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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
SHASTRI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI-110 115

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D.O. No. 7-13/2011-EE.6

Dear Colleagues,

Thanks to your efforts, 10.54 crore children were provided hot cooked meals during 2011-12 as against 10.46 children during 2010-11. While these efforts are appreciated, we have to strive for even higher achievement during 2012-13 and ensure that no child attending the school is left hungry. Currently we cover only around 72% of the enrolled children.

I am enclosing herewith an analysis of the implementation of MDMS for the year 2011-12 based upon the Annual Work Plan & Budget, 2012-13 and 4th Quarterly Progress Report (QPR) of 2011-12. This brings out the critical issues that are required to be addressed with a sense of urgency – a meal lost by a child is lost forever. We also need to constantly refine the MDMS and improve its effectiveness. The following issues need your immediate personal attention:

i) Coverage of children against enrolment:

A major goal of MDMS as you are aware, is to provide mid-day meal to each and every child in the eligible schools to enhance enrolment and retention for universal Elementary Education in the Country. At the national level 72% of the enrolled children have been covered under Mid-day-Meal Scheme on an average basis. The States/UTs of Haryana & Arunachal Pradesh (98%), Lakshadweep (97%), Nagaland (95%), Karnataka & Himachal Pradesh (94%), Goa (93%), Mizoram & Sikkim (91%), Puducherry & Kerala (90%) have reported more than 90% coverage. On the other hand the MDMS coverage in the States / UTs of Bihar (43%), Chandigarh (51%), Uttar Pradesh (57%), Jharkhand (58%), J&K (60%), Gujarat (66%), and Delhi (68%) is below the National Average and leaves a lot to be desired. This also shows that the resources allocated under the scheme have not been fully utilized in these States (**Annexure-I**).

Though there is marginal increase during 2011-12 in the number of children availing of MDM against that of 2010-11, the comparison of data on coverage of children during 2010-11 and 2011-12 reveals that the States of West Bengal (26.76 lakh), Uttar Pradesh (2.96 lakh), Maharashtra (2.4 lakh), Gujarat (2.3 lakh), Assam (1.77 lakh), and Haryana



मध्याह्न भोजन योजना
Mid Day Meal Scheme

(1.1 lakh), have shown significant increase from the previous year. The coverage has gone down in States of Bihar (10 lakh), Andhra Pradesh (6.4 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (5.7 lakh), Odisha (3.9 lakh), and Tamilnadu (1.4 lakh).

Keeping in view the performance of the States, the Programme Approval Board (PAB) of Mid Day Meal Scheme has kept the overall target for 2012-13 at 10.96 crore as against the enrolment of 14.6 crore children. As such there is a wide gap between enrolment of children and the coverage under MDMS. Therefore, to bridge this gap special steps need to be taken by the low performing States to bring their coverage at least up to the National level of 72% achieved during 2011-12.

ii) Coverage of working days:

The guidelines for MDMS provide that mid-day meal should be served to all children attending school on each working day. At the national level the coverage of working days under MDMS has increased to 218 days during 2011-12 from 215 working days in 2010-11. The States/UTs of Uttarakhand (246 days), Jharkhand (245 days), Himachal Pradesh (240 days), and Chandigarh (236 days) have served mid-day meal on more than 235 working days, whereas, Assam (178 days), Bihar (184 days), Kerala (187 days), J&K (192 days), Puducherry (201 days), Delhi & Meghalaya (204 days), and Mizoram (206 days), Maharashtra and D&N Haveli (210 days), Manipur (211 days), Sikkim (215 days), have covered less than the National average of 218 working days during 2011-12. **(Annexure II)**

iii) Utilisation of foodgrains and cooking cost:

The Scheme aims to provide 450 and 700 calories of energy for primary and upper primary students respectively. To facilitate this, the scheme provides for 100 grams of foodgrains for primary and 150 grams for upper primary students every day. In addition cooking cost is provided at the rate of Rs 2.89 and Rs 4.33 for primary and upper primary students respectively to add nutrition value to foodgrains by way of pulses; vegetables as well as oil and fat.

Ideally the consumption of food grains and utilisation of cooking cost should match with each other. The analysis of the data **(Annexure III)** shows that there is a mis-match of 2% at the National level in the utilisation of foodgrains (85%) and utilisation of cooking cost (87%). However, there is a wide gap between the consumption of food grains and utilisation of cooking cost in various States/UTs. While, the utilisation of cooking cost is higher as compared to food grains consumption in the States/UTs of Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Mizoram, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana and Tripura, it is vice-versa in the States/ UTs of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Sikkim, Puducherry and Gujarat.

In the States/UTs of Chandigarh, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, West Bengal, Gujarat, Assam, Haryana, Kerala, Puducherry, and Delhi the consumption of food grains is less

than the national average of 85% (**Annexure-IV**). Likewise utilization of cooking cost in the States/UTs of Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Puducherry, Manipur, West Bengal, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, Kerala, Delhi and Odisha is less than the national average of 88% (**Annexure-V**). This is ironical; on the one hand the children in these States suffer from debilitating, malnutrition and anaemia, on the other hand available resources under MDM scheme are being utilised sub-optimally. Moreover, the lack of synchronisation between utilisation of food grains and cooking cost also reflects a lack of focus, effective monitoring and/or reliability of the figures.

iv) Lifting of food grains and utilization of transportation assistance

Like utilisation of cooking cost and foodgrains, utilisation of transportation assistance and lifting of foodgrains should also match with each other. The analysis of the data on lifting of food grains and the utilization of transportation assistance shows that at the National level lifting of food grains is 80% and the utilisation of transportation assistance is 83%. State wise analysis of utilisation of transportation assistance reveals that while the States/UTs of Mizoram (200%), Gujarat (184%), Haryana (175%), Sikkim (125%), Tripura (114%), Maharashtra (104%), and Uttarakhand (103%) have utilised more than the allocated transportation assistance grant, the States/UTs of Jammu & Kashmir, Lakshadweep and A & N Islands have not shown any expenditure towards transportation assistance (**Annexure VI**). The lifting of food grain is less than the national average of 80% in the States/UTs of Lakshadweep, Bihar, Chandigarh, Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, Puducherry, Manipur, Gujarat and Assam (**Annexure VII**). This needs to be looked into.

v) Payment to Food Corporation of India (FCI) as on 31.1.2012

The position relating to payments of bills to FCI is needs to be improved further; out of the total bills raised by FCI upto 31st March, 2012 amounting to Rs. 130889.50 lakh, an amount of Rs. 115049.12 lakh only has been paid. An amount of Rs. 15840.38 lakh is still pending for payments to be made to FCI by various States/ UTs. More than 20% bills are pending in the States of Nagaland (32%), Karnataka (31%), Bihar (30%), Maharashtra (29%), and Andhra Pradesh (21%). The pendency against the remaining States ranges from 2% to 41% (**Annexure-VIII**).

vi) Construction of Kitchen-cum-Store

Provision of infrastructure facilities such as kitchen-cum-store is an essential component for proper implementation of the MDM scheme for supply of healthy, hygienic and hot cooked meal to the children and also safe storage of food grains at the school level. The Government of India has sanctioned 9,55,473 units of kitchen sheds for schools up to 2011-12. So far the States/UTs have constructed only 5,60,546 units (59%).

The pace of construction of kitchen–cum-store is very slow and needs urgent attention in the States / UTs of Andhra Pradesh (4%), Kerala (13%), Jharkhand (32%), Mizoram (26%) , Maharashtra (27%), Tamil Nadu (30%), Meghalaya (32%), Haryana (35%), Uttarakhand (38%), Manipur (38%), Jammu & Kashmir (40%), and Odisha (48%) etc., where less than half of the sanctioned schools have constructed kitchen cum stores (**Annexure-IX**). The States / UTs are requested to work out a plan for completion of the construction of all the kitchen-cum-stores during 2012-13.

vii) Engagement of cook-cum-helpers

Under the component of cook-cum-helper, 2472362 (92%) cook-cum-helpers have been engaged during 2011-12 against the approval of 2699388. 19 States/ UTs have engaged 100% cook-cum-helper as approved by PAB. In the States of Punjab (70%), Goa (73%) and Kerala (69%) the engagement of cook-cum-helpers is still less than 75% (**Annexure X**). State/UT governments are requested to engage the cook-cum-helpers as per the requirement of the children in the schools and the MDM norms and avoid wastage of precious teaching and learning time.

The national average of utilisation of funds for honorarium to cook-cum-helpers during the financial year 2011-12 is 81%. It is commendable that various States and UTs have shown remarkable improvement in this component and 23 states and UTs are above the national average of 81% in utilisation of funds for honorarium to cook-cum-helpers. In States/UTs of West Bengal (80%), Madhya Pradesh (73%), Rajasthan (72%), Punjab (71%), Jammu & Kashmir (65%), Maharashtra (63%), Arunachal Pradesh (60%), Uttar Pradesh (59%) and Andaman Nicobar (40%) utilisation of funds for honorarium to cook-cum-helpers is below the national average of 81%. The State/UTs of Delhi, Lakshwadeep and Goa have not reported any information regarding engagement of cook-cum helpers and payment of honorarium to them (**Annexure-X**). During State visits and in the PAB meetings it has been observed that payment of honorarium to cook-cum-helpers is delayed in many States from 2 to 6 months resulting in hardship to them. We need to ensure, necessary arrangements for timely payment of honorarium to the cook-cum-helpers to keep them incentivised and motivated.

viii) Utilisation of MME

Monitoring is an integral part of implementation of the MDM scheme and utilisation of MME fund shows the performance of the States/UTs in monitoring of the MDMS. The total allocation of MME fund for the financial year 2011-12 was Rs. 18838.79 lakhs, against which Rs. 15641.59 lakhs (83%) has been utilized by all the States/UTs. It is reflected from the QPR analysis that 7 states viz. Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Mizoram, Daman & Diu, Chandigarh and Uttarakhand have utilized 100% of their allotted fund for MME. However, the analysis of the QPR (**Annexure-XI**) also shows that the utilisation of MME fund is nil in States namely Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshdweep and Goa. Utilization of MME fund is less than 60% in some States/UTs viz.

Puducherry (56%), Manipur (54%), Andhra Pradesh (51%), Chattisgarh (49%), Madhya Pradesh (46%), Delhi (24%) and Kerala (4%).

Low utilisation of MME fund indicates poor monitoring of the programme and therefore poor health of implementation of the programme and need for a proper and comprehensive MME plan. These State/UTs are requested to make more efforts for strengthening the monitoring mechanisms, training of MDM functionaries, display of MDM logo and publicity for proper implementation of the scheme.

Analysis of QPR reveals that in 11 States/UTs have shown good performance in inspection of schools by State/District/Block officials. In States/ UTs of Goa, Delhi, Lakshadweep and Punjab, all the schools have been inspected on an average three times during the financial year 2011-12. The institution inspection performance is very poor for three North Eastern States viz. Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur. In the States/ UTs of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Chandigarh, Bihar, Haryana, Kerala and Meghalaya half of the schools covered under MDMS are not inspected during this financial year (**Annexure XII**). These State/ UT Governments are advised to put more emphasis on inspection of MDMS in school level for better implementation. States/UTs can utilise MME funds for setting up of monitoring / inspection mechanism at district level.

ix) State Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee (SSMC) Meeting:

SSMC, headed by Chief Secretary is an apex body at the State/UT level for guiding, monitoring and implementation of the scheme and convergence with other departments like Finance, Food & Civil Supplies, Health etc. at State/UT level. The meetings of SSMC at regular intervals are necessary to review the Scheme and suggest policy measures and ensure smooth flow of funds for effective implementation of the programme. QPR analysis shows that only 41 SSMC meetings have been held in all the States/ UTs during the financial year 2011- 12 against the norm of 120 meetings.

Haryana, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Chandigarh have convened 3 SSMC meetings during the financial year 2011-12. In the States/ UTs of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Punjab, Tripura, West Bengal and Daman & Diu, 2 SSMC meetings each has been convened whereas Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Lakshadweep has convened one SSMC meeting each during the financial year 2011-12. Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Puducherry have not convened any SSMC meeting during the financial year 2011-12. (**Annexure XIII**).

The States / UTs are advised to convene SSMC meetings once in a quarter with prior intimation to Government of India, allowing us time to send our representative in the

meeting. Representative of respective monitoring institution should also be invited to attend these meetings and present their findings before the Chairperson of the SSMC.

x) School Health Programme:

The nutritional support under the Mid Day Meal scheme is complemented by health check-ups and distribution of micronutrients to the children, in convergence with National Rural Health Mission. In addition distribution of Iron Folic Acid, De-worming tablets and Vitamin A, regular health checkup of school children is supposed to be carried out at least twice a year. While the status of coverage of children under School Health Programme is satisfactory in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chattishgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Puducherry, Daman & Diu (**Annexure-XIV**), in the States/ UTs of Meghalaya, West Bengal, Sikkim the performance of School Health Programme is unsatisfactory. These States need to focus on this component. On a conservative estimate, India has almost 8 million children out of school; studies have shown that 18% of these children are out of school as they can't see and their refractive errors need to be corrected. In the States of Bihar, Chattisgarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab the programme of distribution of spectacles has performed well during the financial year 2011-12. Similarly, other illnesses and disabilities keep children out of school are also responsible for dropout/absenteeism. The States/UTs who have not yet started this programme or whose performance is not satisfactory may kindly make special efforts to implement the School Health Programme on a priority basis.

xi) Availability of Gas based cooking and Drinking Water:

Gas based cooking in the schools is important from environmental perspective. All the States/UTs are encouraged to introduce gas based cooking in schools wherever possible. The States/ UTs where more than 60% schools are using Gas for MDM cooking are Himachal Pradesh (86%), Karnataka (72%), Nagaland (80%), Punjab (84%), Tripura (62%), Uttar Pradesh (74%) and Dadra & Nagar Haveli (99%).(**Annexure- XV**)

The facility of drinking water is available in 100% schools in only 6 States/UTs namely Tamilnadu, Odisha, A&N Islands, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. In the remaining States/UTs where drinking water is not available to all the children; efforts need to be made by the State Governments to ensure the availability of safe drinking water in all the schools as well as to inculcate hygienic habits like washing hands and eating in clean utensils. Children suffer from water borne diseases namely diarrhoea, due to supply of contaminated water, therefore the remaining states need to focus on this issue.

xii) Submission of Information:

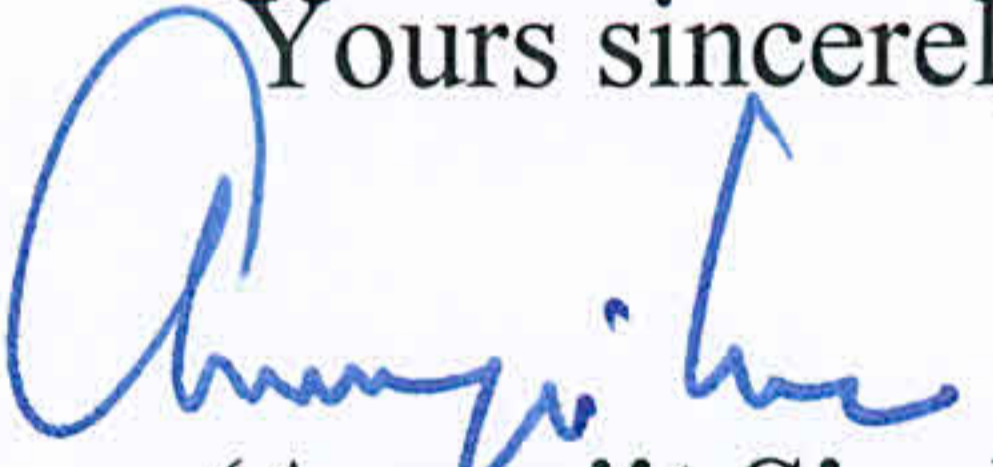
Timely submission of information like QPR, MPR etc. helps in monitoring and taking appropriate action in time for proper implementation of the scheme. The States/UTs are

requested to submit the QPRs, MPRs and other information within the prescribed time line, to enable us to review the information and take corrective action wherever required. We received QPRs for the 4th Quarter in time from 7 States/UTs. The 4th QPR was delayed by 1 day to 10 days in respect of 10 States/UTs. 13 States/UTs have submitted 4th QPR with delay of 10 to 30 days. 5 States/UTs have submitted the 4th QPR after more than 30 days. **(Annexure XVI)**

I shall appreciate if appropriate action is taken at your level to address these issues. Similarly, the delay in payment to FCI and payment of honorarium to cook-cum-helpers is due to the delayed release of funds at the State level. The states may kindly look in to the matter and ensure timely release of funds.

During 2012-13 we will be spending Rs. 11937crore of public funds on the programme, not including the contribution of the states. A little effort on your part will ensure that no child remains hungry at school! We owe it to the people of India! We are all privileged to be involved in this noble mission – God's very own work!

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Amarjit Singh)

To,

Principal Secretaries / Secretaries of all the States / UTs implementing Mid Day Meal Scheme