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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
SHASTRI BHAVAN
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28th February, 2014

Dear

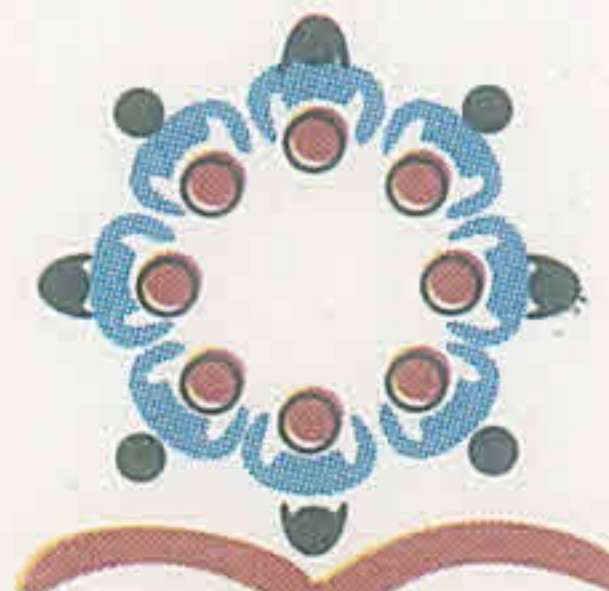
Sh. Khemraj,

The 5th Joint Review Mission visited Rajasthan from 10th - 19th February, 2014 to review the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) and assess the nutritional status of the beneficiary children, in two districts – Baran and Bundi as per the prescribed Terms of Reference (ToRs). The JRM team was headed by Dr. Mridula Saxena, Professor and Head of Department of Home Science and Hospitality Management, PSS, Central Institute of Vocational Education, NCERT, Bhopal. Other members of the team were - representatives from MHRD and Government of Rajasthan, Office of the Supreme Court Commissioner, UNICEF and the Monitoring Institute for the scheme in Rajasthan. Research Fellows from Bhopal and Consultants from Ed CIL's Technical Support Group for Mid-Day Meal Scheme assisted the JRM. A total of 43 schools and 1104 children (593 girls and 511 boys) were surveyed.

The JRM team was appreciative of the best practices like innovative methods of connecting hand pump with seesaw for fetching the water; assigning one period in the time-table, for a teacher to discharge the functions of MDMS; installation of soap dispenser for hand washing in Primary School Jaitpur of Bundi District; construction of Dining Hall cum classroom in Upper Primary School in Hindoli block of Bundi district and keeping a sample of food cooked in schools throughout the day for inspection, if the need arises.

The mission expressed its concern on the following issues:

The assessment of 1104 children(593 girls and 511 boys), by the team of nutrition experts showed that the Body Mass index of children of both districts and both genders fared quite below the WHO reference standards, although the children of Bundi appeared to have higher BMI as compared to that of children from Baran in both the genders. Classification of the BMI scores into various categories of Nourishment revealed that 41% boys and 25% girls of Baran were in moderately undernourished category as against 53 % boys and 26% girls of Bundi district. Clinical symptoms revealed 1.3% and 1.7% children showing symptoms of Iron and Calorie-Protein Malnutrition respectively in the two districts. In this aspect also, Bundi fared better than Baran district. The other observations are as under:



मध्याह्न भोजन योजना
Mid Day Meal Scheme

- i) Low coverage of the children against enrolment.
- ii) The weekly Menu prescribed by the State Govt. does not comply with the National provisions of pulses and vegetable i.e 120gm and 180 gms pulses and 300gms and 450gms vegetables per week to Primary and Upper Primary respectively. Instead, the state menu provides for only 80 g and 120 g pulses and 200 g and 300 g vegetables to Primary and Upper Primary children.
- iii) Delay in release of cooking cost to Schools and payment of honorarium to cook-cum-helpers.
- iv) Variation in quality of the food grain stored in (i) FCI Godown (ii) godown of Transport agency and (iii) storage of cooking Agency (Annapurna Samiti). The storage for food grains at transport agency`s godown at the district and block level was generally poor.
- v) Cooking agencies viz. Akshaya Patra and Annapurana Mahila Sahakari Samiti are not functioning as per MoU.
- vi) Poor Convergence with School health program at School level. **The health condition of cook-cum-helpers was also poor.** No water testing of water source i.e. hand pump conducted at the school level.
- vii) Non display of MDM Logo and entitlements of the children.

Based on their observations, the JRM team has made the following recommendations:

a) Dietary Recommendations

- More varied menu should be there. There is a need to reduce the use of Potato as a major component of all vegetable dishes. Green vegetables must also be used.
- The practice of taking weighed amounts of Raw ingredients should be followed, feasibility and arrangement for which, needs to be worked out. This would reduce the approximation of quantities.
- In both the review districts, the children and teachers reported preference for wheat. Compulsion of rice should not be there. Option should be provided to choose the grain of choice.

b) MDMS Implementation Recommendations

To avoid delay in release of cooking cost and honorarium of payment to cook-cum-helpers, State should develop mechanisms for release of funds by transferring the funds from the District to Schools directly. Honorarium of cooks-cum-helpers should be e-transferred to their saving accounts.

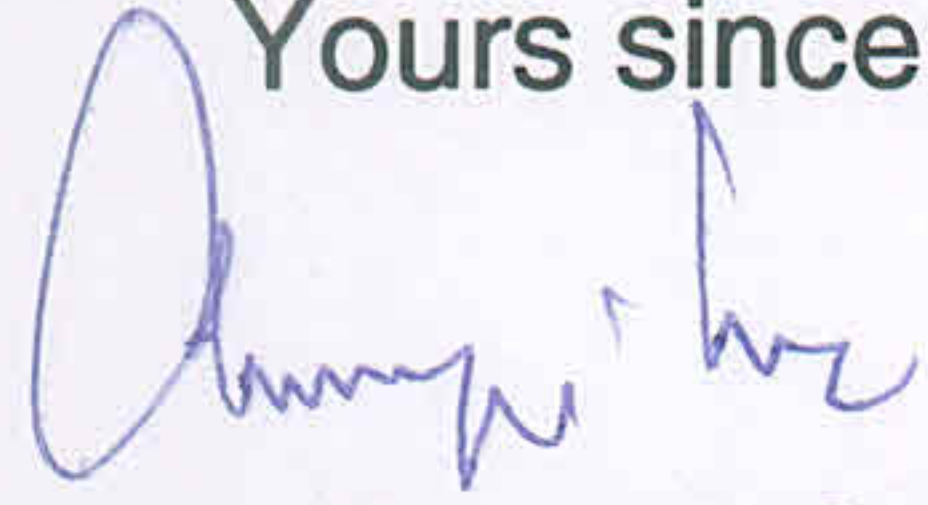
- i) Regular inspection and monitoring of the storage of the Transport agency`s godown at district and block level.
- ii) Standardized system of hand and plate washing should be put up at school level. The system should have proper and covered drainage so that there is no filth and dirt around the washing area.

- iii) Option should be provided to choose the grain of choice according to the local preferences under the prescribed norms of MDMS.
- iv) Review of the functioning of the cooking agencies Akshya Patra and Annapurna Simiti.
- v) The mechanism should be developed to construct smokeless chullahs and proper ventilation should be designed in the Kitchen-cum-store. The Government of India has provided a model design in this regard, which is also available on the MDM Bureau www.mdm.nic.in. The State may suitably adapt the same to its requirements.
- vi) Strengthening Teachers' awareness about school health programme.
- vii) Usage of Agmark certified ingredients especially cooking oil for preparation of MDM must be ensured.
- viii) Special awareness drive about the objectives, importance, norms, logo etc for the various stake holders including teachers and community need to be organized.
- ix) Reconciliation of the data with MPR, QPR & MIS Web Portal for accuracy in reporting in future.
- x) The authorities may work out feasibility of supplying grains in MDM-Stamped gunny/Poly bags to avoid pilferage during transportation.
- xi) Drinking Water in all schools must be got tested for hardness and microbial load.
- xii) Better convergence with Health Programme must be ensured.

The complete report is being enclosed.

I shall appreciate if you could submit an action taken report on the above recommendations within 3 months. A little concerted effort on your part will ensure that no child in a school remains hungry in your state.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,

(Amarjit Singh)

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