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SHASTRI BHAVAN  
NEW DELHI-110 115

D.O. No. 13-2/2013 MDM 2-1

Dated: 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2013

Dear *Sh. Devan Choudhary*,

I write this to convey the findings of the Fifth Joint Review Mission on the Mid Day Meal Scheme that visited Delhi State from April 22-30, 2013, through a Team comprising of the representatives from Government of India, State Government of Delhi, representative of Hon'ble Supreme Court Commissioner Office, and Monitoring Institute for Delhi. During the visit, the Team covered 32 schools in the districts of East Delhi, New Delhi, South Delhi, Central Delhi, West Delhi and south west Delhi and presented its report to the State Government on May, 1<sup>st</sup> 2013.

1. The mission was appreciative of the fact the hot cooked mid-day meal was served to all the children on all the working days.
2. The major findings/recommendations of the Review Mission on the basis of field visit in the selected districts are as under :
  - I. The findings reveals the disturbing reality that out of the total sample of 498 school children, 51.6 % were malnourished i.e. they had lower than normal body fatness as judged by BMI for age index (WHO, 2007). This classification further indicated that 54.3 % boys (n=132) and 48.9 % girls (n=125) were malnourished.
  - II. The students were generally satisfied with the quality and quantity of the mid day meal. They, however, expressed a particular liking for Rice-Rajma, Rice-Kadhi, and puri-aloo subzi. The most disliked menu is halwa-chana, majority of the students suggested replacing halwa-chana with Rice-Rajma or vegetable pulao.
  - III. The mission recommends that two sets of 10-12 day cyclic nutritionally balanced menu needs to be developed according to seasonal availability of foods. Since it was observed that the meals were nutritionally not balanced and while some of the meals were providing adequate amount of carbohydrates and fats, they were lacking in proteins, vitamins and minerals.
  - IV. Recipes for quantity food production of each dish should be standardized. Such standardized recipes should be provided to each NGO/ kitchen supervisor.
  - V. Portion size of each dish to be served to primary and upper primary students should be standardized. The size of the serving ladle should be standardized and such ladles should be provided to each school.
  - VI. There is a need to encourage the use of iron, calcium and vitamin 'A' rich vegetables. Easy availability, accessibility and incorporation of such



(preferably) seasonal vegetables should be facilitated by the state. Use of seasonal low cost unconventional foods should be promoted. Home Science colleges may be involved for developing and popularizing such recipes.

- VII. The quality of food grains available at few kitchens was satisfactory. However, the new centralized kitchens (started working since 1.4.2013) had not received the food grains from FCI by the time of visit of JRM.
- VIII. It has been recommended by the mission that all the centralized kitchens must follow the principles of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) to ensure that compromised quality food products are not prepared/ served; and that food borne health hazards do not occur. Insulated transportation vans/ Insulated containers should be used by the food suppliers so that food temperature can be maintained above 70°C which would minimize the risk of microbial contamination during the transportation and storage period; the danger zone being between 5 °C to 63 °C.
- IX. The primary (bulk) containers should preferably be sterilized before packing the food. This would minimize the risk of food infections/ outbreaks, especially during the rainy season and the summer. Insect and fly trappers must be installed near all doors and windows of the kitchen. All windows and doors should have wire mesh. Over use/ abuse of oil during frying should be avoided
- X. All individuals and food handlers associated with midday meal scheme must wash their hands before and after handling the food. Periodic health checkups of the food handlers should be made mandatory.
- XI. The MME funds had yet not been released to the MCD and DCB schools. It was noted that most of the schools surveyed were not maintaining record of the food received from the supplier or any other necessary details; and the requisite information was not being fed in to the MIS system on a daily basis.
- XII. The performance of the State on the data entry work of MDM MIS Web Portal was found to be an area of concern The State should take immediate remedial measures to ensure timely feeding of data in to the portal. To ensure timely data entry MME funds can be utilised and data entry can be out sourced as is the case in Bihar.
- XIII. It has been observed that designated Cook-cum-Helpers are not there at school level for the distribution of MDM. The State may assign the responsibility of engaging the approved number of cook-cum-helpers for cooking and serving the mid-day meals to children as per the norms under MDMS to the respective NGOs. Distribution of food to the beneficiaries should be the responsibility of the service providers i.e. mid day meal kitchen employees. The role of school authorities should be of supervisory level.
- XIV. Nearly all schools surveyed had the SSA logo along with the necessary information but the MDM logo was either missing or not displayed at a prominent place.
- XV. If there is sufficient space, the school(s) may be provided funds to set up the kitchens. This will facilitate serving of food at optimum temperature to the children without undergoing the problems associated with the transportation/ storage of food.
- XVI. One, Nutrition and Food Safety Officer (NFSO) must be appointed/ engaged in each district who should further be assisted by Deputy Nutrition and Food Safety Officers (DNFSO). Counseling of students on social issues as well as moral, nutrition and health education shall be carried out by these officers.

- They would also conduct training programmes for kitchen personnel involved with the preparation of mid day meals.
- XVII. Capacity building of all the stakeholders at every level is required for effective implementation of the MDMS. A module for school teachers on roles and responsibilities of teachers under MDM may be included in the training curriculum of the teachers under SSA highlighting the nutritional and health needs of the children.
- XVIII. Inspection is an important component for smooth implementation of the Scheme at the grass root level. Regular inspection has been made mandatory by the State Government by different District level officials. Effective monitoring mechanism should be developed by the State Govt. to ensure periodic inspection of the scheme by officials at all levels. Inspecting Officers should record their observations on the implementation of the Scheme.
- XIX. Provisions of Social and Community Audits should be made by the government to evaluate the implementation of programme and to identify gaps, with the involvement of SMC members. The process should begin with capacity building of the concerned persons for the purpose. The experience of Andhra Pradesh is instructive in this regard.

On the whole, the Mid Day Meal Scheme has made strident improvements in the physiological, social and mental well-being of our school children; and it is expected to continue doing so for our future generations with greater efficiency and much better impact.

I Shall appreciate if early action is taken on the observation/findings of the JRM and an ATN sent to us.

With regards

Yours sincerely,



(Amarjit Singh)

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