Cynically it is unfortunate that the "hunger" problem in India is not primarily one of mass starvation which would attract international attention but rather one of widespread state of malnutrition which has been so common for years that it leaves the International community indifferent. Even today, when India has made notable progress in many field of economic growth, 53% of the children are moderately and severely malnourished and close to 2 million children die every year before completing one year. And many of these deaths would be avoidable should enough food and nutrition/health education made available to the poorest household.

Contrary to many emergency situations, there is no dispute here whether we need to provide a 1900 or 2100 kcal food basket. The poorest 30% of Indian household i.e. 300 million people still have food consumption levels well below acceptable level with only 1680 calories per day per capita available in the best scenario. When you can provide a supplement of 600 kcal for a whole family per day, it is already a remarkable achievement.

The condition of the scheduled caste and tribal families in backward areas appears far worse than some of the conditions seen in refugee camps. An Indian rural child from these families eats only twice a day at the best time of the year suffers from several episodes of diarrhea per year and is not being given adequate care. No doubt that in these areas there is also a very high infant mortality rate. It is a very sad picture that next to the splendors that India can offer, million of children are prone to suffer from low potential of physical and mental capacity because they did not receive the proper nutrition they had the right to have at the start of their life. No future for them and worse no hope. Money and assistance is just not available for them. Programmes to assist women and children in remote areas (which unfortunately still fall under the label of "development project") have seen their resource drastically cut in the recent years mainly due to the fact that donors are allocating their money to highly visible and political emergency operations.

Having worked on the "emergency" side for 6 years, I feel now frustrated about this dichotomy of so called emergency situation and development where you have so much difficulty in raising interest of the donors and even awareness and support from your own headquarter! The need is enormous in some of the poorest states of India but also the potential of having effective intervention is there with highly motivated community and competent staff. In giving some hope you could do so much for mothers and children in India whom are responsive and understand the need to fight to change their situation. But unless, there is no drastic response from the International Community, children in India will continue to suffer and die silently.