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ASIA/INDIA - Malnourished children at risk because of very poor sanitary conditions throughout the Country

New Delhi (Agenzia Fides) - Children who live in unhealthy areas, with very poor sanitary conditions, in particular in places where there is a high rate of population, use outdoor spaces for their physiological needs, get sick easily. Surprisingly, a child who grows in India is much more likely to be malnourished compared to one of the poorest Countries on the planet such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Somalia. Rickets affects 65 million Indian children under 5 years of age, including one-third of children who belong to the richest families in the Country. According to RICE Institute, most people do not use latrines, particularly in India. The limited availability of toilets in the Country also involves huge risks for girls to be raped because they are forced to use open-air bathrooms. However, according to another survey carried out on approximately 23 thousand Indians who live in the north showed that even among those who have bathrooms, over 40% said that at least one family member prefers open spaces. Public campaigns are necessary, in schools and in the media, to explain the health benefits and the economic costs arising from the use of toilets and better sanitation. Researchers found that only a quarter of rural households have realized that washing hands helps prevent diarrhea. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 31/07/2014)

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