

F.No.12-2/2014 MDM 2-1
Government of India
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education & Literacy
MDM Division

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated 22nd April, 2014

Subject: Minutes of the meeting of Empowered Committee for Mid Day Meal Scheme held on 04.02.2014 at New Delhi.

The meeting of Empowered Committee meeting held on 04.02.2014 at Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Human Resource & Development to review the implementation of the MDM Scheme and to suggest policy measures for improving its implementation.

2. A copy of the minutes of the above meeting is enclosed herewith.


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Distribution:

- i) Shri Kolusu Pardhasarathi, Minister for School Education, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
- ii) Shri P.K. Shahi, Education Minister, Govt. of Bihar
- iii) Shri Kali Charan Saraf, Hon'ble Minister, Education (Primary, Secondary and Higher Education) , Sanskrit Education, Technical Education, Govt. of Rajasthan
- iv) Dr. R. C. Laloo, Deputy Chief Minister, Department of Education, Govt. of Meghalaya
- v) Director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad
- vi) Director, Nutrition Foundation of India, New Delhi
- vii) Director, Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute, New Delhi
- viii) Representative of UNICEF (Ms. Urmila Sarkar, Chief, Education)
- ix) Shri N.C. Saxena, Ex-Secretary, Planning Commission, Commissioner Food Security, Office of Supreme Court Commissioner
- x) Prof. Shantha Sinha, Ex-Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
- xi) Ms. Tulasi Munda, Adivasi Vikas Samiti, Serenda, Odisha
- xii) Shri Biraj Patanaik, Principal Advisor to Office of Supreme Court Commissioner on Food Security
- xiii) Shri Haleem Khan, Ex-Chairman, MP Madarsa Board, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- xiv) Ms. Annie Namala, Centre for Inclusive, New Delhi

- xv) Dr. Sheetal Amte, Baba Amte Foundation, Anand Van, Chandrapur, Maharashtra
- xvi) Ms. Bharati Ghanshyam, representative of Akshay Patra Foundation, Bangalore
- xvii) Shri Subhash Naik, representative of NAIK Foundation, Bhiwandi Road, Thane
- xviii) Ms. Leena Joseph, Naandi Foundation, Hyderabad
- xix) Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy, MHRD
- xx) Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development
- xxi) Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- xxii) Secretary, Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs
- xxiii) Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development
- xxiv) Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- xxv) Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- xxvi) Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
- xxvii) Secretary, Ministry of Minority Affairs
- xxviii) Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- xxix) Chief Executive Director, Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)
- xxx) Additional Secretary (EE.I), Department of School Education & Literacy, MHRD.

Copy to:

- i) PS to HRM
- ii) PS to MoS(JP)
- iii) PS to MoS(ST)
- iv) PPS to Secretary (SE&L)
- v) PPS to AS (EE.I)

Government of India
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education and Literacy
Mid-Day Meal Division

Minutes of the meeting of Empowered Committee for Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS)
held on 4th February, 2014 at Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi

The meeting of the Empowered Committee for Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was held on 4th February, 2014 at 03:00 p.m. under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India to review the implementation of the MDMS and to suggest policy measures for improving its implementation. The list of participants is enclosed as Annexure - I.

2. Secretary (SE&L) welcomed the members of the Committee and other participants. He requested Dr. Amarjit Singh, Additional Secretary (EE.I) to take agenda items for the detailed deliberations.

3. The following issue were discussed: --

3.1 Safe storage and proper supply of quality ingredients to schools

Additional Secretary (EE.I) mentioned that the pace of construction of Kitchen-cum-Stores by the States is not satisfactory. For instance, construction work is yet to start in 91% of the sanctioned kitchen-cum-stores in Andhra Pradesh, 67% in Kerala, 62% in Manipur, 49% both in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, 36% in Jharkhand, 31% in Haryana, 27% in Uttarakhand and 21% in Bihar. The delay in the construction of kitchen cum store deprives the schools from cooking of mid-day meal under safe and hygienic conditions.

Shri P.K. Shahi Education Minister (Bihar) mentioned that the central assistance @ Rs.60,000/- for construction of Kitchen cum store sanctioned during 2006-07 to 2009 (before November, 2009) is too inadequate. He further informed that delay in the construction of kitchen-cum-stores also occurred due to non-availability of land in the schools. In the meanwhile the cost of construction has increased manifold and the States need additional central assistance to meet the cost overrun.

Additional Secretary (EE.I) clarified that MHRD started providing central assistance for construction of kitchen-cum-stores on plinth area norms as per the Schedule of Rates approved by the Technical Authorities viz. PWD, PHED etc. with effect from November, 2009. The States should meet additional expenditure from their own resources for the construction of kitchen-cum-stores sanctioned at unit cost norms @ Rs.60,000/- in a time bound manner so that the food grains etc. are stored properly in the kitchen-cum-stores in moisture free conditions in storage bins.

3.2 Cooking Cost

The cooking cost @ Rs. 3.34 and Rs.5.00 per child per day for primary and upper primary schools respectively is shared between the Center and the States in the ratio of 75:25 except NER States where this sharing is in the ratio of 90:10.

Shri P.K. Shahi Education Minister Bihar mentioned that the Cooking Cost is very less for providing quality food with required nutrition. He suggested that the cooking cost may be increased from its existing rates.

Additional Secretary (EE-I) informed that the cooking cost is being increased @ 7.5% every year since 2010-11 to meet the increased cost of items in the MDM basket. Some States are providing milk, seasonal fruits to the children from their own resources. Bihar may also contribute additional funds from State Share for improving the quality of mid-day meal.

3.3 Honorarium to Cook-cum-Helpers

Shri P. K. Shahi, Education Minister (Bihar) mentioned that honorarium to cook-cum-helper @Rs.1000/- per month is very meager. This is not even one third of the wages under Minimum Wages Act. The CCH should be paid honorarium at least at par with Minimum Wages Act.

Dr. Shashi Tharoor, MoS, MHRD clarified that cook-cum-helpers (CCH) are engaged on part time basis in the schools. Therefore, they are not covered under the Minimum Wages Act. But some States viz. Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Haryana, Mizoram, Puducherry, Punjab etc. are contributing additional funds from State/UT resources towards the payment of honorarium to CCH. Hon'ble HRM suggested that Bihar may also contribute additional funds from State resources for paying additional honorarium to CCH over and above the State share. But Education Minister, Bihar mentioned that State does not have resources to pay for the additional amount over and above minimum State share for the payment of honorarium to CCH. Secretary (SE&L) informed that a proposal to increase the honorarium of CCH from Rs.1000/- per month to Rs.2000/- per month for 12 months in a year instead of existing period of 10 months, is already under consideration of the Government of India.

3.4 Lack of Management Structure for Mid-Day Meal Scheme

Additional Secretary (EE.I) mentioned that most of the States do not have dedicated manpower at State, District and Block levels for monitoring the scheme. Joint Review Mission (JRM) Teams have also observed that few states like Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal etc. have established proper management structure. These JRMs have also recommended effective Management Structure at State, District and Block levels. The role and responsibilities of functionaries should be clearly defined for rigorous monitoring of the Scheme.

The Committee was informed that smaller States were not in a position to set up Management structure exclusively for mid-day meal scheme because of very meager allocation of MME funds. It was suggested that the MME allocation may be increased.

Additional Secretary (EE.I) informed the participants of Empowered Committee that a proposal for enhancing the MME from its existing limit of 2% of the total cost of recurring central assistance is under the consideration of the Government.

3.5 Monitoring of the Scheme

MDM Guidelines prescribe well established monitoring mechanism at National, State, District and Block levels.

At National Level, the scheme is being monitored by the National Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee headed by Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy, New Delhi. The Committee oversees the implementation of the scheme and also takes policy decisions regarding its implementation. The meetings of NSMC are held once in six months.

The implementation of the scheme at State level is monitored by State Level Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary of the State. This Committee is expected to hold its meetings once in a quarter.

MHRD has very recently issued instructions for constitution of District Vigilance & Monitoring Committee (DVMC) under the chairmanship of senior most Member of Parliament / Member of Parliament, if a district has more than one MP.

Shri R. C. Laloo, Deputy Chief Minister, Meghalaya, informed that most of North Eastern States have one Member of Parliament. So it becomes very difficult to seek his convenience for holding meetings of DVMC for all the districts. To this, Shri Laloo was informed that meetings of DVMC may be held as per the convenience of the Hon'ble Member of Parliament.

3.6 Capacity Building of Stake-holders

Cook-cum-helpers are the back bone of the mid-day meal scheme, but most of them are not adequately aware of the art of preparing variety mid-day meal with required nutrition. Therefore, they are provided training through the Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), Food Craft Institutes of Hotel Management, Food & Nutrition Department of the Universities etc. Training module for CCHs has been developed by MHRD in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism and reputed NGOs (Akshaya Patra & Naik Foundations etc.) for covering Personal Hygiene; Sourcing of ingredients, and pre-processing; Storage and Handling of food; Cooking and Serving of food; Safety and Hygiene of food; Quality check of cooked food – sensory evaluation; Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability Awareness; Planning for enhancing quality of MDM; Awareness about the basic steps in case of any medical emergency etc.

Dr. A. Laxmaiah, Senior Deputy Director, National Institute of Nutrition, ICMR, Hyderabad also endorsed the need for proper management structure and capacity building of the CCH.

3.7 Tasting of the meal

Additional Secretary (EE.I) mentioned that MDM guidelines have been reiterated to all State Governments to ensure that mid-day meal is tasted by two to three persons before it is served to the children. One of them should be teacher in-charge of MDM and other Cook-cum-helper or members of SMC on a rotational basis. The members of community, PTA may also be encouraged to taste the MDM and sign the Taste register to be maintained in each school.

Shri P.K. Shahi, Education Minister (Bihar) informed that teacher is supervising the Mid-Day Meal but he is not interested in tasting mid-day meal because teachers are involved in many other teaching and learning activities viz. Booth Level Organizer, Election Duty, Teacher Training etc.

Additional Secretary (EE.I) informed the Bihar Education Minister that MDM Guidelines envisage that teacher shall supervise preparation of meals and its serving in an orderly manner amongst children without any discrimination.

3.8 Hand washing by children

Additional Secretary (EE.I) mentioned that improper hygiene is a major source of infections amongst the children. Therefore, MDM Guideline encourage hand washing by Children before and after taking mid-day meal. The States have been advised time and again to promote hand washing with soap.

Mamta Bora Thakkar, Wash Specialist, UNICEF and Dr. P. K. Prabhakar Dy. Commissioner, Child Health Ministry of Health & Family Welfare mentioned that many States are already promoting this activity.

3.9 Testing of food samples by reputed institute

Additional Secretary (EE.I) informed the Committee that guidelines have been issued to all States/UTs to get the food samples tested from Laboratories recognized by National Accreditation Board for laboratories, Central Scientific and Industrial Research (Central Food Technology Research Institutes), National Food Safety and Standards Authority of India etc.

3.10 Emergency Medical Plan

All the States/UTs have been advised to prepare Contingency Plan for any emergency arising out of any untoward incident in the school. The contact numbers of Doctor(s) of Primary Health Center / Chief Medical Officer of the District Hospital, Fire Brigade

Police etc. should be painted at a prominent place in the school for use during emergency. The schools must have first aid boxes, Do & Don'ts during emergency.

Dr. P. K. Prabhakar, Deputy Commissioner (Child Health), MoHFW, GoI informed that Toll Free Number-108 has been installed for Nationwide Emergency or Ambulance Services. He further suggested that the States/UTs may give wide publicity of this number to all the Districts / Blocks / Schools etc.

3.11 Mechanism for convergence with various Ministries

Joint Review Missions, Monitoring Institutes etc. have recommended that convergence with other Ministries/Departments is necessary for smooth implementation of the Scheme. Chief Secretaries of the States should hold regular meetings of the State Level Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee with the line departments for the smooth implementation of the scheme in convergence with other Departments.

4. Other Issues raised by the Members during the meeting

The following other issues were also raised by various members during the meeting:

- (a) Ms. Leena Joseph, NAANDI Foundation, Hyderabad desired to know about the Scope of Centralized Kitchens.

It was clarified that in urban areas, where there is a space constraint for setting up school kitchens in individual schools, the MDM Guidelines provide that a Centralized Kitchen could be set up for a cluster of schools where cooking can take place and cooked hot meal may be transported under hygienic conditions through reliable transport systems to various schools. Operation of these Centralized Kitchens may be entrusted to reputed NGOs under the Public Private Partnership model. The Guidelines further state that NGOs with a local presence and familiarity with the needs and culture of the State be selected.

At present, more than 90 lakh children (about 10%) are being fed by NGOs/Centralized Kitchen across the country. Some States/UTs have engaged NGOs for serving meals to the children in schools located in rural areas also. This is against the provision of the MDM Guidelines. Therefore, it is proposed to request the States/UTs to assess the need for engagement of NGOs in the light of the MDM Guidelines.

- (b) Shri P.K. Shahi, Education Minister, Bihar mentioned that Fire Wood is very costly and so is the LPG. He desired to know as to how this issue can be sorted out.

It was clarified that MHRD is reimbursing the additional expenditure incurred by the States/UTs on the procurement of unsubsidized LPG cylinders on sharing basis with the States/UTs.

(c) Promoting Accountability and Transparency

- i) **Social Audit:** The Ministry has conducted social audit of the Scheme on pilot basis in two districts viz. Chittoor and Khammam of Andhra Pradesh during 2012-13. The findings have been very useful for enhancing the effectiveness of the Scheme. It has been decided to extend social audit to 9 other States (viz. Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh & Bihar) during the current year. All the States/UTs are advised to engage reputed Institutes in their State for carrying out such an audit in their respective States and take corrective steps as per the findings of the social audit.
- ii) **Management Information System (MDM-MIS):** Department of School Education & Literacy has developed a web enabled MDM-MIS portal for Mid-Day Meal Scheme in collaboration with NIC to monitor the Scheme on real time basis. The States/UTs have completed Annual Data Entry for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme portal for 10.70 lakh schools (94%) during 2013-14 and Monthly Data Entry for 73% of schools for the month of June, 2013 and 65% for the month of September, 2013.
- iii) **Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS):** IVRS is to be integrated with MDM-MIS for real time monitoring of the scheme on a daily basis.
- iv) **Community Participation:** Community participation is the key to the successful implementation of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme as it ensures effective monitoring at the local level and also generates a sense of ownership of the program in the community. The parents whose children are studying in the school are the members of the School Management Committees. They monitor the scheme on a day to day basis and also see whether their children are getting the quality meal as per prescribed food norms. They are also encouraged to taste the food on the date of their visit to the school.
- v) **Independent Monitoring:** The implementation of the Scheme is rigorously monitored through 41 independent Monitoring Institutes like IIT Chennai, XLRI Jamshedpur and Viswa Bharati etc. The NSMC has recommended to carry out a baseline study on MDMS with the help of IIPS and NIN.

It is relevant to mention that Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute, Delhi has been assigned to carry out a pilot study in Faizabad district, Uttar Pradesh to ensure the effective implementation of the scheme and the draft report is expected to be submitted by June, 2014.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

List of participants

1. Dr. M. Pallum Raju, Hon'ble Minister, MHRD, Govt. of India
2. Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State, MHRD, Govt. of India
3. Shri Jitin Prasada, Minister of State, MHRD, Govt. of India
4. Shri P. K. Shahi, Education Minister Bihar.
5. Shri R. C. Laloo, Deputy Chief Minister Education, Meghalaya.
6. Shri R. Bhattacharya, Secretary, SE&L, MHRD, Govt. of India
7. Shri N. C. Saxena, Food Commissioner, Supreme Court of India.
8. Prof. Shantha Sinha, Ex-Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
9. Dr. Amarjit Singh, Additional Secretary (EE.I), MHRD, Govt. of India
10. Shari Ashok Pai, Joint Secretary, M/o Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India.
11. Shri Deepak Kumar, Joint Secretary, Department of Food.
12. Shri Haleem Khan, Ex-Chairman, M.P., Madarsa Board, M.P.
13. Shri Gaya Prasad, Director, Mid Day Meal, MHRD, Govt. of India
14. Ms. Leena Joseph, NAANDI, Hyderabad - 34.
15. Ms. Sunita Bhasin, Director, Swami Shivananda Memorial Institute (SSMI), Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026.
16. Dr. A. Laxmaiah, Sr. Deputy Director, National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), ICMR, Hyderabad.
17. Ms. Prema Ramachandran, Director, Nutrition Foundation of India, Delhi.
18. Ms. Bharti Ghanshayam, Director, Govt. relations & Staff Initiatives, Akshaya Patra Foundations, Bangalore.
19. Dr. Meenakshi, Singh, Scientist, FSSAI, Delhi.
20. Dr. P. K. Prabhakar, Deputy Commissioner (Child Health) M/o H&FW, Govt. of India.
21. Shri G. Balasubrananian, Deputy Advisor (PHE), Govt. of India.
22. Shri B. D. Shivani, Dy. Secretary, MHRD, Govt. of India
23. Ms. Mamta Bora Thakkar, WASH specialist, UNICEF, 73, Lodi Estate, New Delhi.
24. Ms. Anita Tandon, Education Specialist, UNICEF 73, Lodi Estate, New Delhi.
25. Dr. Suparna S. Pachouri, Director, Department of SE&L, MHRD, Govt. of India
26. Ms. Shilpa Raina, UNICEF.
27. Dr. J.H.Panwal, Joint Technical Advisor, Food & Nutrition Board, M/o W&CD, Govt. of India.
28. Shri O. P. Dani, CGM, FCI, Govt. of India.
29. Shri Anuraag Gupta, GM (Sales) FCI, Govt. of India.
30. Shri Badri Narain, Director (MDM), Rajasthan.
31. Shri R. Lakshmanan, Director (MDM) Bihar.
32. Shri Akash Deep, Nodal Officer, MDM and Additional Secretary Education, Govt. of Meghalaya.
33. Shri Harshit Midhva, SRO, Planning Commission.
34. Dr. Pitam Singh, Joint Advisor (HRD) Planning Commission.
35. Ms. C. V. Savada, Under Secretary, MOPR.