There are six questions in this part. Answer all questions.

1. Define the term community nutrition. Explain the various components of community nutrition.

**Ans:** Community nutrition incorporates the study of nutrition and the promotion of good health through food and nutrient intake in populations. This article will consider aspects of community nutrition relating to dietary goals and recommendations for populations; methods of assessing diet in population groups; and promoting healthy eating at the community level.

Community nutrition (public health nutrition) requires a population approach. The community rather than the individual is the focus of interest. This area of nutrition focuses on the promotion of good health and the primary prevention of diet-related illness. The emphasis is on maintenance of health in the whole population, although it will also include working with high-risk groups and other subgroups within the population. Community nutrition includes nutritional surveillance; epidemiological studies of diet; and also the development, implementation, and evaluation of dietary recommendations and goals. A community may be any group of individuals, for example, the population of a town or country, or the residents of an old people’s home.

Community nutrition consists of three distinct components. They are:

A) Community Diagnosis
b) Developing an Action Plan
C) Evaluation of Action

A. Community Diagnosis

It is important to remember that food, nutrition and health problems are combined to diagnose the causative factors. These three problems are interlinked and the root causative factors may be common and interrelated with one another. Let us understand this with an example. If diarrhoea presently occur among a group of children in a community due to improper source of drinking water it might lead to malabsorption of nutrients in the body. As a result, any nutritional deficiency like anaemia or night blindness might set in. Poor dietary situation might further aggravate the condition. Thus the problem is initially health and then lead to nutritional later. The root causative factor may be common to more than one of the three problems.

Some of the causative factors are educational, social, economic, cultural, agricultural, health, etc. These factors are detailed here for your understanding.

Educational

Lack of awareness about foods and nutrition, child care, hygiene and sanitation and their relation to nutritional health status.

Social,

Living conditions are unhygienic, over crowded and insanitary. Mothers and children overburdened with work in the farm and at home.

Economic

Poor agricultural yield and low economic conditions.

Cultural

Undesirable traditions or religious beliefs which affect diet, attitudes towards practices such as child spacing and so on.

Agricultural

Nonavailability of certain foods.

Health

Lack of awareness about safe drinking water source, common illness, malnutrition.

B. Developing an Action Plan

Information collected with the help of community will help to identify chief problems and suggest causes for the problem. Thus it helps us understand some of the problems and needs of the people in the community and help to plan suitable actions to overcome these problems.

The chief problems like food shortages, malnutrition and anaemia and the factors involved, can be identified through this process. After collecting this information, we could meet with the people and discuss it. Meeting and discussions with individuals or groups are useful for helping people look closely at the reasons for problems. They need to understand why problems do or do not occur so that they will be able to choose the best actions to take to solve their problems. People in the community, other community workers and health staff at clinics/health/hospitals are examples of some of these people with whom we will discuss the problems.

It is evident that problems often have several causes. Hence, the community must decide on different actions to take in solving them. Deciding on which actions to take will depend on the kind of problem, its causes and the reasons behind the behaviors which cause it. Working out an action plan will involve:

- understanding and stating clearly what you want to achieve
- deciding on the activities and materials you will need
- identifying the people you will need
- giving jobs or tasks to people
- planning the whole plan into a time frame which shows when the activities will start and end.

C. Evaluation of Action