a feeling of 'goodness' to it. It brings together a wide range of people to 'commit' and to 'act'. It is a 'catalyst'. You may notice the chosen iconography has a lot of 'hands', they signify the 'support', the 'action', the 'impact' and the 'collaborative' nature of this platform. The 'goodness' is hinted by the icon of the heart inside the apple but also is shown by the colors: yellow and orange. These colors also signify the qualities 'urgency', 'good business' and the 'trust' which are central to the platform. A stronger blue is also chosen for signifying 'business'

Collating the keywords and visualizing them (as featured on a page from the pitch document)

After achieving a consensus within the varied team, a creative brief was prepared that provided the framework for the second step, the design process. This step involved visualizing keywords that captured the essence of I4N. Some of them were

#### LOGO

IMPAct for Nutrition

**Components**  
The logo is made up of two components - the word mark and the picture mark. The logo should always appear together.

The picture mark and the word mark together create a unique logo (as featured on a page from the brand identity manual)



Application of the logo on different brand carriers (at the launch event)

© Anne Milan

**The outcomes:** The branding process created a cohesive brand identity that included the logo, the iconography, the colors and the typeface.



An ideation workshop led by IMPAct4Nutrition to engage and support the private sector in order to increase awareness and improve nutrition literacy

their employees' lives by contributing to the improvement of their diets, ideally as part of a broader approach to employee wellbeing and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The brief on "The Evidence for Workforce Nutrition Programmes" goes on to state that there are two reasons why workplaces are such a critical and effective point of intervention:

- > they provide repeated interaction with a captive audience, and
- > they are a contained environment that can easily be modified.

## “The workplace offers unique opportunities to address malnutrition”

In describing what workforce nutrition programs are, the GAIN brief outlines them as a set of interventions that operate through the existing structures of the workplace – whether a corporate office such as Moody's Analytics or a large garment factory such as Arvind Mills, both pledged partners of I4N – “to address fundamental aspects of nutrition among employees or supply chain workers. Ideally, these programs aim to create improved access to, and demand for, safe and nutritious food, with the aim of changing employee behavior around food consumption, and of improving employee health and wellbeing.”<sup>6</sup>

Globally, the four most impactful program areas that are easy to implement alongside other health and wellness program components, according to the GAIN brief, are:

- > healthy food at work,
- > nutrition education,
- > nutrition-focused health checks, and
- > breastfeeding support.

The vision is that by aligning with I4N, the private sector can help co-create tools and resources to support each of these proven programmatic areas, and can ultimately improve the health of their workforces, significantly reducing the burden of malnutrition in India.

### From defining the problem to taking action

With a clear understanding of the transformative proposition of workforce nutrition, I4N quickly realized that there are two key challenges in creating a healthy nutrition environment in the workplace in India: awareness and access. Most of the workers in the country, both blue-collar and white-collar, do not even have a basic understanding of nutrition, so the first step was to create knowledge of the subject. Since the goal of I4N is to catalyze the private sector to support the Government in achieving its POSHAN Abhiyaan targets, the knowledge-creation efforts were anchored around the themes identified by the Government. POSHAN Abhiyaan views nutrition holistically, and as part of the guidelines, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has identified critical and interrelated theme areas. These are both nutrition-specific (e.g., breastfeeding, complementary feeding and anemia reduction) and nutrition-sensitive (e.g., good WASH practices and diarrhea management). All I4N messaging is developed around these guidelines, as they target key nutrition behaviors that have universal applicability across business sectors, employees, customers and suppliers.



A sample of the tools and resources developed by IMPAct4Nutrition to promote workplace nutrition

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**“A common pain point was the lack of simple and actionable nutrition messaging for employees”**

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I4N conducted in-depth ideation sessions with our first-pledger companies, which represent companies across sectors, size, employee demographics and geographical locations. A common pain point that we heard echoed by each of the companies was the lack of simple and actionable nutrition messaging for employees, together with a lack of opportunity for their employees to enact good nutrition behaviors in the workplace.

I4N literature around nutrition, such as the ‘The Ten Commandments of Nutrition – For You and Your Family,’ which demystifies common concepts and urges employees to take the first steps towards good health, was developed to be circulated in the workplace.<sup>7</sup> The Ten Commandments are divided into two segments, one addressing the employee directly and one for the employee’s family and children, thereby tackling all of the POSHAN Abhiyaan goals such as the adequate intake of protein, vitamins and minerals in everyday food, optimal breastfeeding, and the importance of sanitation and immunization. Detailing the importance of each vitamin and mineral for our health, the ‘Nourish Nuggets’ go a step beyond providing basic nutrition information. They make people aware of the individual elements of good health, and they further the goal of creating awareness of micronutrients. They also explain where they are available at affordable prices.

To create easy access to nutrition literacy for employees, I4N has operationalized the ‘Nutrition Kiosk,’ a one-stop nutrition gateway for the workplace.<sup>8</sup> The Nutrition Kiosk can take any shape according to the space and budget of different companies – it may be a single shelf or a full-fledged cart – and will be the single point of access for the workforce, providing all the information and advice they need on good nutrition. From literature such as The Ten Commandments and Nourish Nuggets to health checkups and nutrition counseling, the Nutrition Kiosk can provide any or all of the essential nutritional elements. To ensure that knowledge can be converted into actions, behaviors and practices, the Nutrition Kiosk also contains a range of whole foods, nuts, accompaniments and Government-recommended supplements that employers can provide to their employees either at a subsidized cost or entirely free of charge.

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**“The Nutrition Kiosk will be the single point of access for the workforce, providing all the information and advice they need on good nutrition”**

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Both The Ten Commandments booklet and the Nutrition Kiosk have already been rolled out, and the next I4N product – a recipe book, created especially by MasterChef finalist Sadaf Husain, that contains easy-to-make and cost-effective nutritious recipes from each region of the country – is ready for distribu-

**BOX 3: Bringing IMPAct4Nutrition to life in the workplace**

By the IMPAct4Nutrition Secretariat

One of the companies supporting IMPAct4Nutrition carried out various nutrition literacy sessions and cooking demonstrations using the IMPAct4Nutrition content with their employees and communities in their catchment area. The goal was to educate employees about healthy eating and nutritious recipes. The sessions also covered simple, actionable nutrition messages that promote healthy behaviors and provided tips on how these can be incorporated into everyday diets. Special attention was given to the needs of infants, children, adolescent girls, and pregnant and nursing women. The community members, who call themselves the ‘nutrition companions,’ took an oath to return to their respective communities and disseminate their learnings through similar sessions.



Community and workplace engagement within companies that have pledged to support IMPAct4Nutrition

Other activities organized by companies included quizzes, rallies and nutrition talks in schools. The companies also started a ‘Let’s Talk Nutrition’ series by releasing an internal memo for their employees. One company launched a project in partnership with Byju’s (an online learning app) that resulted in 16 Government schools in Bangalore receiving their first personalized tablets, which include nutrition content to promote nutrition literacy among students and teachers.



IMPAct4Nutrition pledged partner Arvind Mills conducts a Nutrition Awareness Session at the Tribal Girls' Hostel in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to impart knowledge to young minds on nutrition, healthy eating and ways to improve their choices about the foods they consume



Employee newsletter on nutrition literacy circulated by a company supporting IMPAct4Nutrition

tion as well. The idea of ‘Nutritious Recipes for the Workplace’ is to make nutrition easy and fun for employees who have little time to invest in their personal health. Companies can also give this book to their canteen chefs, who can easily adapt universal Indian foods such as *idli*, chicken curry and *khichdi* into the more nutritious versions in the book (see Box 3).

**Looking ahead**

In continued efforts to create awareness of, and access to, good nutrition at the workplace, I4N is now working on co-creating more literature to raise the profile of key aspects of good health. Our next set of priorities also includes coming up with a robust monitoring dashboard to track private-sector progress against POSHAN Abhiyaan goals.

In nine short months, 19 big companies have already pledged to actively spread the message of good nutrition and health at the workplace. The I4N platform is already reaching a combined workforce of nearly 100,000 employees and their families in India, and has taken the first steps towards mobilizing the *jan andolan* for nutrition that the country so desperately needs.

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**Note:** *This is the first article in the IMPAct4Nutrition series. In the next edition of the Sight and Life magazine, you can read more about how IMPAct4Nutrition is mobilizing companies' corporate social responsibility budgets towards increased nutrition programming.*

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