

Tiny fish tackle malnutrition in India

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WorldFish's an innovative school feeding pilot in Assam, India. The project added powdered small fish to school meals, helping tackle child malnutrition using locally available aquatic foods.

The pilot reached more than 3,000 children across 98 schools and Anganwadi centres. The powder, made from small indigenous fish species, was blended into daily meals of rice and lentils. Rich in vitamin A, iron, and zinc, these fish offer a sustainable way to fill critical nutrient gaps in children's diets.

"The results speak for themselves in terms of the absolute, positive leaps we've taken in our fight against malnutrition." - Keerthi Jalli, IAS, Commissioner, Panchayat & Rural Development, Government of Assam.

Supported by the Government of India through the Prime Minister's Matsya Sampada Yojana, the programme responds to a stark challenge. In Assam, 35 per cent of children are stunted and 33 per cent are underweight. By drawing on a simple, familiar ingredient, the initiative provides a cost-effective, scalable nutrition solution.

The work builds on decades of WorldFish research into the role of small fish in combating hidden hunger. Similar approaches are being tested in Zambia, Timor-Leste, and Myanmar.