

Best Practices Adopted in Mid-Day-Meal Scheme: Case Study of Haryana



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(July 2008)



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Manju Narula

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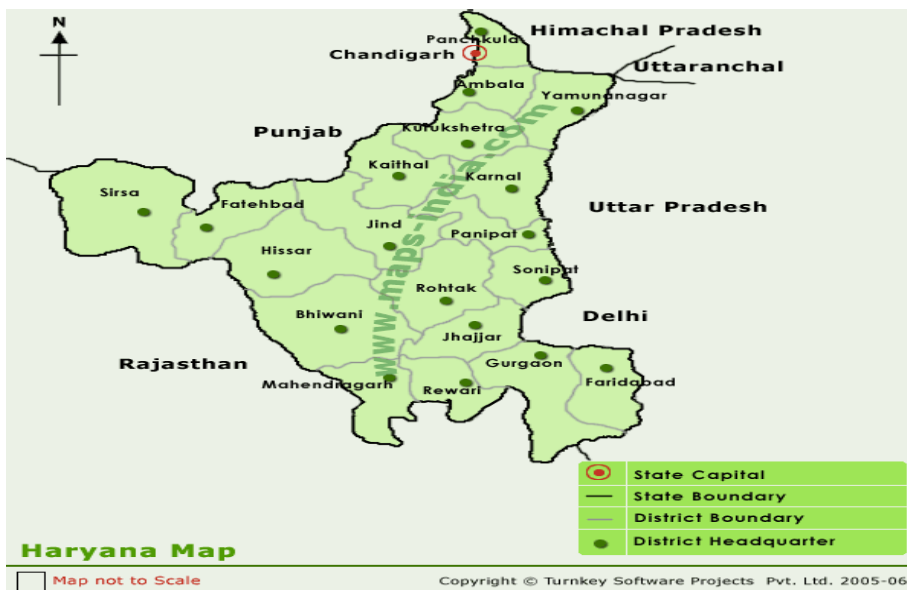
Best Practices Adopted in Mid-Day-Meal Scheme: Case Study of Haryana

Section I Introduction

1. Demographic Profile of the State, Haryana

Haryana was carved out of the Indian state of Punjab in the year 1966, with seven districts viz. Ambala, Karnal, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Mahendragarh, Hissar and Jind. However, their number has increased to twenty because of readjustment of districts boundaries. It was decided that the two states of Haryana and Punjab would have a common capital Chandigarh and a common High Court called the 'Punjab and Haryana High Court', apart from being a union territory.

At present, the state is administratively divided into four divisions namely Hissar, Ambala, Rohtak and Gurgaon. There are 20 districts, 47 subdivisions, 67 tehsils, 119 blocks and 6955 villages in the state. It has Uttar Pradesh on the eastern border, Punjab on its northern border, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh and Shivalik hills on its northern border and Rajasthan and Araveli hills on its southern border.



According to the Census 2001, the total population of Haryana is 2.11 crore and 41 thousand, which is 2% of the total population of India. Out of it 54 percent are males and 46 percent are females. The decadal population growth is 28 percent 71 percent population lives in rural area and 29 percent population is in urban areas. 38 percent of the population is schedule caste. By the size of the population, it stands sixteenth position in India. The sex ratio in Haryana is very low i. e. 861 in 2001 census ringing alarm bells. There is a continuous decrease in sex ratio from 1991 to 2001 by 4 point i.e. 865 to 861. Its position for the sex ratio in the country is 30th. The sex ratio in 2001 is the lowest sex ratio since independence and lowest amongst the major states of India. District wise analysis of sex ratio indicates that Panchkula district (823) has lowest ratio, followed by Panipat (830), Faridabad and Sonipat (839). Highest sex ratio among all the districts is in Mahendragarh (919) followed by Rewari (901), Fatehabad (886) and Biwani (880).

2. Education Profile

2.1 Literacy

The total literacy rate of the state (68.59 percent), is above the national literacy rate (65.38 percent), out of it 64.78 percent are male and 32.51 percent are female. The Table 1 shows that not only total literacy rate, but also both male and female literacy rate as well as rural and urban literacy rate are higher than national averages. However, at the time of reorganization of the state, literacy rate (19.92%, census 1961) was lower than the national average (27.76, Census 1960).

Table 1: Literacy Rates

<i>Literacy Rates</i>	<i>Total</i>	Rural			Urban		
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Haryana	68.59	64.78	32.51	49.85	81.96	64.06	73.66
India	65.38	57.87	30.62	44.69	81.09	64.05	73.08

Source: Census 2001

2.2 Primary Education

The State Department of Education in Haryana has been making constant and strenuous effort to improve the access and quality of school education. The Table 2 shows management wise number of primary schools and also expansion of primary schools since 1966, when the state was carved. From 1966-67 to 1990-91 i.e. near about one and half decade the growth of schools was at a slow pace. The number of schools increased rapidly after 2000-01. In Haryana government policy for aided schools does not look very encouraging, as government aided schools remained same from 2000-01 to 2006-07. However, girls' aided schools decreased than boys' schools from the same period. In Annexure I district wise growth of primary schools is given.

Another noticeable point that was observed in Haryana was the state government is making all its efforts to bring all the children of the age group 6-14, into the perview of education. During the year 2007-08 drop out rate has remained 5.44 percent for the age group 6-11, and nil for the age group 11-14 in 2007-08. It shows that for the age group 11-14 the state government has become successful in bringing all the children to school. Now the state is putting all the efforts to bring back remaining children of the age group 6-11 in the purview of primary education and improving the quality of education being imparted at both the levels i.e. primary and upper primary.

Table 2: Number of recognized primary schools by management in Haryana

Years	Government			Government Aided		
	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
1966-67	4192	257	4447	N.A	N.A.	N.A.
1990-91	4969	167	5138	N.A	N.A.	N.A.
2000-01	7318	1352	8670	116	53	169
2004-05	7209	1501	8710	127	39	166
2005-06	7841	1502	9343	133	34	167
2006-07	7771	1502	9273	135	34	169

3. Methodology

The universe of the study undertaken is the state of Haryana. Broadly, for documenting best practices adopted in the mid-day-meal programme in the state Two aspects were taken, one planning and management and the second implementation at the grass-root level. Managerial issues of mid-day-meal programme at the state, district and block level, were discussed with officers in-charge concern for mid-day-meal programme. For the second issue actual day-to-day running of the scheme was observed in government primary schools. This involves issues such as procurement, storage, preparation and serving of food.

Therefore, after consultations with the state level officers two districts Ambala and Faridabad were selected, as the primary aim of the study is to document best practices of mid-day-meal programme in the state. From Ambala district, four schools that were in Ambala Cantonment block were chosen. From Faridabad district two blocks were selected i.e. Faridabad block and Ballabgarh block.

In Faridabad MDM is managed by two ways- one, by NGO, where centralized cooking of mid-day meal and delivery to various schools is carried out and second, where mid-day meal is cooked at the school level. Therefore to have a comparative picture both types of schools were visited. Team visited in 6 schools, out of them, 4 schools were selected that are managed by NGO and 2 schools where cooking is done at the school level. The schools that were selected were both from urban and rural areas. The students interviewed were from weaker section, and were comprised of the SCs, BPL families and other economically poor families.

4 Mid-Day-Meal Scheme in Haryana

4.1 Beneficiaries

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme was originally launched as a Centrally Sponsored programme in August 1995 to give a boost to universalization of primary education and

to improve the nutritional status of children at primary stage. The aim was to feed students studying in primary classes with the objective of mitigating malnutrition among the vulnerable groups either in the form of ration or cooked meal. The programme was revised in September 2004. The revised programme ensured that cooked mid-day meal should be provided to every child studying at primary level should get in all the government, local body and government aided schools and also children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) Centres. The cooked meal quantity was fixed; according to it minimum 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein should be provided to the children.

In 2006 norms of mid-day-meal programme were revised as per the requirement of the age group children and increased the quantity of food grains, and protein. According to the revised norms, every child at the primary level is given MDM daily on all school days having 450 calories and 12 grams proteins (as compared to the earlier norm of 300 calories and 8-12 grams proteins). The additional quantity of calories and proteins are provided through addition of vegetables or other ingredients. For upper primary schools children mid day meal is provided with 700 calories and 20 grams proteins.

In Haryana, revised scheme for mid-day-meal was launched in 2004 as a Centrally Sponsored scheme. Under the scheme, hot cooked meal is being provided to all the children at the primary level. However, with the directives of Government of India from May 2008-09, it has been extended up to upper-primary level also. By September 2007 the scheme had covered in all the 14496 primary schools and AIE Centres, i.e. in 20 districts and 119 educational blocks of Haryana. The total enrolment of the children benefited from the programme was 16.11 lakh, out of it schedule caste beneficiaries were about 5.99 lakh (Table 3). Other Backward Class beneficiaries were 4.04 lakh. In addition 1.27 lakh beneficiaries were from AIE centres. The Table highlights that out of the total beneficiaries SCs and Others were availing 37 percent and one fourth percentage of mid day meal facility at the primary level was availed by OBCs.

The schools in which we visited found that the mid-day-meal programme in many upper-primary schools had been started from 15th May 2008. We were told that order had been issued to all the schools by DEO to extend the scheme after the summer-vacations up to upper primary level. With this initiative by the government 7.5 lakh student studying in upper primary classes would also get benefit of hot cooked mid day meal in the state (Table 4).

Table 3: Number of Beneficiaries of Mid-Day-Meal at Primary Level (2007-08)

Types of students	Total students	Percentage
SC	598672	37.17
ST	0	-
OBC	404007	25.08
Others	608054	37.75
Total	1610733	100.00

Table 4: Number of Students would be benefited by Mid-Day-Meal at Upper Primary Level (2008-09)

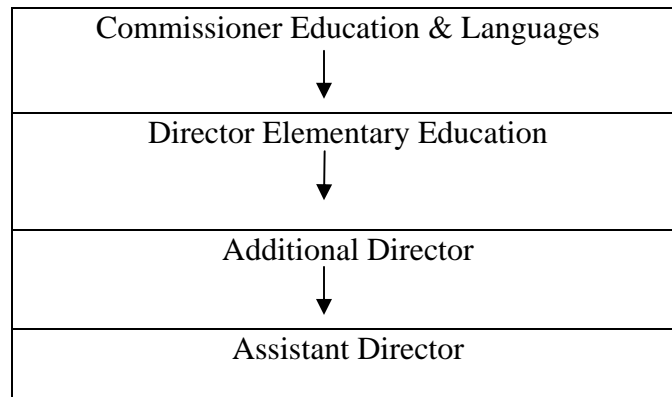
Enrolment in Upper Primary	Enrolment in AIE Centres	Total
697917	59200	757117

Annexure III gives in detail district wise and gender wise number of S.C. students availing the benefit of MDM. Because of the mid day meal programme more girls' have started coming to school, thus helping in achieving the goal of universalization of elementary education. In the state, 37 percent of the SCs are benefiting from the programme, out of it more than 47 percent are girls. During interaction with the students we found that majority of the students are from very poor economic background and they told that one of the major incentive to come to school is they get hot cooked mid-day meal. Therefore by starting the mid day meal programme demand for girls' education has been created. The mid day meal programme succeeded in accelerating the pace of Universalization of Elementary Education driven by improved female participation and participation of girls' in education process.

4.2 Organizational Structure

The Commissioner Education & Language looks after mid day meal programme. He/she is responsible for procurement and supply of food grains, pulses, and edible oil to all the school so that uninterrupted supply of cooked food is made available to all the primary, upper-primary and AIE centres. The Commissioner is the head of mid day meal programme. He/she is assisted by Director Elementary Education, Additional Director and Assistant Director of MDM. At the District level District Education Officer (DEO) is responsible for implementation of the mid day meal programme. The DEO is supported by Block Education Officers. At the grass-root level Head Teacher looks after proper implementation of the programme. The organizational structure at the state level is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Organizational Structure for MDM Programme at the State Level



4.3 Implementation of the Programme

The mid day meal committee is responsible for purchasing and supply of food grains and for monitoring and supervision of mid day meal scheme. The Committee ensures that food grain (wheat and rice) is purchased timely through Food Corporation of India (FCI), to all the primary schools once in a month. The purchased food is supplied through CONFED at BPL rate (Figure 2). Food grains are supplied in the ‘Bags’ that are of 50 k.g. Other ingredients like grams, pulses, jeera, salt, pepper, cooking oil etc. are purchased by district committee under Chairmanship of Additional Deputy

Commissioner by calling open tenders and supplied to the schools. Perishable vegetables are purchased daily as per need by Head teacher. For rectifying inter-district and intra-district low and uneven utilization of food grains and cooking cost, concerned District Education Officers are responsible for monitoring of correct utilization of food grains and cooking cost. By 2007-08 total quantity of food grain allocated for the schools was increased from 28673 quintal to 30302.74 quintal (Table 5), as norms for quantity of food grains were increased in 2006. There was almost 1 percent increase in the quantity of food grains as per the decision of the central government from 2005-06 to 2007-08. Teachers' are made responsible for maintaining and storage of food grains and audits stock and account register. They were told by the state authorities to look after hygiene, discipline and social equity.

Figure 2: Distributions of Food Grains for MDM Scheme

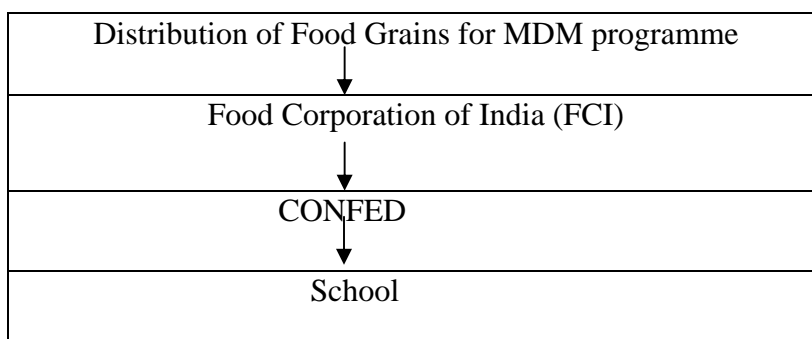


Table 5: Total Quantity of Food Grains in Haryana

Food Grains	Quantity	
	2005-06	2007-08
Wheat	14336.50	15085.37
Rice	14336.50	15217.37
Total	28673.00	30302.74

The Menu Committee has been constituted at the state level that prescribe weekly menu for all the schools. The menu had been made for 5 days, which included different combinations of wheat, pulses, and rice. For the sixth day i.e. Saturday meal is provided to the children as per their request. It is same for all schools throughout the week. Five

recipes namely Meetha Rice, Vegetable pulao, Dalia, Paushtik Khichri and Bakli are fixed for the MDM for the children from Monday to Friday. These recipes are given to the children by rotation every day. In 2007-08 the scheme of MDM has been extended to upper primary schools. Almost same recipes are provided at upper primary level (Table 6) except increase in quantity level. The seasonal vegetables are used for cooking vegetable pulao. Thus the children are served hot mid day meal comprising of the specific stipulated ingredients. The details of menu with specific ingredients and cost are given in Table 6& 7.

Table 6: Nutritious recipies for Primary Schools

S.No.	Menu	Quantity (grams)	Protein (grams)	Calorie	Conversion cost per student per day excluding fuel, cooking, and labour charges
1	Meetha Rice	205	20.00	745	2.18
2	Vegetable Pulao	210	21.00	703	3.35
3	Paushtik Kitchri	187	20.4	700	2.42
4	Paushtik Dalia	195	21.7	729	2.00
5	Bakli	250	22.0	704	3.00
Total cost per child per day is Rs. 2.07 (including cook & fuel charges)					

Table7: Nutritious recipies for Upper Primary Schools

S.No.	Menu	Quantity (grams)	Protein (grams)	Calorie	Conversion cost per student per day excluding fuel, cooking, and labour charges
1	Meetha Rice	205	20.00	745	2.18
2	Vegetable Pulao	210	21.00	703	3.35
3	Paushtik Kitchri	187	20.4	700	2.42
4	Paushtik Dalia	195	21.7	729	2.00
5	Bakli	250	22.0	704	3.00
Total cost per child per day is Rs. 2.17 (including cook & fuel charges)					

In all the schools to handle the operation of mid day meal properly, honorary cooks are recruited on the basis of school enrolment (Table 8). After 100 students another cook can be recruited and then total salary is divided between both. This responsibility is given to the head master of the school. Generally local people are recruited for it. Preference is given to Schedule caste or women who are widows. They are engaged in cooking activities on purely temporary and part time basis. They are given breaks during summer and winter holidays for which they are not paid anything.

Table 8: Criteria for Recruiting Cook

No. of child at school	No. of cooks
1- 250	2
251 – 500	2
5001-750	3
751 – above	4

There is no provision for recruiting the helper. Total numbers of cooks in the state during 2007-08 were 10890, out of it 90 percent were women and 10 percent were men. Category wise bifurcation shows that 42 percent were SCs and 58 percent were others (Table 9).

Table 9: No. of Staff involved in MDM Programme in Haryana (2007-08)

Staff	2007-08	% age
Total Cooks	10890	100
Men	1073	10
Women	9817	90
SCs	4602	42
Others	6288	58

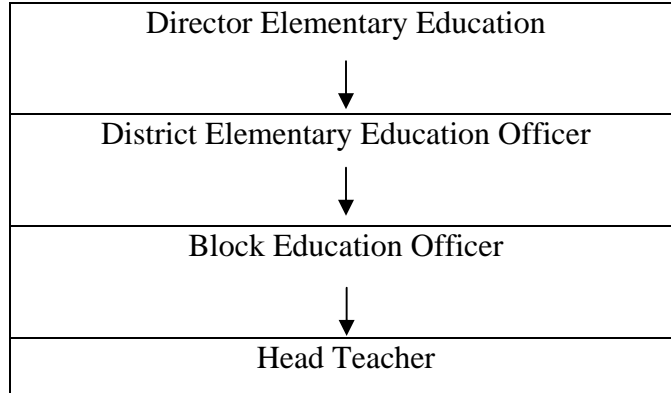
4.4 Allocation of Resources and Fund Flow System

During 2007-08, Government of India sanctioned Rs. 5158.27 lakh for MDM programme for cooking cost, kitchen sheds, kitchen devices and MME. Out of this Rs. 4764.41 lakh had been sanctioned for cooking cost, including Rs. 965.00 lakh left unspent of last year. In addition to this Government had sanctioned Rs. 2252.00 lakh for cooking cost as state share. For providing funds to upper primary children additional funds of Rs.654.00 lakh (Rs.434.00 lakhs by Central + 220 by state) had also been allocated.

The fund flow system at the state level is given in Figure 4. The Directorate of Elementary Education sends funds for mid day meal direct to District Education Officer (DEO). The DEO directly transfer funds electronically to Head teacher's account book

through BEOs. In every head teachers account minimum Rs.5000/- to Rs.12000/- according to the strength of students are credited. Head teacher utilized the funds to buy perishable items, fuel, and cook's salary and accordingly she had to furnish utilization certificate to DEO.

Figure 4: Fund Flow System at the State Level



Section II

Best Practices at the System Level

For proper implementation of the MDM scheme the state has adopted many best practices. These are as follows:

1. Distribution of Food Grains

For the supply of food grain in time as well as to maintain quality of food grains the state government has adopted very good practice. The committee selects the food grains and put their stamps on the food grain Bags. When FCI supplies food grain bags through CONFED in schools these stamps are checked before delivery, so that the same quality of food grains that were selected by the authorities are delivered. Thus the state government maintains quality of food grains.

To maintain regularity in the mid-day-meal programme, schools heads are given instruction that food grains can be taken on loan locally if the stock of food grains is finished in the school and there is delay in reaching the grains from CONFED. On receipt of food grains the same quantity of grains are given back. This helps in providing mid day meal to the children without interruption

2. Promoting Gender Equality

The education of girls has a multiplier effect, yielding benefits not only for the present generation, but also for the future ones. Mid day meal programme in the state has helped in ensuring greater enrolment and retention of girls at primary level. After introduction of mid day meal programme in the state, the enrollment of girls has increased. Thus the programme has been successful in participation of girls in the education process and reducing the gender gap. The boys and girls enrolment, over the years are coming to

equal in number and majority of these girls were from SC or from backward community. In 2006-07 total girls at the primary level in the state increased from 46.86 percent to 47.24 percent in 2007-08 (Annexure II). Out of the total girls (7.18 lakhs in 2007-08), 47.57 percent were SC girls.

3. Allocation of Funds to schools

The state government has made a very good policy of transfer of funds for cooking cost, directly in head teachers account. This initiative ensures no delay in providing uninterrupted mid day meals in schools. Not only this, the state has made a practice that by every 7th of the month cook's salary should be distributed. Their salary cannot be delayed after that.

4. Involvement of Voluntary Organization

With the efforts of the state government, ISKCON food relief foundation a voluntary organization agreed to supply food in two blocks of Faridabad district mainly in urban areas. In 76 schools the ready meal is being supplied.

5. Community Involvements

Community's role in Haryana, is significant in developing among children desirable nutritive health programme. In one of the district 'Sirsa', this programme is being implemented through Community. In the districts, programme is being implemented smoothly in accordance with parameters of Government of India. Members of Gram Panchayat, Village Education Community check the cooked meal and supervise distribution of mid-day-meal programme. They conduct 'Mother's Sammelan' from time to time. In that members are being motivated to supervise the distribution of meal. In addition, in the Sammelan Mothers' roaster is prepared and accordingly they ensure that at least one mother should be present when meal is served to the children .

6. Health Interventions

6.1 Students

The state government is very particular that all the children should have at least desirable health. Therefore with coordination of nearest Primary Health Centre, they have made the practice for physical health check up programme. The Primary Health Centre every year conducts free check up of all the children up to primary level. Comprehensive and detailed check up is being conducted for all the children and also their height, weight and blood are tested. Accordingly children get technical advice. The children who are found anemic or diagnosed some disease are admitted in the civil hospital for treatment. All the schools are provided with weighing machine and facility for making height scale, so that the teachers can check student's height and weight regularly.

Apart from this, all the children are given micronutrient supplementation and de-worming through administering six monthly doses for de-worming and vitamin-A supplementation with the assistance of Health Department. At the time of administering de-worming medicine each child is given two bananas in addition to mid day meal.

6.2 Cook

State Government had issued the orders for medical health check-up of all the cooks by respective schools, twice in a year. This helps in preventing communicable diseases to children.

7. Infrastructure Facilities

To make the mid-day-meal programme successful state government has not left any stone un-turned. The state government has provided as per the guidelines very good infrastructure to all the primary schools and now as the programme is being extended to upper primary level, the government is providing them all the necessary infrastructure facilities. These are:

7.1 Kitchen Sheds

The central government has sanctioned substantial funds for construction of kitchen-cum-store. The state government had utilized it very efficiently. The construction of kitchen shed is the responsibility of the State Project Director (SPD), Haryana Pariyojana Parishad. Up to 2007-08 there were 267 pucca kitchen sheds in the schools. In the educationally backward districts amount of Rs. 1911.29/- lakhs were sanctioned the centre, for construction of kitchen sheds. They are under construction and up to February, Rs. 650.00 lakh were utilized. In rest of the districts, construction work will start from 2008 onwards. In some of the districts, community monitor and supervise of construction and also contributes through donation of funds.

7.2 Kitchen Devices

Adequate cooking help has been provided by the government, so that mid day meal can be made available to the students and the teachers' time can also be saved. This contains kitchen devices and two gas cylinders and chullas. The cooking vessels contain Patila, Dhakan, Karchi and Buckets. In addition the state government has provided Rs. 5000/- for each school two containers of one quintal capacity, Rs. 2000/ for gas connections. During 2007-08 all the schools purchased two gas cylinders and one chullah. Eating utensils are brought by children.

7.3 Provision of Drinking Water Facility

The government has endeavored to provide clean drinking water for the students. With the coordination of Public Health Department the state government has provided tap for drinking, cooking and cleaning purpose in every school. In addition water tanks are built in all the schools. State has made the policy that in a year two times i.e. after summer vacations, and after winter vacations, water tanks should be cleaned. This is monitored and supervise by district and block level officers.

7.4 Capacity Building Programme

The state government with the help of Food & Nutrition Board, Ministry of Women and Child Development conducts capacity building programmes of teachers involved in mid-day-meal programme. These programmes acquaint teachers about cooking of nutritious food, hygiene, discipline, social equity and conservation of water and they in turn educate children about all these issues. Students were also taught to recite prayer, before starting the food.

7.5 Employment Generation

The mid-day-meal programme has generated employment opportunities, mostly for women of disadvantaged sections. These women feel empowered after getting employment.

7.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

For strengthening the mid-day-meal programme the state government conducts evaluation from internal as well as external agencies. District Education Officers and Block Education Officers conduct internal evaluation. External evaluation has been done once by Kurukshetra university and once by Society for Service to Voluntary Agencies (North) Haryana.

7.7 Setting up of Management Information System (MIS)

At the state level MIS has been set up to keep record of all the information related to opening of new schools, AIE centres, training and appointment of teachers, undertaking civil works, etc. In addition, DEOs and BEOs are provided computers to feed and store information of mid-day-meal programme to strengthen the information base.

7.8 Additional Allocation by State

The average cost of mid-day-meal (excluding food grains) was Rs.2/- per child per day as per the government norm. Out of it, central assistance was Rs.1.50/- and the state share was Rs.0.50/- per child, per school day on mid-day-meal programme. The Haryana Government decided to spend additional amount of Rs. 00.07/- per child, per school day on the mid-day-meal programme. Thus the total amount spent by the state government on mid-day-meal programme was Rs.2.07/- per child per school day instead of Rs. 2/-. Out of it Rs. 1.67 was spent on food grains, fuel, vegetables, condiments and Rs. 0.40 paisa per child to pay honorarium to cooks.

Table 9: Per Child-per-Day expenditure on MDM scheme

Sub-Heads	I-V	VI-VII
Food Grains	Free	Free
Fuel, Vegetables, Condiment	Rs. 1.67	Rs. 2.10
Honorarium to staff	0.40 paisa per child	0.40 paisa per child
Administrative exp.	-	-
Total	Rs. 2.07	Rs. 2.50

Section III

School profile

I Ambala District

In Ambala district, the total primary schools during 2007-08 were 564; out of it 27 were girls schools. The enrolment at the primary level was 56,402; out of it more than 50 percent were girls. Because of the mid-day meal programme more girls had started coming to school. Total beneficiaries in the district were 59857 (including EGS and AIE centres). For these beneficiaries 1179 staff were involved in the programme. The total allocation to the programme for the district was Rs. 282.66 lakhs, out of it Rs. 269.23 were spent during the year 2007-08 (details are given in Annexure IV).

In the district all the primary 564 schools are under mid day meal programme. In all the schools meals are prepared in the school itself. To get experience of the implementation of the scheme, we visited 4 schools in the block Ambala Cantonment area. The enrolment mentioned in the school profile was of April 2008. DEO informed us that generally strength of the school increases after July and August.

1. Government Senior Secondary School, V.C. Bazar, Ambala Cantt.

The government Senior Secondary School was our first visit to get acquainted with how the mid day meal programme. is implemented at the school level. The primary section is attached with senior secondary school. The enrolment at the primary level was 153; out of it 125 were present on that day. Many children were absent as it was raining heavily that day. The school does not have separate kitchen and store. Therefore, food grains were kept in the containers provided by the state government in the classrooms very systematically, neatly and tidily. There were three rooms and varanda. Meal is prepared in the varanda.

We saw actual preparation and serving of food. The cook was preparing Paustik Kitchri on Gas Chulla. The vessels used for cooking were clean. We tasted the mid day meal and it was tasty & quality of the food grain used was very good. All the children stand in the queue. One by one meal was served in the plates/tiffin that they brought with them from their respective homes. It was good to note that the children finish their meal in the school and did not carry the meals to home. After the meal all the students stay back in the school. They do not have the habit to go home after having food.

While interacting with the students, the team found that all the students were from very poor families. Their parents were mostly riksha pullers, daily wagers, domestic servants or labourers. The students were very satisfied with the food that is served daily. They mentioned that all the days' food is cooked and it is tasty and enough quantity is served. They never observed any discrimination while serving the meal by teachers. They like the scheme of providing mid-day-meal so much that even requested us for mid day meal during holidays too. They all were ready to come during summer holidays.

The cook was excited with the initiative of the government for providing gas chullas and cylinders. She appreciated these steps very much. She was very happy as from last year i.e. from 2006-07 they received gas cylinders and chullas. This has made the cooking more easy and convenient. She told that earlier they have to invest time on purchase of fire wood, and cooking through fire wood is also not hygienic. During rainy season as fire wood get wet, cooking becomes difficult. Now this problem has been over.

The Head teacher was very enthusiastic about the mid-day-meal programme. She always plans for uninterrupted preparation of mid day meal. She told that government has issued notification to all the schools that if food grain is not enough or there is a delay in receiving food grains from the CONFED, due to some unavoidable circumstances they can borrow from the nearest grocery shop. As and when, school receives food grain, borrowed quantity can be returned in kind. It had happened once but the problem was overcome. Also head teacher reported that in the name of school mid day meal account was opened. They never face the problem of shortage of funds for mid day meal

activities. They always have enough money (Rs. 5000/ to Rs. 12000/-) for buying vegetables and for cook's salary. While interaction with the cook she mentioned that with the initiative of the government that 'cook should get salary by 7th of the month, it should not be delayed beyond it', she gets salary always in time, therefore she was happy and contented.

2. Rajkiya Prathamik Pathshala, Khoj Ki Pur, Ambala Cantt

In Rajkiya Prathamik school, there were 86 students, out of them 74 (86 percent) were girls. Out of the 86 percent girls, 43 percent were SCs and 49 percent were BCs. There were three teachers and one guest teachers. One teacher was responsible for mid-day-meal programme and there was one cook.

We observed serving of the food. All the students were sitting on the mattresses. The floor on which students sat to have their meal was neat and clean. Children properly washed their hands and did prayer. Cook with the help of the teacher served the food. Watching children eat warm meal happily is a site one can never forget. The children were happy with the quality and quantity of meals. The team feels that it was not quality that was important to the students but getting the mid-day-meals made them happy. In the school there was a separate store for food storage. The store looked clean by Indian standard. To maintain mid-day-meal programme records register was maintain properly and it was up to date. The head teacher told us that medical check up of the cook is carried out twice in a year, to prevent communicable diseases to children.

The school head take the help from Sarpanch of the village in kind from time to time. Sarpanch is always ready to help the school. He has donated plates and mattresses for all the children. However, children were required to wash their only plates after the meal, and for that soap was provided to them. One can conclude, on the basis of this observation, that hygiene factor is well taken care.

3. Government Primary School (GPS), Kudda Khurd, Ambala Cantt., Ambala

Total students in the GPS, Kudda Khurd were 164, out of them 148 were present on the day of visit i.e. May 21, 2008. There were 4 teachers and 1 post was vacant. Concern teachers for mid-day-meal programme told that they always check the stamp and weight on the food grain bags before unloading them. Once, the food grains were of bad quality, immediately that was reported to DEO. Those food grains were later changed. Food grains for mid-day-meal was always of good quality.

The school had a kitchen-cum-store. The cook was very pleasant in appearance. She has maintained kitchen-cum-store very well. It was neat and clean. The school has good quality of containers. Food-grains were kept in containers with dry neem leaves, so that food grain can be protected from insects. Food was already cooked and served to the children on the gas chullas by the time we reached. There was a water tap in the courtyard. Soap was kept there to wash cooking utensils and eating utensil.

4. High Secondary School (HSS), Salar Hedi, Ambala Cantt., Ambala

In HSS, Salar Hedi, 104 students were studying in primary branch. The feeder sector of the school was SC dominated. Out of the total students 72 were SCs and 26 were OBCs. 90 students were present on the day of visit.

The school had a store that was neat and cleaned. All the food grains were kept in containers. Earlier they had a problem of container, because they were of small in size. Cook was not able to store all the food grains properly. With the initiative of head teacher, second hand container big in size, was purchased in very cheap price thus the problem of storage was solved. By the time we reached students had already finished their meals. We interacted with the cook. She told us that she gets salary by 7th of the month. It was never late. Head teacher told us that even in summer and winter holidays, students stand outside the gate of school, so that they may get food.

The students mentioned in a very informal way that meal served them is always enough in quantity, tasty and properly cooked. It is always served in a proper way and discrimination is never done. We are thankful to the government for initiating the scheme of Mid Day Meal.

II. Faridabad district

In the district of Faridabad, there were 530 schools; out of them were girls' schools for the year 2007-08. Total students studying in the schools were 102937. The block wise and gender wise number of schools and enrolment is given in Annexure V. Total beneficiaries for the scheme were 94451. For the programme number of cooks involved were 340. The total plan outlay for the programme was Rs. 253.67 lakh. Out of it, Rs. 212.67 lakhs were spent for the year 2007-08 (see Annexure V).

As mentioned earlier that in two blocks of Faridabad District i.e. in 76 schools, ISKCON food relief foundation, New Delhi is supplying Mid-Day-Meal. We were told that the food is distributed to various schools by tempos. The food that is provided in the school is always timely, hot and well cooked, and tasty. This initiative is well appreciated by the teachers as well as children. The menu offered by ISKCON comprises Khir, Mitha Rice, Paushtic Kichri, Mitha Dalia, Namkin Dalia, Bakli and Pulao turn by turn. The main attraction for the children in such meals are Khir and Meetha rice with dry fruits. Teachers feel that their lot of time is saved when food is supplied by out side agency.

To get a diverse experience of the implementation of the scheme, we visited 4 schools in different locations where mid day meal is served through centralized kitchen.

1. Government Primary School (GPS), Sihi, Zone Ballabgarh, Faridabad

In the GPS school, Sihi, 317 students were on roll on the day of visit at primary level. Out of them 244 students were present on 28th May 2008. We were told that some students are of nearby states and as schools were about to close for summer holidays they

left early. The school was neat and clean. Posters and ‘Quotations of great people’ were displayed on the walls of the corridors of the school.

Food is supplied by ISKCON. Teachers and students were happy with quality as well as quantity of food. The food is always delivered hot and in time. The break time is from 11.20 A.M. to 11.40 A.M. If by chance the food is delayed by lunchtime, teachers accordingly adjust break time. We saw distribution of food. All the students were sitting in queue. One by one meal was distributed to the students under the supervision of head teacher.



While discussion with the teacher, she reported that management and planning of the ISKCON’s centralized kitchen is very efficient. Through tempo they supply food. They bring food in containers. Each container has 50 students food. According to the strength of the students they deliver food. ISKCON has provided ‘Cooked Meal Card’ for every school (see Annexure VI). In the Card date, total number of students enrolled, number of meals received name of the item received, etc. is mentioned. Thus, monthly record of the meal served in the school is maintained. In the card it is clearly written that before distribution of the meal to the students it should be tasted by the members of committee.

She narrated about one incident that last year continuously for three days ISKCON served Meetha Rice. Head teacher complained to the authorities of ISKCON, that students do not appreciate same menu to be provided daily. From that day onwards meal was served according to the menu chart.

2. Government Middle School, Mirtzapur, Faridabad

The team visited in Government Middle school, Mirtzapur. At the primary level there were 237 students, out of them 211 were present. Up to primary level ISKCON serve the food and for middle level self cooked meal was served to the students. Primary level teachers appreciated the food provided by the ISKCON. They were of the view that this was better than the food that was cooked in the school. Now they were able to save time, and more time they could also devote on teaching learning.

At the upper primary level cooking was started ten days back. Children were happy that they have started getting food. Because of extension of mid day meal upto upper primary level, they don't have to carry lunch from home. Instead they have started getting hot cooked meal. They requested that it would be better practice if they also get mid-day-meal from ISKCON as primary class students get.



3. Government Middle School, Jasana, Faridabad

The total number of students in the school were 191, out of them 165 were present. More than 95 percent of the students were from Scheduled Caste and Back ward community. The school did not have a separate kitchen; however the meal was prepared in the veranda, which was at a distance from the classes held. However store was in the classroom itself. When team visited the school, class II students were sitting in the shade of the tree. We observed that mostly students were from backward and from very poor families. During interaction children told that they were happy with idea of providing mid-day meal as well as with the quality of meal served. While discussion with the teachers they mentioned that if a cluster of schools can be made and food is supplied through centralized kitchen, it would be a welcome idea.



4. Government Girls Middle School, Schrawak

Total students in the school were 123, out of them 88 were present. At the upper primary level there were 59 students and 50 were present when team visited. Mid-day meal is provided by ISKCON up to primary level and for upper primary level meal is cooked in the school.

5. Rajkiya Vidhalaya, Nacholi, Faridabad

The school is up to upper primary. Over the years there was an increase in the total enrolment as well as in girls' enrolment. During 2004-05, 244 students were there out of the 124 were girls. The number increased to 262; out of them 129 were girls. Register was well maintained.

The school had a separate kitchen cum store. All the facilities for cooking are provided to the school well in time by the district authorities. As the enrolment was more than two hundred, two cooks were there. The school had yet to start mid-day-meal for upper-primary level. Many initiatives have been taken by the school apart from providing mid-day meal. For example, the school organizes medical camp every year. On May 16th, 2008 they had organized medical camp. In that camp detailed check up of every child was done. There height and weight, eye sight, dental check up were done. The height scale was permanently made on the wall of the school. The teacher mentioned that once, two of the students' growth was not found satisfactory during the medical health check up by the doctors. Those two children were admitted for proper treatment in the civil hospital. In addition de-worming medicines were given to the students twice in the year. The good practice is that with the de-worming medicines always two bananas are given to the children. This was addition to the mid-day meal.



Conclusion

In Haryana mid day meal scheme has been proven to be a strategic intervention in education as it provides an incentive to children to come to school. It is a great boon to the poor children. The scheme is covered in 100 percent of the primary schools and hot cooked meal with fixed menu is served in all the primary schools from 2004. From 2008-09 sessions, it had been extended up to upper primary level. Some of the upper primary

schools already started cooking before summer vacations and in rest the schools it would start after summer vacations.

At the system level many initiatives has been taken for successful implementation of the programme. For example, putting stamps on the food grain bags before supply to the schools, opening of saving account for the mid-day-meal programme at school level for ensuring timely purchase of the ingredients, supply of adequate infrastructure facilities, involvement of voluntary organization (ISKCON) in MDM, Community involvement in supervising and distribution of mid-day-meal, organizing “Mothers’ Sammelan”, etc. However, arrangements for regular health check-up and other related medical support is provided to students with great care. Even the state has made obligatory for health check-up of cook, to ensure communicable disease are not transferred

With regard to the general impression of the environment with particular attention to hygiene, cleanliness and discipline among students, hygiene and cleanliness is well taken in the school, while preparing the meal as well as serving. Students were encouraged to obey discipline and hygiene. They form a queue to receive the meals or eat meals. Prayers were conducted before taking meals. Teachers ensure washing of hands before taking meal. No gender or caste discrimination was observed in distribution of meals. The head teachers and other teachers in whose supervision the meals prepared are always first tasted and then meal is served to the students. From time to time programme is inspected. The students were satisfied with the quality and quantity of meals served. After the meals students love to stay in the school. Another interesting fact was that the scheme has provided employment to underprivileged classes, especially women.

Involvement of private partners in the MDM scheme is very good initiative by the state government. It is implemented only in two blocks of Faridabad district. Looking at the very good response it needs to be extended in other districts of the state also. Centralized kitchen helps in saving as well as optimally utilizing all the resources, which is ultimately beneficial to the final recipient of the scheme, the students. Therefore if possible, idea of centralized kitchen should be promoted.

To conclude we can say that the mid day meal scheme that is revised in 2004 (serving cooked meal) definitely help in increasing the attendance therefore have positive impact on enrolment and retention and ultimately leading to universalization of elementary education. The accelerated efforts of mid day meal, which are already showing results, have started firmly set the state to achieve better quality of life for its people. Also bringing and retaining more and more children in schools especially girls and thus literary reducing gender gap.

Annexure I

District-wise number of primary schools

Districts	2004-05		2006-07		2007-08	
	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Ambala	67	509	67	566	67	536
Bhiwani	121	637	121	691	121	695
Faridabad	102	596	103	640	86	530
Fatehabad	45	356	45	392	45	395
Gurgaon	153	803	153	908	53	386
Hissar	130	501	132	543	132	536
Jhajjar	70	335	70	350	70	465
Jind	148	468	148	476	148	342
Kaithal	60	355	60	380	60	383
Karnal	17	492	17	499	17	523
Kurukshetra	58	509	58	520	58	487
Mohendergarh	93	507	93	542	93	531
Panchkula	26	223	24	269	24	272
Panipat	47	247	47	264	47	251
Rewari	37	442	37	448	37	444
Rohtak	80	243	80	262	80	245
Sirsa	112	537	112	572	112	563
Sonipat	92	453	92	461	92	456
YamunaNagar	43	497	43	555	43	611
Mewat	0	0	0	0	117	622
Total	1501	8710	1502	9338	1502	9273

Source: Department of Elementary Education, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Annexure II

Class-wise and District-wise number of students

Districts	2004-05		2006-07		2007-08	
	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Ambala	34939	63448	26830	56604	28487	60073
Bhiwani	58541	118065	55680	112907	55681	102075
Faridabad	68604	147941	59444	119865	54454	105020
Fatehabad	30805	63865	29588	61659	30915	70918
Gurgaon	59267	143599	45926	136709	21514	63817
Hissar	53734	104305	51783	106250	51664	112709
Jhajjar	32667	65854	25505	55431	20614	45558
Jind	57011	116459	50757	105937	48628	93870
Kaithal	33723	71360	35859	72437	34640	74502
Karnal	42182	88728	40341	84911	34120	59325
Kurukshetra	31015	65775	30308	64121	34875	86195
Mohendergarh	32861	64006	29613	57992	30718	58885
Panchkula	12384	26638	12659	27634	13458	30379
Panipat	28179	58643	25373	52300	28984	60297
Rewari	26264	51811	23083	45864	22154	45351
Rohtak	32360	64888	30511	60439	28359	56726
Sirsa	44231	93186	42873	89818	45179	100726
Sonapat	43087	871111	39904	83036	39219	74398
YamunaNagar	31794	67467	30474	64643	33561	70511
Mewat	0	0	0	0	60914	148919
Total	733648	1562949	686811	1465955	718138	1520254

Source: Department of Elementary Education, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Annexure III

District wise number of SC students (2007-08)

Districts	I-V		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Ambala	52.60	47.40	25767
Bhiwani	53.34	46.66	44775
Faridabad	50.66	49.34	52516
Fatehabad	53.07	46.93	27045
Gurgaon	52.89	47.11	30352
Hissar	52.89	47.11	45216
Jhajjar	51.36	48.64	28477
Jind	61.92	38.08	39759
Kaithal	52.42	47.74	31415
Karnal	53.71	46.29	36084
Kurukshetra	52.96	47.12	23533
Mohendergarh	52.23	47.77	26774
Panchkula	54.79	45.58	9827
Panipat	51.93	48.07	177735
Rewari	49.82	50.18	19857
Rohtak	50.65	49.35	24103
Sirsa	52.36	47.64	42381
Sonipat	51.61	48.39	28829
YamunaNagar	52.31	47.66	21159
Mewat	-	-	-
Total	52.43	47.57	598672

Source: Department of Elementary Education, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Annexure IV

Mid Day Meal Programme in District Ambala, Haryana *

Table 1: Class-wise Enrolment

Class	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
I-V	54699	53921	56402	59857
VI-VII	Non applicable	Non applicable	Non applicable	Non applicable
I-VII	54699	53921	56402	59857

Table 2: Block-wise number of Primary Schools

Name of the Block	2004-05		2005-06		2007-08	
	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total
Ambala City	6	153	6	149	6	149
AMBALA Cantt	7	75	7	75	7	88
Barara	3	90	3	90	3	90
Naraingarh	3	75	3	94	3	94
Saha	7	79	4	70	4	70
Shahzadpur	4	70	4	73	4	73
Total	30	542	27	551	27	564

Table 3: Block-wise Enrollment in Primary Schools

Name of the Block	2004-05		2005-06		2007-08	
	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total
Ambala City	673	13226	642	1358	6991	14335
AMBALA Cantt	615	12868	638	1278	7737	13081
Barara	350	690	384	735	3938	7523
Naraingarh	378	713	347	712	3776	7443
Saha	435	705	369	668	3785	7204
Shahzadpur	364	750	299	639	3183	6816
Total	2816	54699	2683	53921	29410	56402

Table 4: Number of Beneficiaries of Mid-Day-Meal

Types of students	Registered students	Total Beneficiaries
SC	29848	29848
ST	0	0
OBC	8093	8093
Others	21916	21916

* Source: Block Education Office, Ambala

Total	59857	59857
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Table 5: Quantity-wise Allocation of Food Grain

Food grains	Quantity		
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Wheat	3078.00	3212.75	4375.25
Rice	3592.95	3478.91	5352.15
Pulses	As per demand	As per demand	As per demand
Vegetables	As per demand	As per demand	As per demand
Edible oil	As per demand	As per demand	As per demand
Total	6670.95	6691.66	9727.4

Table 6: Total Number of staff involved in MDM Prgrammes

Staff	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Organizers	551	564	566
Cooks	580	590	613
Helpers	0	0	0
Total	1131	1154	1179

Table 7: Availability of facilities for MDM programme

Facilities	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Kitchen-cum-store	In Class Room	In Class Room	In Class Room
Proper container for storing grains	0	Yes	Yes
Kitchen Devices	Yes	yes	Yes
Gas cylinder	Nil	yes	Yes
Water supply	yes	yes	Yes
School health programme	Eye/Health Check up	Eye/Heaith Check up	Eye/Health Check up

Table 8: Monthly Honorariums

Staff	Corporation Area(Rs)	District Area(Rs)
Organizers	Head Teacher	Head Teacher
Cooks	0.40 Per child per day	0.40 per child per day
Helpers	0	0

Table 9: Per Child-per-Day expenditure on MDM scheme

Sub-Heads	1-V
Food Grains	1.17
Fuel, Vegetables, Condiment	0.30+0.20
Honorarium to staff	0.4
Administrative exp.	0
Total	2.07

Table 10 Statement of year-wise plan outlay & expenditure (Actual Expenditure)

Year	Outlay	Expenditure	Beneficiary
2003-04	856212	855199	7217
2004-05	16511000	12136703	54699
2005-06	33834297	16104058	53921
2006-07	42725039	28009604	56402
2007-08	28266435	26922693	59857

Table 11 Management-wise Actual Expenditure on MDM programme

Types of Schools	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Govt.+ Govt. Aided	12136703	16104058	28009604	26922693
Local Bodies	0	0	0	
EGS	0	0	0	0
AIE Centres	464495	2184864	858400	9503837

Table 12: Expenditure for the year 2005-06 & 2006-07

	Total Expenditure (in Rs)	
	2005-06	2006-07
Food Grains* Veg+Spices+Fue	16104058	28009604
Total	16104058	28009604

Annexure V

Mid Day Meal Programme in Faridabad District, Haryana[†]

Table 1: Class-wise Beneficiaries

Class	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
I – V	117200	116979	97550	94451
V – VII	-	-	-	-
I - VII	117200	116979	97550	101551

Table 2: Block-wise number of primary schools

	Name of Blocks	2004-05		2005-06		2006-08	
		Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total
1.	Faridabad	19	85	19	85	24	136
2.	Ballabhgarh – I	11	73	11	73	26	
3.	Ballabhgarh – II	16	73	16	73	-	116
4.	Palwal – I	12	78	12	78	24	
5.	Palwal – II	8	56	8	56	-	156
6.	Palwal – III	12	70	12	70	-	
7.	Hodal	11	64	11	64	11	16
8.	Hathim	17	97	17	97	-	-
9.	Hasanpur	-	-	0	-	4	56
		106	596	106	596	89	530

Table 3: Block-wise Enrolment in primary schools

	Name of Blocks	2004-05		2005-06		2007-08	
		Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total
10.							
11.	Faridabad	16537	39773	11753	22095	16137	31117
12.	Ballabhgarh – I	8527	17194	8098	16363	12244	24164
13.	Ballabhgarh – II	7245	14886	12710	246097	1368	25518
14.	Palwal – I	7579	14797	9590	12502	6670	12563
15.	Palwal – II	-	-	4717	9612	4682	9575
16.	Palwal – III	4886	9674	-	-	-	-
17.	Hodal	6885	13988	0	0	-	-
18.	Hathim	8001	20107	7625	19291	-	-
19.	Hasanpur	8029	15126	6868	12824	-	-
		67689	145546	58361	117296	53001	102937

Table 4: Number of Beneficiaries of Mid-Day-Meal

Types of students	Registered students	Total Beneficiaries
SC	32315	29315
OBC	18412	16412

[†] Source: From District Education Office, Faridabad

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Others	50824	48724
Total	101551	94451

Table 5: Block-wise allocated Food Grain & Quantity

Food Grains	Quantity		
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Wheat	11832.10	11649.87	11649.87
Rice	11832.10	11649.87	11649.87
Pulses	As per norm	As per norm	As per norm
Vegetables	As per norm	As per norm	As per norm
Edible Oil	As per norm	As per norm	As per norm

Table 6: Number of Staff involved in MDM Programmge

Staff	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Organizers	-	1	-
Cooks	613	340	340
Helpers	70	-	-
Total	683	340	340

Table 7 Criteria for recruiting cooks & Helpers

No. of child at centre	No. of cooks	No. of helpers
1 – 250	1	
251 – 500	1	1
501 – 750	2	1
751 & above	2	2

Table 8 Statement of year-wise plan outlay & expenditure (Actual Expenditure)

Year	Outlay	Expenditure	Beneficiary
2003-04	2900000	2900000	111248
2004-05	25742000	12610000	117200
2005-06	33009000	22688526	116979
2006-07	28760000	30196314	97550
2007-08	25367000	21267472	101551