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मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय
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नई दिल्ली - 110 115
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
SHASTRI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI-110 115

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Dear

I am happy to share with you the analysis of the 1st quarter of the year 2011-12 for Mid Day Meal Scheme. Thanks to your efforts, more than 10.40 crore children are being provided hot cooked meals in 12.17 lakh schools in the country. Many independent evaluations have reported that MDMS has helped in preventing classroom hunger; promoting school participation and fostering social equality and enhancing gender equity. An extremely positive development has been that the gap of 21.59 percentage points recorded between male and female literacy rates in 2001 Census has been reduced to 16.68 percentage points in 2011. While the overall literacy rate has increased by 9.81 percent, it has improved by 11.84 percent in the case of females. MDMS teams can take some credit for this!

The following issues merit your attention to further refine the MDMS and improve its effectiveness.

i) Coverage of children against enrolment

The objective of the MDMS is to provide mid-day meal to each and every child in the eligible schools to promote enrolment and retention so as to universalise Elementary Education in the Country. At the national level 69% of the enrolled children have been covered under Mid Day Meal scheme on an average basis. The States / UTs of Haryana & Puducherry (98%), Lakshdweep (97%), Arunachal Pradesh (96%), Sikkim (94%), Himachal Pradesh (93%), Karnataka & Kerala (91%) have reported more than 90% MDMS beneficiaries. On the other hand the MDMS coverage in the States / UTs of Bihar (45%), Chandigarh (52%), Jammu and Kashmir (57%), Delhi and Tamilnadu (58%), Uttar Pradesh (59%), Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand (60%) is below the national level and shows that the resources allocated under the scheme are not being fully utilized in these States (**Annexure-1**).

ii) Utilisation of food grains and cooking cost:

The utilisation of food grains and cooking cost at national level is 13% of the allocation for the 1st QPR. Andhra Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Sikkim have not reported any expenditure under the head of cooking cost despite have utilized



the food grains. In the States / UTs of Lakshadweep (6%), Madhya Pradesh and D & N Haveli (7%), Kerala (8%), Maharashtra (9%), Delhi (10%), A&N Islands and Daman & Diu (11%) the utilization of food grains is even below the national average (13%). This clearly shows that the recommended dietary allowance of 100 grams and 150 grams of food grains for primary and upper primary students every day is not available to the school children. Similarly, in more than 11 States viz. Sikkim and Andhra Pradesh (0%), Delhi (3%) A & N Island and Mizoram (7%), Kerala (8%), Maharashtra (9%) Orissa, Punjab, Puducherry and Assam (12%), there is a considerable underutilisation of the cooking cost; showing that the students in these States are deprived of the nutritious component of pulses and green vegetables in their meals (**Annexure-2&3**). This is ironical; the MDM benefits do not reach a large proportion of children especially in the states such as Orissa and Assam where a majority of the children suffer from debilitating malnutrition and anaemia. This reflects a lack of effective monitoring and to an extent insensitivity to childhood hunger.

iii) Lifting of food grains and utilization of transportation assistance

Further 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 12%, however the utilization of transportation assistance is 9% in the country during first quarter. Lakshadweep, Delhi, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, A&N Islands, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Goa, Assam and Andhra Pradesh have reported nil utilization under this head, whereas Puducherry and J&K (1%), Bihar (4%), Arunachal Pradesh (6%), Jharkhand, Maharashtra (8%) and Kerala (9%) have shown some utilization of funds (**Annexure – 4&5**). The States/UTs are requested to make regular payments to lifting agencies to ensure timely supply of food grains to the implementing agencies.

iv) Payment of cost of food grains to FCI

In order to ensure timely payment of cost of food grains to FCI, the MDMS authorizes the districts to make payment to FCI directly in respect of the food grains lifted by them. The analysis of the payment of cost of food grains to FCI reveals that Rs 318 crores is still due to be paid to FCI for supply of food grains. States like Bihar and UP owe FCI more than 50 crores, Maharashtra owes Rs 39 crores, Rajasthan and Jharkhand owe more than Rs 20 crores while States like Orissa, AP and Gujarat and Karnataka owe FCI more than Rs 10 crores! All the states/UTs, are requested to take urgent action to liquidate the outstanding payment to FCI. FCI is a commercial organisation and it pays interest to banks for the funds availed of by it due to delayed payment of its dues. Due to the huge delay in payments to FCI, their officials are currently insisting on advance payment for supply of food grains; which may lead to further interruption in serving MDM in schools (**Annexure-6**). Ironically, the states that have huge over dues to FCI are not eligible any additional release of funds due to poor expenditure. If payments to FCI are promptly made and reflected in their MPRs, the states would become eligible for release of the second instalment under the MDMS.

v) Engagement of cook-cum-helpers

As against an approval of 26,99,388 cook-cum-helpers, 23,26,986 (86%) cook-cum-helpers have been engaged during 2011-12. The States/UTs of Uttar Pradesh (7%),

Kerala (69%), Chattisgarh (81%), Madhya Pradesh (82%), Chandigarh and J &K (83%) have engaged less cook cum helpers than the PAB approval. It is pertinent to mention that the States/UTs should engage cook cum helpers as per their requirement in line with the guidelines, to avoid the involvement of the teachers and children in cooking and serving of MDM and avoid wastage of precious teaching and learning time (**Annexure-7**).

West Bengal, Tripura, Sikkim, Punjab, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have not paid honorarium to Cook cum Helpers. This is a serious issue and these States/UTs are requested to take immediate action to pay the outstanding dues. They should institute mechanisms to ensure timely payments to cook-cum-helpers on an ongoing basis.

vi) Construction of kitchen-cum-stores

Government of India has sanctioned 8,78,833 kitchen-cum-stores during 2006-2010-11. Out of which, 5,05,552 kitchen-cum-stores (58%) have been constructed till now, while 1,20,334 kitchen-cum-stores were in progress. Construction is yet to start in one-third of sanctioned kitchen-cum-stores. There is only 5% progress noticed in the construction of kitchen-cum-stores during the first quarter when compared to the last financial year progress. In majority of the States, the progress was below 50% of the sanctioned kitchen-cum-stores, which is a matter of grave concern. (**Annexure-8**). Among all the States, Andhra Pradesh (6%), Kerala (13%) and Maharashtra (24%) have shown very low performance in the construction of kitchen-cum-stores. The State Governments are requested to speed up the construction of the kitchen-cum-stores in the schools to avoid inconvenience in the implementation of the MDMS at the school level and also to ensure a safe and hygienic environment for cooking MDM in the schools. It is relevant to mention that as per mandate of the RTE Act, 2009 all schools must have kitchen-cum-stores by 2012-13.

The States / UTs are also requested to submit the proposals along with budget provision in their State budget for remaining kitchen-cum-stores that are still required as per plinth area norms and State Schedule of Rates prevalent in the States to enable this Department to process the proposals for release of funds during 2011-12. There is however, an inbuilt provision under SarvaShikshaAbhiyan to construct kitchen-cum-stores in the new schools; therefore, it may be ensured that the proposal does not include new schools.

vii) Procurement of kitchen Devices

Government of India has sanctioned kitchen devices to 11,31,527 schools during 2006-2010-11, out of which 90% (10,18,898) of the schools in the country have procured kitchen devices for cooking of MDM. In 5% schools, kitchen devices are not yet procured, and procurement is in progress for 5% of sanctioned kitchen devices. In States like Bihar, Rajasthan, Kerala nearly one-fourth of the schools are in the process of procurement of kitchen devices. 53% of the schools in Maharashtra have not yet started the procurement of the kitchen devices, followed by Mizoram (47%), Assam (43%) and Arunachal Pradesh (40%) (**Annexure-9**). The concerned State Governments are requested to speed up the procurement of the kitchen devices in the schools to avoid inconvenience in the implementation of MDMS at the school level.

The States / UTs Governments are also requested to submit proposals for procurement of kitchen devices for remaining schools to enable this Department to release the Central Assistance during the current financial year.

viii) School Health Programme:

A healthy mind they say resides in a healthy body. The Mid Day Meal provides a platform to the children to develop healthy habits like washing hands before and after eating. In convergence with National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) regular health check-ups of school children are supposed to be carried out at least twice a year. In addition distribution of Iron Folic Acid (IFA), and De-worming tablets and Vitamin A has to be undertaken for the school children, as per the schedule of the Department of Health. The State/UTs are supposed to ensure implementation of this programme in convergence with the state health department. While the status of coverage of children under School Health Programme is satisfactory in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. It leaves a lot to be desired in remaining States/UTs (**Annexure-10**).

ix) Drinking Water:

It is the responsibility of the State Government to ensure availability of safe drinking water in every school. However, due to non-availability of safe drinking water, children particularly from rural India suffer from water borne diseases viz. diarrhoea etc.

The facility of drinking water is available in 100% schools in only 7 States/UTs viz. Karnataka, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland (**Annexure -11**). The remaining States/UTs should make concerted efforts for providing safe drinking water to the children in the schools and also inculcate hygienic habits like washing hands before eating and cleaning utensils afterwards.

x) Utilisation of MME

Monitoring is a key and an integral part of implementation of the MDM scheme; nevertheless, the utilisation of MME funds is very low in many States viz. Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Delhi, Daman & Diu, D&N Haveli, Chandigarh, A&N Island, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Orissa and J&K have reported nil utilization of funds under this head. Kerala (1%) Sikkim (2%) West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh (9%) Assam and Karnataka (13%) have reported very low expenditure under MME head **Annexure-VI**. Low utilisation of MME funds indicates the poor health of implementation of the programme. These State/UTs are requested to make vigorous efforts to develop mechanisms for strengthening the monitoring system for proper implementation of the scheme (**Annexure-12**).

xi) 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 at State/UT level. The meetings should be convened at least once in a quarter so as to review the Scheme and suggest policy measures for effective implementation of the programme. During 2011-12, only 9 States / UTs have convened SSMC meetings.

SSMC meetings were not convened in the remaining 26 States/UTs during the 1st Quarter of 2011-12 (**Annexure-13**). The States / UTs are advised to convene SSMC meetings once in every quarter with prior intimation to Government of India to enable us to depute the dealing officer for the SSMC meeting. Representative of respective monitoring institution should also be invited to attend these meetings and present their findings before the Chairperson of the SSMC. Most of the issues raised above could have been sorted out in the SSMC meetings.

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 lines, to enable us to analyse statements and suggest measures to take corrective action by the State/UTs.

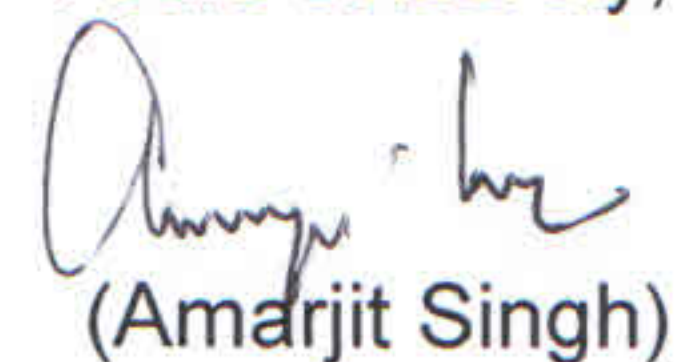
17 States/UTs viz. Bihar, Chattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Orissa, Manipur, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Delhi did not submit the 1st QPR within the stipulated time.

I shall appreciate if appropriate action is taken at your level to address the above issues. The Government of India is spending more than Rs.10380 crore on this flagship programme of the Government. In addition, the State Governments are also providing matching shares towards their contribution in the programme. A little effort on your part will go a long way to ensure that no child remains hungry in the school. ***This is truly God's own work, which we all are privileged to carry out.***

Please do not hesitate to write if there is anything we can do at this end to facilitate your work for effective implementation of the MDMS in your state.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Amarjit Singh)

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