EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF MONITORING WORK OF MDM DRAFT REPORT OF THE FIVE DISTRICTS OF HARYANA

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1. AVAILABILITY OF FOOD GRAINS

- During the visit of the Monitoring Institute (MI) in the selected 200 sample schools of five districts, it was found that buffer stock of food grains for at least one month was available in all the sample schools of Karnal, Bhiwani, Kaithal, Sonipat & 13 schools of Babain & Shahabad block of Kurukshetra district. Centralized Kitchen of Kurukshetra catering to sample schools of Thanesar, Ladwa & Pehowa block also had the availability of buffer stock of food grains for one month.
- School authorities of all the schools of 5 districts visited by MI reported that food grains were delivered in the schools in time by the lifting agency during the period of monitoring, except for two schools of Karnal and one school of Kaithal district. In such cases, Heads of the schools & Self-Help Groups involved in MDM managed the procurement of food grains from godown at their own level whenever it was not delivered to the school. Though the chances of such a situation seemed rare.
- Quality of food grains was reported good in all the sample schools where the meals were being cooked and served in the school of all the five districts except for four schools of Sonipat district.
- It was also reported that food grains were released to schools after adjusting the unspent balance of the food grains in the school except 5 schools of Kaithal, 5 schools of Karnal & 1 school of Sonipat.

2. TIMELY RELEASE OF FUNDS

- In all the sample schools of five districts visited by the MI, it was found that funds were being received at the school level regularly and there was no delay in releasing the funds either at state/ district or Block level except for a minor delay in three schools of Kaithal district.
- KGBV Rajaund which is run and maintained under special scheme did not receive funds for time (from 20.7.14 to 19.11.14).

3. AVAILABILITY OF COOKING COST

- During the visit of the MI in the selected sample schools of five districts, it was observed that all the schools monitored of Bhiwani, Karnal, Kaithal, Kurukshetra, & Sonipat districts, where meals were being prepared with in the school, were receiving cooking cost in time except for a brief delay in three schools of Kaithal district. This

could probably be attributed to logistic reasons. In such cases, it was reported that SMCs pool in their resources to serve meals to the children.

- Cooking cost was being received by the school from the department through bank. No disruption in the serving of meals to children was reported, due to non availability of cooking cost by any school for the period of monitoring except for KGBV, Rajaund where meals were not served.

4. AVAILABILITY OF COOK-CUM-HELPER

- Cook-cum-helpers in all the schools were engaged by the concerned department and SMC/SHG had also taken to initiave to engage them.
- It was found that cooks-cum-helpers were available as per Govt. norms in all the 200 sample schools of five districts monitored.
- An honorarium of Rs. 2500 is being paid to cook-cum-helpers either through cheque/ cash or in some cases it is also transferred to their account. The state of Haryana has increased its share of honourarium to be paid to cook-cum-helpers from Rs. 400/- per month to Rs. 1750/- w.e.f. 1.1.2014.
- Interaction with cook cum helpers indicated that from the period of monitoring, they had been receiving remuneration regularly but 18 schools of Karnal & 1 schools of Sonipat district informed that at times they would receive the honorarium with a gap of two months also.
- Different sections of the society were well represented so far as Social Composition of cooks cum helpers engaged in 200 sample schools of five districts is concerned in this regard the following was observed by MI:

	SC/ST	OBC	Minority	General	Total
Bhiwani:	35	33	3	23	94
Kaithal:	46	37	1	16	100
Karnal:	38	47	3	27	115
Kurukshetra:	25	30	------	11	66
Sonipat:	18	37	3	31	89

- It was observed that training in terms of good practices of cooking and hygiene was provided to cook-cum –helpers in all of the sample schools.
- After visiting the sample schools MI was informed by the school official that cook-cum-helpers engaged in the sample schools of five districts had under gone health check-ups. But 36 schools of Bhiwani, 14 schools of Kaithal, & 16 schools of Sonipat district could not confirm the same for the period of monitoring.

5. REGULARITY OF SERVING MEAL

- It was observed that in all the schools of five districts visited by MI, hot cooked meals were being served daily. No interruption was reported in this regard during the monitoring period except for KGBV, Rajaund.

6. QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF MEAL

- Children in all the sample schools monitored by the monitoring team, seemed satisfied with the quality and quantity of meal being served to them though to a variable degree. It was observed that children were free to ask for second serving or smaller servings if they desired to do so.
- Adequate quantity of pulses was being used in the meals served to children and also sufficient quantity of seasonal vegetables was being used though not necessarily green leafy ones. Use of fortified salt was prevalent in cooking the meal. Overall there appeared to be good acceptance of the type of meals being served to the children.
- It was observed that school officials make effort to adjust the menu in accordance with the way that would be well accepted by the children. Though standard gadgets were available but over a period of time cooks had also come to devise their own method of measure based on experience.

7. VARIETY OF MENU

- In all the 200 sample schools it was reported that SMC members collectively decide the menu for the week as per suggested guidelines of the education department,
- Only recommended food groups are displayed and not the menu and that too near the kitchen of the school.
- Everyday different menu is served and more or less the same pattern is followed depending upon the season. Meals served to the children include locally available ingredients and are well accepted by the children. Serving of recommended food groups leads one to believe that nutritional requirements are being met by the meals served to them.

8. DISPLAY OF INFORMATION/LOGO UNDER RTE ACT,2009 at the SCHOOL LEVEL at PROMINANAT PLACE

- In all the schools, where meals are being cooked in the school, information related to the quantity and the date on which the food grains are received, balance quantity of food grains utilized; other ingredients purchased and number of children given MDM on a day was maintained in the register but not displayed at any place.
- Menu in terms of recommended food groups is displayed near the kitchen space.
- Sample schools had displayed the MDM logo in the school near the kitchen but not necessarily on the outside wall of the school. Those schools who had not displayed MDM logo at any place in the school during the period of monitoring claimed that

they were in the process of getting the logo made as funds had been received in the school for the same.

9. TRENDS

Enrolment

Sr. no	Detail	Bhiwani	Kaithal	Karnal	Kurukshetra	Sonipat
i.	Enrolment (40 schools)	6357	9867	10411	6670	6992
ii.	No. of children present on the day of the visit	5164 (81.23%)	7984 (80.92%)	7833 (75.23%)	5591 (83.82%)	5469 (78.22%)
iii.	No. of children availing MDM as per MDM Register	5164	7984	7833	5591	5469

It was observed that in terms of availing the features of MDM, 75%-85% of the children enrolled in the 200 sample schools of five districts were availing.

10. SOCIAL EQUITY

- In all the 200 sample schools visited it was informed that children were asked to line up for getting the meals as per the turn of their class and would sit in line on Tat-patti or darri. Schools with greater number of students had longer breaks in order to serve meals to all the children in an orderly manner. It was also found that in schools with limited space, children would collect the meal and form small group of their friends and eat.
- It is hearting to note that MI did not observe any kind of discrimination with regard to gender /caste or community so far as cooking and serving of food or seating arrangement was concerned.

11. CONVERGENCE WITH OTHER SCHEMES

- All the schools claimed to be aware of the common goals of SSA and MDM and attempted to implement the same. Every effort is being made to implement the MDM scheme in a manner that is aimed at achieving the objectives of SSA in terms of enrolment as well as retention of children in the schools. Kitchen sheds cum stores & toilet were being provided to the school under SSA.
- In convergence with School Health Program it was observed that health check-ups were being done on yearly/ half-yearly basis.

- Basic first aid kits were available in the schools. It was also observed that micronutrients were administered to children from time to time.
- Health cards were maintained in all the sample schools visited by the MI except nine schools of Bhiwani, one school of Karnal and 16 schools of Sonipat.
- MI informed that health check-ups were done on yearly/ half yearly basis in all the sample schools except three schools of Karnal and six schools of Sonipat district.
- All through potable water was reported to be available in all the sample school of five districts but evidence with regard to its convergence with drinking water & sanitation program was missing.

12. INFRASTRUCTURE

Kitchen Shed-cum-Store : Kitchen-cum-Store, where as available were constructed under SSA.

Sr.no	Details	Bhiwani	Kaithal	Karnal	Kurukshetra	Sonipat
i.	Constructed and in Use	30	34	28	25	32
ii.	Consteucted but Not in use	0	2	0	0	0
iii.	Under-Construction	3	2	0	2	2
iv.	Sanctioned but not started	1	1	1	2	2
v.	Not Sanctioned	6	1	12	11	4

- **Hygeinic conditions & Ventilation:** Kitchen-cum stores wherever available were reasonably away from the class rooms and properly ventilated with adequate hygienic conditions in most of the school. Sample schools are using firewood and LPG both depending upon the availability & needs of the individual schools.
- **Kitchen Devices:** It was found that sufficient cooking & serving utensils were available in all the schools of five districts. Eating plates were also available (though not in adequate number) in all the sample schools monitored except seven schools of Karnal.
- **Storage-Bins:** All the schools had the availability of storage bins but clear evidence in terms of its procurement was not forthcoming.
- **Toilets:** All the sample schools being observed have adequate separate toilets for both boys and girls. However attention needs to be paid in terms of making the existing facilities more user friendly.
- **Fire-extinguisher:** It was found that fire-extinguishers were available in all the sample schools of five districts except 4 schools of Bhiwani, 13 schools of Kaithal, 4 schools of Karnal, 4 schools of Kurukshetra & 6 schools of Sonipat district did not have the same.

13. SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Children are encouraged to wash hands before and after eating but schools need to improve upon in providing the needed number of taps and drainage in order to inculcate this habit. In most of the schools it was observed that children were taking meals in an orderly manner.
- Officials of the Sample schools claimed that due care was being taken to conserve the water in the schools. Commendable effort was being put up in this direction by seven schools of Bhiwani & four schools of Karnal district, whereas in rest of the schools it was found to be just average.
- In all the sample schools, where the meals were being cooked, the arrangement of cooking process and storage of fuel was safe and did not pose any fire hazard.

14. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- All the sample schools visited by the MI reported fair participation of Parents / SMC / VEC / Panchayats / Urban bodies in daily supervision and monitoring of MDM scheme except one school of Bhiwani, three schools of Kaithal, 10 schools of Karnal district.
- Evidence of a formal roaster regarding participation of community members being maintained in the school for supervision of MDM was hard to establish in most of the school.
- Almost all the schools reported that details of school activities and facts related to MDM tasks are shared with the community members. Invariably such a sharing of information takes place during Parvesh Utsav.
- On an average, meetings of SMCs are held once every month in all the schools. Almost in all the meetings issues related to MDM are discussed except in the meetings that are specifically convened for some other purpose.

15. INSPECTION & SUPERVISION

- Inspection registers were available in most of the sample schools except 11 schools of Kaithal, 16 schools of Karnal & 3 schools of Kurukshetra did not have any Inspection register.
- During the monitoring period none of the sample schools (except 28 schools of Kaithal) received any grant under MME but 28 sample schools of Kaithal district had received funds under MME components.
- It was reported that State / District / Block level officers / officials often inspect Mid Day Meals in the school. The frequency of such inspection in the schools varied to the extent of being monthly, quarterly, and half yearly. In some cases surprise inspection were also done. It was found that Bhiwani district has established an effective system of regular monitoring and supervision involving regular interaction

with teachers & parents in order to create awareness about importance of hygiene and nutrition.

16. IMPACT

- All the schools claimed that Mid Day Meal scheme had improved the enrollment, attendance, retention of children of the area in the schools.
- Absence of any discrimination of gender and caste in case of cooking ,serving and eating can be seen as an indication of improved social harmony in all the sample schools of the five districts visited by the MI.
- It can be concluded that consumption of nutritious food being served to the children would invariably improve the nutritional status of the children but clear evidence confirming the same could not be ascertained.
- Knowledge of good practice is a first step to be oriented towards practicing the same. In this context it can be said that awareness of the children about importance of hygiene and nutritious food groups promotes good eating habits and eating meals together with peers enhances social interaction.

17. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

- No formal mechanism of grievance redressal existed at the school level. However department officials informed that such a mechanism existed at the district level. There is a toll free number available at the state level but schools were ignorant about the same.

18. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE MONITORING INSTITUTE

- During the period of monitoring it was observed that concerted efforts are being put in by the state of Haryana in the direction of the effective implementation of the Mid Day Meal Scheme. Efforts involve providing of needed physical as well as material resources. Food by its very nature has physiological, sociological and psychological functions and reaping its full benefits requires sensitization of stake holders, which is a gradual process.
- Absence of any kind of discrimination of caste and creed with regard to either serving or eating of meals is a satisfying indicator of our moving towards a harmonious society. Mid Day meal scheme has the potential of orienting the children towards the need of good nutrition and hygienic habits. For this purpose there is a need to provide for adequate clean eating spaces and hand washing facilities along with insistence on using the same.
- Pattern of cooking, serving and consumption of food is greatly influenced by the socio-economic background of the individual In this direction efforts could be initiated to create awareness among children of impressionable age about the physiological benefits of consuming nutritional benefits. Sensitizing the individuals

about the need of cooking food under hygienic conditions and serving food with a personal touch of care can go a long way in nurturing the emotional faculties of children. Not just insistence on washing hands before eating meals but also ensuring water, soap and towels for the same is essential for inculcating good habits of hygiene and sanitation. Such components can easily be included in the day today teaching learning process.

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