

CHAPTER-III

Implementation of the scheme

As per MDM Scheme guidelines, the overall responsibility for providing nutritious, cooked MDM to every child in all Government Schools, Madarasas/Maktabas and special training centres of primary and upper primary level lies with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. This will include *inter-alia*:

- ❖ Ensuring adequate budgetary provisions towards assistance for cooking cost and establishing systems for timely flow of funds towards all components of the programme, namely cooking costs, infrastructure, procurement of kitchen devices etc.
- ❖ Formulating State norms of expenditure under different components of the scheme, which will be not less than the minimum contribution prescribed under the scheme.
- ❖ Formulating safety specifications for construction of kitchen-cum-store.
- ❖ Establishing systems for continuous and uninterrupted flow of foodgrains to all eligible schools, Special Training Centres from Food Corporation of India (FCI).
- ❖ Ensuring that all logistic and administrative arrangements are made for regular serving of wholesome, cooked MDM in every eligible school. Similarly ensuring logistic and administrative arrangements for timely construction of infrastructure and procurement of kitchen devices through funding made available under the scheme and by convergence with other development programme.
- ❖ Formulating guidelines that would promote and facilitate peoples' participation in the programme including criteria for identifying and associating genuine voluntary agencies and civil society organisations.

3.1 Allocation of foodgrains

As per the scheme guidelines, the state nodal departments were to furnish to the Ministry, by 15th January every year, a district-wise request for allocation of foodgrains based on the enrolment data of eligible children as of 30th September of the preceding year. Programme Approval Board (PAB) after scrutiny of the proposal of the state, was to allocate the foodgrains district-wise. Every state government/state nodal department was to designate a single Government/Semi-Government agency with state wide jurisdiction and network e.g. State Civil Supplies Corporation. This agency is responsible for lifting foodgrains from FCI godowns and delivering them to designated authority at the taluk/block level.

Scrutiny of records related to foodgrains allocated and lifted by states revealed that projected enrolment was unrealistically high *vis-a-vis* the actual enrolment and consequently led to significantly higher allotment of foodgrains by the Ministry. The details of nine states⁴ which lifted less than 80 *per cent* foodgrains against allocation during 2009-10 to 2013-14 is given in **Annex-IV**. The various reasons for low lifting of foodgrains were as under:

- The projection of number of children by various state governments in their Annual Works Plan & Budget (AWP&B) was on a higher side.
- Number of children who actually availed MDM, in comparison to enrolment was less.
- MDM was served on less number of days during the year, then what was approved by the Programme Approval Board.

Audit also came across instances of short lifting of foodgrains in test checked schools of eight states which ranged between 2.77 *per cent* and 42 *per cent*, as given in **Table 3.1** below:

⁴ Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Tamilnadu, West Bengal, Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Puducherry.

Table 3.1: Cases of short lifting of foodgrains

Sl. No.	State	Remarks
1.	Assam	In 120 test checked schools foodgrains were short lifted by 32 per cent.
2.	Haryana	Out of 66 test checked schools, in 64 schools, foodgrains were not provided as per norms and shortfall in foodgrains in 37 schools was more than 25 per cent. As a result, cooking of MDM was disrupted in 27 schools in Rewari and Sirsa districts for a period ranging between 19 and 536 days.
3.	Karnataka	Shortfall in lifting of foodgrains ranging between 32 to 42 per cent during 2009-14.
4.	Meghalaya	In the test checked districts, against allocated quantity of 19229.40 MT of foodgrains there was short lifting of 598.27 MT (3.11 per cent) during 2009-14.
5.	Punjab	The Department short lifted the allocated foodgrains by 5.46 to 18.23 per cent during 2009-14. As a result, 32 out of the 90 selected schools faced shortage of foodgrains and procured these on loan basis from other schools. Further, MDM could not be served for 1011 days in 20 schools due to non-availability of foodgrains.
6.	Rajasthan	In test checked district Jhalawar there was short lifting of foodgrain between 14.54 per cent and 17 per cent.
7.	Delhi	There was short lifting of foodgrains ranging from 857.04 to 3538.159 MTs during 2010-14, which constituted 9.39 to 21.85 per cent of allocation.
8.	Puducherry	Short fall in lifting of rice by the department during the period 2009-10 to 2013-14 ranged between 2.77 per cent and 33.13 per cent.

In the following cases, however the states had lifted 5182.22 MTs of excess foodgrains as against the allocations as given in **Table 3.2** below:

Table 3.2: Cases of excess lifting of foodgrains

Sl. No.	Name of State	Year	Foodgrains allocated (In MTs)	Foodgrains lifted (In MTs)	Excess foodgrains lifted (In MTs)
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	2010-11	4544.67	5928.39	1383.72 (30.44 per cent)
		2011-12	6677.00	7530.00	853.00 (12.77 per cent)
2.	Himachal Pradesh	2012-13	19323.70	19792.52	468.82 (2.43 per cent)
3.	Nagaland	2010-11	6227.56	6570.21	342.65 (5.50 per cent)
		2011-12	5828.20	6945.99	1117.79 (19.18 per cent)

4.	Delhi	2013-14	29957.40	30950.87	993.47 (3.32 per cent)
5.	Lakshadweep	2013-14	247.12	269.89	22.77 (9.21 per cent)
Total			72805.65	77987.87	5182.22

Though these states had lifted excess foodgrains, audit observed reduction in enrolment of children in these states as compared to previous year, which indicates absence of adequate control mechanism at the releasing points.

Scrutiny of records related to lifting, transportation and utilisation of foodgrains brought out various irregularities as detailed in the following case studies.

Case Studies

1. Lifting and utilization of foodgrains as per actual consumption

Government of India provides free supply of foodgrains at the rate of 100 grams for primary and 150 grams per child per day for upper primary under MDM Scheme.

Audit observed that **UT, Chandigarh** consistently short lifted foodgrains during 2009-10 to 2013-14 ranging between 49 per cent and 67 per cent of the total allocation. Utilization of foodgrains per child per day ranged between 62 to 87 grams and 70 to 107 grams in primary/upper primary level respectively as against prescribed norms (100 grams /150 grams).

The department in its reply (October 2014) stated that children consume less quantity of meal and hence lifting and utilisation of foodgrains was in accordance with actual consumption. The reply is not consistent with the scheme provisions.

2. Higher norms of foodgrains fixed for children

In **Kerala** the implementation of the scheme in the entire 14 districts was evaluated by an external agency, viz. Centre for Development Studies (CDS) during April 2011 to March 2012. CDS observed that some schools had suggested that the present quantity of rice fixed for each child was not fully required, particularly for girl children. The Secretary, General Education Department also informed audit that the quantity was in excess

of requirement. Though the stipulated quantity was debited in MDM accounts, actual utilization was of lesser quantities and the balance of foodgrains thus saved was given to the children on festive occasions. The department's view highlights the fact that the norms are not based on actual requirement and there is a need for review and revision of the norms for efficient implementation.

3. Misappropriation of MDM foodgrains – ` 1.91 crore

Ministry's instructions (February 2010) required lifting of rice from FCI by the official authorized by the District Administration. Further, the quantity of rice lifted by Transport Agent (TA) and that delivered at block / school points was to be reconciled regularly to avoid the possibility of any short supply and pilferage of rice.

In **Odisha**, audit examined the foodgrains management at district level and found that there was no mechanism of regular reconciliation of the quantity lifted from FCI and that delivered at school points. Further, the bills submitted by the TA were passed for payments merely on the basis of delivery challans without reconciling the same with the actual quantity delivered at the delivery point. This led to short delivery as well as misappropriation of 806.15 MTs rice of ` 1.91 crore as indicated below:

- Test check of records of three Block Education Officer (BEOs) (Aul, Marshaghai and Mahakalapara) of the district Kendrapara revealed that while 2143.25 MT of rice were lifted between April 2013 and August 2014 from FCI Depot, the actual delivery by the TA was only 1758.71 MT. Thus, 384.54 MT of rice worth ` 91.07 lakh⁵ were short delivered. The resultant amount was yet to be recovered. BEOs of Aul, Marshaghai and Mahakalapara while confirming the facts stated that it would be reported to the District Nodal Office. Further progress was awaited (January 2015).
- In Kendrapara, TA lifted (December 2011) 410.35 MT of rice from FCI Depot but delivered only 362.35 MT rice at school points. Thus, 48.00 MT of rice costing ` 11.37 lakh was short delivered. The District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) did not recover proportionate

⁵ @ 2368.36 per Qtl. CMR-cost in 2013-14 multiplied by 3845.37 Qtls.

cost of foodgrains and instead released the security deposit of ₹ 15.00 lakh to TA in June 2012.

DSWO, while admitting release of security deposit, stated (September 2014) that the TA was directed to produce the remaining challans on distribution of rice.

Similarly, in Kendrapada, TA lifted (January 2012 to January 2013) 4278.698 MT of MDM rice from FCI depot, and claimed transportation of only 4022.822 MT. This indicated short delivery of foodgrains. The amount claimed towards transportation cost was paid (March 2013) without recovering ₹ 60.60 lakh being the cost of remaining 255.876 MT rice short delivered.

- DSWO, Balangir supplied 653.04 MT of rice (April 2009 to March 2011) to Block Development Officer (BDO), Loisingha for distribution to different primary and upper primary Schools under the block. On cross verification of rice stock registers of concerned BDO with the delivery challans furnished by TA to the DSWO, audit found that only 547.06 MT of rice was received at block point, though delivery challans submitted by TA showed receipt of entire quantity by the BDO. This resulted in suspected misappropriation of 105.98 MT of MDM rice valued ₹ 25.10 lakh⁶.
- In order to assess actual delivery of rice at schools audit cross checked stock registers/delivery challans of 13 schools in Gudvella blocks and report/returns of 26 schools in Loisingha and Muribahal blocks of Balangir district and found that in 22 cases no rice was supplied. However, audit noticed that the TA submitted delivery challans in support of delivery of five MT rice while in 20 cases TA claimed excess delivery of 6.75 MT rice as compared to rice received at schools. Similarly in Cuttack District on sample checked in Cuttack Sadar block and Athagarh block, revealed that in 13 cases pertaining to nine schools there was short/non supply of 2.15 MT rice.

Audit also observed that supply of rice was inflated by the TA fraudulently manipulating the delivery challans as indicated in

⁶ @ 2368.36 per Qtl. CMR-cost in 2013-14 multiplied by 1059.800 Qtls.

photographs below.

DELIVERY CHALLAN MDM
 Block: Gudupla
 Date: 01/30/12
 Name of Transporting Agent: Santosh Kumar Agrawal, Titilagarh
 C - D.I. of School, DPMU, MDM Cell, Balangir
 Name of the School /SHG /AWC: Dusuda H.S.
 Received: Rice from transporting Agent for MDM on proper weightment in good & hygienic condition.

Sl.No.	Particulars	Primary	U.P. Primary	Total
01.	RICE		300 kg	
02.				300 kg

Signature of Transporting Agent: [Signature]
 Signature and Date of the Receiving Officer with seal: [Signature] 20/11/12

Photo 1: Challan available with school showing delivery of 300 Kg rice.

DELIVERY CHALLAN MDM
 Block: Gudupla
 Date: 01/30/12
 No.: [Blank]
 Name of Transporting Agent: Santosh Kumar Agrawal, Titilagarh
 A/C - D.I. of School, DPMU, MDM Cell, Balangir
 Name of the School /SHG /AWC: Dusuda H.S.
 Received: Rice from transporting Agent for MDM on proper weightment in good & hygienic condition.

Sl.No.	Particulars	Primary	U.P. Primary	Total
01.	RICE		1300 kg	
02.				1300 kg

Signature of Transporting Agent: [Signature]
 Signature and Date of the Receiving Officer with seal: [Signature] 20/11/12

Photo 2: Challan submitted by the TA claiming delivery of 1300 Kg rice to Block Nodal Officer (BNO).

These cases indicate that the District level officers responsible for management of foodgrains failed to exercise due diligence.

4. Fraudulent lifting/non-delivery of foodgrains in Uttar Pradesh

- In Manihan block of **Mirzapur** district, 89.58 MT of foodgrains valuing ` 4.47 lakh was lifted by DRMO in October 2013 without allotment from MDMA/Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA). The foodgrains were irregularly delivered to kotedars.
- In **Ghazipur**, wheat (4898.77 quintal) and rice (8207.18 quintal) valuing ` 66.70 lakh was lifted from the block godown by kotedars during the period November 2010 to August 2013 but the material was not delivered to the schools.
- In **Mirzapur**, the status of 1627.23 MTs of foodgrains valuing ` 80.58 lakh lifted from FCI and paid for during 2009-14 remained unascertainable.
- In district **Ghazipur**, 1174 MT of foodgrains valuing ` 59.77 lakh, though lifted from FCI, was not delivered to block godowns.

- In **Saharanpur**, there was a variation of 302 MTs of foodgrains lifted⁷ from FCI and available in block godowns⁸ of UPF&CSD.

5. Doubtful implementation of MDM Scheme

In **Manipur**, test check of records of nine sampled schools of Chandel District, revealed that during 2011-14 MDM was served to children on 3391 school days while the total school days worked out to only 3191 during the same period indicating possibility of fudging of records and leakages. Similar instances were noticed in the case of Imphal East district where MDM was reported to have been served for 4715 school days against total available school days of 4101.

6. In **Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh**, MDM in primary schools and upper primary Schools of urban areas was supplied by NGOs. Primary school, Bazdaran-II was situated in the urban area of district Saharanpur. Due to non-availability of teacher, the school was closed since October 2011. The Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), however, showed serving of 1779 meals during 2014-15 (up to October 2014). The data regarding meals served during earlier years were not available on IVRS. The matter indicates creation of fake records requiring investigation.

3.2 Variation in foodgrains allocated and lifted

During audit, the data on lifting of foodgrains were collected from 29 states for the period 2009-10 to 2013-14 and compared with the data available with the Ministry. A comparison of these figures is given in **Annex-V**.

- Analysis of figures revealed various inconsistencies between the figures of foodgrains lifted by the states and the Ministry.
- 14 states had reported less lifting of foodgrains of 225473.20 MTs as compared to Ministry's record. Out of these 14 states, eight states viz. **Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh** and **Delhi** had short lifted foodgrains of 222959.14 MTs. Thus, variation in the figures of

⁷ As per bills furnished by DRMO.

⁸ As per ledger maintained at Office of the Regional Food Controller, Saharanpur.

foodgrains showing less lifted w.r.t. records of the Ministry indicates the possibility of misappropriation and pilferage of foodgrains.

- 16 states reported figures of excess lifting of foodgrains as compared to the records of the Ministry. The mismatch was to the extent of 56685.70 MTs. Six states viz. **Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab** and **Rajasthan** had reported excess lifting of foodgrains of 53249.49 MTs. Thus, the integrity of data was questionable.
- The variation in quantity of foodgrains indicates that the concerned nodal departments were furnishing incorrect periodic returns/ utilisation certificates to the Ministry in respect of utilisation of allotted foodgrains.

3.3 Non- availability of buffer stock of foodgrains with service providers

Para 2.6 of guidelines for decentralisation (February 2010) envisaged that district administration should ensure that every consuming unit maintains buffer stock of foodgrains required for a month to avoid disruption due to unforeseen exigencies.

Audit of selected schools in states and Union Territories brought out that there was no mechanism of maintaining buffer stock of foodgrains in as many as 11 states/union territories (**Rajasthan, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Nagaland, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Puducherry**)

In **Tamilnadu**, 21 to 41 schools out of 148 test checked schools did not have the required buffer stock during 2009-10 to 2013-14.

In **Goa**, in the 29 Self Help Groups (SHGs) visited by audit, no buffer stock of foodgrains for one month's requirement was being maintained.

In **Delhi**, the stock registers for the period January to March 2014 depicted minus opening and closing balances of foodgrains ranging between 227.33 MTs and 1005.05 MTs. Thus, the accounting and verification procedures were grossly inadequate.

Hence, non-maintenance of buffer stock of foodgrains for a month had adversely affected the serving of hot cooked meal for all working days to children. Audit came across significant cases of disruption in MDM in 20 states. Details are given in **Annex-VI**.

3.4 Fair average quality (FAQ) of foodgrains not ensured

As per MDM guidelines, Food Corporation of India (FCI) was to issue foodgrains of best available quality, which would, in any case, at least be of fair average quality (FAQ) and would also ensure continuous availability of adequate quantity of good quality of foodgrains. The district collector was to ensure that the foodgrains of at least FAQ were issued by FCI. This was to be ensured through a joint inspection by a team consisting of the FCI representative and a nominee of the collector.

Audit examination of the records made available at the District/School level in 34 State/Union Territories, revealed that:

No inspection with regard to the FAQ was carried out in the states/union territories of **Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Delhi**.

Test check of schools in **Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, and Puducherry** showed that there was no mechanism in place to check the quality of foodgrains.

Case Studies

1. Sub-standard quality of rice exchanged/sold in the open market for better quality rice

In **Goa**, 85 Self Help Groups (SHGs) who were supplying MDM to the children during 2009-14 did not return the rice and wheat received from FCI due to substandard quality but exchanged or sold it in the open market for better quality.

Out of 29 SHGs, audit noticed that 17 SHGs exchanged/sold 3468.04 quintals rice supplied by FCI from open market. Further, 16 SHGs sold both rice and wheat supplied by FCI. While 12 SHGs used rice and sold wheat, one SHG exchanged rice and used wheat. The price of rice was between ` 30 and ` 35 per Kg. During

the same period, 28 SHGs exchanged/sold 5369.16 quintal wheat in open market. Thus huge quantity of rice/wheat supplied to 855 SHGs by FCI flowed into the open market which also indicates that rice supplied by FCI was neither of FAQ nor suitable for being served to children.

The quantity of rice received by the SHGs in exchange of the inferior quality of rice remained unascertainable and unaccounted. Therefore, audit could not derive assurance as to whether the children were provided with optimum quantity of prescribed meal.

2. FAQ of foodgrains was not ensured at the district level.

Further, the **Madhya Pradesh** State Civil Supplies Corporation (MPSCSC) was authorised to supply foodgrains under De-Centralised Procurement (DCP) Scheme during 2013-14. Records of test checked districts revealed that MPSCSC supplied rice of common grade for MDM instead of rice of grade 'A' quality which was previously supplied by FCI till 2012-13. Thus, supply of FAQ foodgrains was not ensured as indicated in the following pictures:



Photo 3: Breeding of Indian meals moth larve in rice stock - PS Dharmdas BlockPushprajgarh District Anuppur, **Madhya Pradesh** dated 14 October 2014



Photo 4: Breeding of Indian meals moth larvae due to storage of food grains in gunny bags at moist place-MS PondiChodi, District Anuppur, **Madhya Pradesh** dated 16 October 2014.

3. Best quality of foodgrains not supplied by FCI

In **Uttar Pradesh**, audit observed that instead of supplying Grade “A” rice, FCI supplied 660011.72 MTs (70.64 *per cent* of the total 939111.301 MTs of rice supplied) of Rice Raw Common (RRC) during 2009-14. Thus, in contravention of scheme guidelines, the best quality of rice was not issued by FCI.

FCI stated that Grade ‘A’ rice was issued only when there was no Common Rice or Grade ‘A’ rice pertains to older period. Reply of the FCI was not in consonance with the guidelines of the Ministry for issue of foodgrains.

In **Lakshadweep**, children and parents complained about inferior quality of rice supplied by FCI. Subsequently FCI started supplying better quality rice from 2013-14 onwards.

In **Delhi**, no sample of foodgrains was lifted for testing during the 2009-2014. It was also observed that the quality of foodgrains at the time of lifting was being labelled as grade 'A' but the same quality did not reach the MDM kitchen. This is borne out by the fact that the available stock of foodgrains of Central Kitchen in South West Delhi of a service provider was found to be substandard and was infested with worms, and contained non-grains elements requiring extensive cleaning. This indicates that the rice was not of FAQ.

As is evident from above, there were numerous instances of inferior quality of rice being supplied posing health hazards to children. The mechanism to ensure FAQ quality through regular inspection was largely absent.

3.5 Disruption in serving of cooked meals

MDM Scheme provides that every child attending the school shall be served Mid day meal on all school days. Para 3.3 of the Guidelines envisages that the State specifies norms and modalities for ensuring regular and uninterrupted provision of nutritious cooked meal. State Government/UT Administrations were to develop and circulate detailed guidelines taking into account common obstacles which may come in the way of regular supply of cooked MDM.

Moreover, the Supreme Court also directed in 2001 that all states should provide cooked meal to the primary school children for at least 210 days in a year.

In the test checked schools of 20 states/union territories significant disruptions in providing cooked meals to the children were noticed. The reasons for disruption were attributed to shortage/delay in receipt of foodgrains, non-availability of funds, absence of cooks etc. Details are given in **Annex-VI**.

Case Study

1. Non-serving of MDM on the day of joint inspection

In **Madhya Pradesh** during joint inspection conducted between September 2014 and December 2014 of the test checked schools of ten districts, audit found that MDM was not served on the day of inspection in 12 schools of seven test checked districts (Anuppur, Bhopal, Dhar, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Rajgarh and Vidisha). The main reasons for non-serving of meals to children were non-supply of meal by Self Help Group (SHG), absence of cooks etc.

3.6 Enhancement of nutritional level of the children

One of the scheme objectives of the government was to improve the nutritional status of the primary and upper primary children. The health status of the children was to be monitored by the parent teacher

associations (PTA)/school level management and development committees (SMDC). Yet even this incorporation of health and nutrition aspects remained on paper as no basic indicators to monitor the incremental improvement in health levels in the children or specific norms (height and weight etc.) for measurements of nutritional status were set by the Ministry to serve as a benchmark.

It was only in 2007 that the Ministry of Human Resource Development requested the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to conduct regular health checks of the children and the Chief Secretaries of all states/union territories were also requested in January 2007 to revitalize the schools health programme including nutritional monitoring under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). Moreover, Department of school education and Literacy, MHRD had sent a communication to the Education secretaries of all states/UTs and also to Minister of Health and Family Welfare in May 2013 for better implementation of the school health Programme. No follow-up action was taken to collect the data on the coverage of children or to ascertain the improvement in nutritional status.

3.6.1 Administration of Micronutrients and health check-ups

Para 4.5 of guidelines prescribed that MDM should be complemented with micronutrient supplementations and de-worming medicines, through administration of (a) six monthly dose for de-worming and Vitamin-A supplementation, (b) weekly Iron and Folic Acid supplement, Zinc and (c) other appropriate supplementation depending on common deficiencies found in the local area.

In the test checked schools of six states/Union territories (**Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim**) micronutrients and supplements were not administered to children as a preventive measure to check the spread of area specific diseases among children.

Further, in the test checked schools of 17 states/Union territories audit observed the following shortcomings:

- Area specific deficiency among children were not identified.
- There were shortfalls in organising medical camps.
- Tablets of micronutrients were not being distributed among children.
- Children were found under weight and diagnosed anaemic with vitamin A deficiency and other health problems. They were not administered with appropriate micronutrient supplements.
- Six monthly doses of de-worming and weekly supplements like Iron and Folic Acid, Zinc were not provided regularly to children.
- Tablets were found dumped in the school. The shelf life of a large number of tablets had expired.

State-wise deficiencies have been highlighted in the **Annex-VII** and some cases have been detailed as case study below:

Case study

In **Odisha**, in 134 out of 148 test checked schools, IFA and albendazole tablets were not provided to the children during 2009-14. Joint physical inspection of Udayabhata Upper Primary cluster School under Kendrapara district revealed that huge quantity of tablets were dumped in the office room. Further, in most cases expiry periods of the tablets were also over.

Sl. No.	Name of the tablet	Quantity	Expired on
1.	Albendazole Oral Suspension (Batch no.24072-BG 21)	400	June 2014
2.	Albendazole Tablet 1P 400 Mg. (Batch no.AB/1003)	1330	October 2014
3.	Folic Acid and Ferrous Tablet NFI (Small) (Batch no.FIT29-116)	16000	June 2014
4.	Folic Acid and Ferrous Tablet (Large) (Batch no.FFT29-109)	12000	May 2014



Photo 5: Expired medicines stored at Udayabhata Upper Primary cluster School in Kendrapara district

In Balangir District iron and de-worming tablets were not available in any sample checked schools whereas huge stock of these tablets was dumped at Block Education Offices under the district. The date of receipt of these tablets were not available.



Photo 6: Dumping of IFA & de-worming tablets in BEO Office, Muribahal in Balangir district



Photo 7: Dumping of IFA tablets in BEO Office, Gudvela in Balangir district

The instances brought out above indicate that procurement of tablets was without assessing the requirement. Thus, there was lack of systematic procedure for need identification and rationalised procurement policies.

3.6.1.1 Survey/study to identify the area specific nutritional deficiencies

Para 2.9 of Annexure 11, Part II B of the guidelines states that survey was to be conducted to check the nutritional levels in children.

No survey or study in the test checked schools to identify area specific nutritional deficiencies was conducted in the States/UTs of **Andhra Pradesh, A & N Island, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand** during 2009-10 to 2013-14.

3.6.2 Adherence to health check-ups absent

Audit of the test checked schools in the states brought out that regular health checks were not conducted in as many as eight States/Union Territories (**Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Manipur and Nagaland**). The status of health check-ups conducted in other 14 states is as per the details given in **Table 3.3**:

Table 3.3: Details of health check-ups conducted

Sl. No.	State	Status of health check-ups conducted during 2009-10 in test checked schools
1.	Goa	Health check-ups were conducted in 47 schools once in a year, twice in a year in 10 schools while no health check-ups were conducted in 3 schools.
2.	Haryana	Health check-ups in four out of 60 test checked schools have not conducted.
3.	Jharkhand	115 out of 120 test checked schools did not organise health check-ups camp.
4.	Karnataka	Only 5 health check-ups were conducted in 120 schools.
5.	Kerala	28 out of 60 test checked schools did not conduct the prescribed health check-ups.
6.	Madhya Pradesh	In 247 out of 300 schools health check-ups were not carried out. In 53 test checked schools where health check-ups were conducted, 186 children were found either malnutrient, Vitamin A deficiency or suffering from other health problems.
7.	Meghalaya	41 (68 <i>per cent</i>) out of 60 schools did not conduct the regular health check-ups of the children.

8.	Punjab	In 14 schools (16 <i>per cent</i>) out of 90 schools, doctors did not pay visits.
9.	Tamilnadu	Health check-ups were done only once in a year in 38 schools out of 150 test checked schools and 933 children were found either underweight, anaemic or lack of nutrients.
10.	Tripura	In test checked West Tripura district Health checks were conducted in 8 <i>per cent</i> to 38 <i>per cent</i> schools in which only 6 <i>per cent</i> to 28 <i>per cent</i> children were covered out of the total enrolled children.
11.	Uttarakhand	Health check-up of children schools was to be conducted twice in a year but in 60 test checked schools of Almora and Tehri, only 28 <i>per cent</i> and 36 <i>per cent</i> health check-ups were carried out respectively.
12.	Uttar Pradesh	In 135 out of 360 test checked schools health check-ups were never conducted.
13.	West Bengal	In 58 test checked schools only 40 health check-ups were conducted during the year 2009-14 and covered only 7.96 <i>per cent</i> of total enrolled children.
14.	Chandigarh	119 health check-ups were carried out on an average basis every year during 2009-10 to 2013-14 and covered 57 <i>per cent</i> of the total enrolled children.

Further, records of regular health check-up and registers were not maintained in **Arunachal Pradesh**, **Chhattisgarh** and **Sikkim**. In **Himachal Pradesh** the headmasters of the test checked schools stated (September-November 2014) that teams conducting the health check-ups of the children did not record the results in the registers maintained in the schools.

In **Assam**, 42 out of 120 test checked schools did not maintain any records of health check-ups.

In **Karnataka**, health registers containing records of height, weight and other health status of the children were not maintained in 66 of the 120 test-checked schools.

In **Punjab**, 61 out of 90 schools and in **Uttar Pradesh** 227 out of 360 test checked schools, health cards and health registers were not maintained.

Thus the mechanism of health checks remained largely neglected.

3.6.3 Weighing Machines/Height recorders

In test checked schools of **Assam**, **Lakshadweep** and **Sikkim** weighing machines and height recorders were not provided to schools, while in **Arunachal Pradesh** weighing machines/height recorders were out of order since 2006-07. In **Uttar Pradesh**, in 153 out of 360 test checked schools weighing machines were not available. In Punjab 15 *per cent* of schools were not provided with weighing machines.

In **Chhattisgarh**, Out of 3057 schools, only 900 schools in Raigarh were having weighing machine and height recorders.

In **Rajasthan**, in five test checked districts there was shortfall of 87.61 *per cent* in height measuring machines and 68.66 *per cent* in weighing machines.

In **Tripura**, Directorate of Education procured 227 weighing machines for ₹ 6.37 lakh and distributed these to the Inspector of Schools (ISs) for onward distribution to the Schools. Out of 96 test checked schools weighing machines were available only in nine schools, indicating that the machines were not being put to intended use.

3.6.4 Assurance of quality food

MHRD guidelines of July 2013 state that in order to ensure quality, safety and hygiene under the MDM Scheme, all states/UTs would engage CSIR institutes/National Accreditation Board for Laboratories recognised labs in order to out sample checking of MDM.

Audit, however, observed that in the test checked schools of 18 states/UTs (**Andhra Pradesh**, **Arunachal Pradesh**, **A&N Island**, **Bihar**, **Chandigarh**, **Chhattisgarh**, **Dadra & Nagar Haveli**, **Daman & Diu**, **Goa**, **Jammu & Kashmir**, **Jharkhand**, **Karnataka**, **Kerala**, **Lakshadweep**, **Manipur**, **Punjab**, **Tripura** and **Uttar Pradesh**) the state governments did not

engage reputed institutes and laboratories for carrying out sample checking of cooked meal to ensure quality meal to the children.

In **Gujarat**, test-checked districts had not engaged any recognised laboratory for testing of food samples. During joint field visit of 120 schools, it was observed that in 102 schools, testing of food samples was not carried out during 2009-14.

In 148 test checked schools of **Odisha**, quality of food consumed by the children or foodgrains used in preparation of meal was not tested in any laboratory.

Good Practices

Kitchen Gardens to supplement MDM

In **Arunachal Pradesh**, the school authorities of Government Middle School, Tenga, West Kameng District, had taken up a good initiative of kitchen gardens in school premises to grow vegetables and supplement the mid day meals, as seen from the photographs below:



Photo 8: Kitchen Garden in Government Middle School, Tenga, West Kameng

In **Tripura**, Kitchen garden had been started in 55 schools. This practice was being encouraged in all schools. The Gram Panchayats/Nagar Panchayats had been requested to provide some mandays from the MGNREGA for this purpose.

In **Manipur**, also Kitchen Gardening had been developed in school premises.

In **Madhya Pradesh**, rotis were cooked in electric machines in Bhopal and Jabalpur but were not properly baked as shown in the photo:



Photo 9: Half-baked roti cooked on electric machine, served by NGO at Primary School Vijay Nagar, Bhopal, dated 18 September 2014.

Case studies

1. Standardised procedures for storage not being followed

MDM programme requires that safety and hygiene standards must be set and practiced with rigour. MDM also stipulates that for quality and safety aspect, foodgrains must be stored in a place away from moisture, in air tight containers/bins to avoid infestation. There should be a raised platform for cooking, adequate light, proper ventilation and arrangement for drainage and waste disposal. Cooking and serving utensils should be properly cleaned and dried every day after use.

In Chandigarh, foodgrains stored at three locations viz. sector 22, 30 and sector 35 did not have appropriate facilities for storage. As a result, foodgrains got infested with worms during storage, particularly during rainy season. Audit also observed that complaints of worm infested foodgrains were being received from the cooking agencies.

2. Cooking of poor quality meal in unhygienic conditions

In **Chandigarh**, three agencies viz. Chandigarh Institute of Hotel Management (CIHM), Ambedkar Institute of Hotel Management (AIHM) and Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Development Corporation Limited (CITCO) engaged for cooking MDM for schools of Chandigarh. Audit observed that there were several complaints received from children/Inspector (MDM) of poor quality meal cooked by CITCO. In a

survey conducted by Audit, 122 (75 per cent) children out of 162 children in respect of two schools reported that meal cooked by CITCO was not properly cooked, had bad taste and tasted sour at many times. During visit to CITCO kitchen, Audit observed that meal was being cooked in unhygienic conditions. Broken and unclean utensils were used for cooking meals. Further the area used for cooking was dark and dimly lit.



Photo 10: Kitchen area of CITCO

The department in its reply (December 2014) stated that matter regarding poor quality and taste of meal was taken up with the CITCO and higher authorities and necessary directions were issued to CITCO for taking corrective measures. The action of the department appears to be mild and rather calls for stringent action against the CITCO for compromising safety and hygiene standards of MDM.

3.6.4.1 Instances of food poisoning/hospitalisation and sickness

In **Odisha**, during 2013-14, 210 students of 19 schools fell sick after consuming MDM and had to be hospitalised.

In **Andhra Pradesh**, four cases of food poisoning had occurred in Adilabad district and the children had to be hospitalised.

In **Chhattisgarh**, Non-testing of the food samples resulted in occurrence of six incidents of food contamination in the schools. 108 children had been hospitalised during 2009-14.

In **Delhi**, 126 children were hospitalized due to poor quality of food served by the service provider (M/s Rao Raghubeer Singh Sewa Samiti) on 25 November 2009 in SKV School, TrilokPuri. Consequently the supply of MDM remained suspended from 26 November 2009 to 6 December 2009.

Similarly, during 2009-12, 10 separate incidents of children falling sick after availing MDM occurred in the schools resulting in hospitalization of 305 children (including 126 children were hospitalised in Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, Trilok Puri). Similar incident occurred in July 2013 in East Delhi Municipal Corporation School at Sabhapur resulting in hospitalisation of five students.

3.6.5 Plan to involve teachers and mothers for ensuring quality not working

Para 4.3 of the guidelines stipulates that teachers should be involved in ensuring that (a) good quality, wholesome food was served to children (b) the actual serving and eating was undertaken in a spirit of togetherness under hygienic conditions and in an orderly manner and it should be ensured that the food prepared was tasted by two to three adults including at least one teacher before it was served to children.

The scheme guidelines (Annexure 10 of Para 4.4) emphasized the need to involve mothers of the children in checking the quality of the food being served to the children in the school.

In nine states (**Assam, Bihar, Daman and Diu, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Manipur and Lakshadweep**), the teachers were not involved in tasting the quality of food being served to the children. Nor was any record/register being maintained in the test checked schools in this regard. Further mothers were not found involved in supervision of preparation of meals and feeding of children in the test checked schools of above said states as required under the guidelines. This compromises the checks and balances in place to ensure quality of meal served to children.

In **Himachal Pradesh**, the headmasters of concerned schools stated (August-November 2014) that mothers of children used to visit the school in a casual manner while in **Karnataka** schools replied that they were

reluctant to come to school and taste the food. The position of other six states is given in **Table 3.4** below:

Table 3.4: Instances of non-tasting of cooked meal

Sl. No.	State	Remarks
1.	Andhra Pradesh	86 out of 120 schools test checked there was no involvement of mothers to supervise preparation of meal and feeding of children. No register was maintained to certify that cooked meal was tasted by the teacher.
2.	Haryana	Out of 24 selected schools where cooked MDM was being supplied by ISKON, teacher feedback on quality of food was positive only in 6 (25 <i>per cent</i>) schools. Children feedback was taken only in 8 upper primary schools where it was positive only in 2 (25 <i>per cent</i>) schools. Thus, there was a negative feedback in 75 <i>per cent</i> schools.
3.	Odisha	In 139 schools (94 <i>per cent</i>) mothers were not involved to supervise preparation of meals and feeding of children.
4.	Punjab	Out of 90 test checked schools, mothers were not involved in 59 schools to supervise/prepare food for MDM.
5.	Tripura	In 11 (11 <i>per cent</i>) schools out of 96 test school foods was not tasted by any teacher or mother before serving to the children.
6.	Uttar Pradesh	In 29 schools teachers were not involved to ensure that good quality of food was served to children while in 207 schools mothers were not present to supervise preparation and serving of meals to children.

Thus, mechanism prescribed for ensuring the quality of food provided to the children, was either not in place or the extent of its working could not be assessed owing to lack of documentation.

3.6.6 Calorific value not being ensured

To achieve the objectives of the Scheme, the scheme guidelines prescribed the nutritional content in the MDM (i) Calories – 450 and 700 and (ii) Protein-12 gm and 20 gm for primary and upper primary respectively. The above nutritional content is to be ensured through a package consisting of the following ingredients per child per school day:

Sl. No.	Item	Primary	Upper Primary
1.	Rice/Wheat	100 gms	150 gms
2.	Pulses	20 gms	30 gms
3.	Vegetables	50 gms	75 gms
4.	Oil	5 gms	7.5 gms
5.	Micro-nutrients	Adequate quantities of micro-nutrients like Iron, Folic Acid, Vitamin-A etc. in convergence with NRHM	

No record/register was being maintained to ensure the minimum calorie and protein content provided in the cooked meal being served to the children in the test checked schools of **Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tripura** while in **North and Middle Andaman** there was no system in place to ensure that the specified ingredients were being provided to the children. Thus, required calorie and protein content of the meals being supplied to the children availing MDM could not be ensured.

Case study

Cooked meal samples failing to meet prescribed standards

In **Delhi**, during the period 2010-14, Sri Ram Institute for Industrial Research (SRIIR) tested samples of cooked food of the 37 service providers. SRIIR found that a high percentage of samples (89 *per cent*) failed to meet the prescribed standards, as shown below:

Year	Number of samples tested	Number of samples failed	Percentage of samples failed
2010-11	352	333	94
2011-12	565	541	95
2012-13	559	500	89
2013-14	626	502	80
Total	2102	1876	89

Further, during 2013-14 the minimum and maximum value of calories in these cases ranged between 137.90 and 559.40 calories, and the value of protein ranged between 4.3 and 15.2 grams which was less than the prescribed nutrition value. Audit also observed that the Directorate extended supply orders of 31 service providers on 31 March 2014 for the year 2014-15 though their foodgrains samples had failed. This included 12 service providers who were penalised every

year for the past four years, thereby indicating continuous failure. The Directorate did not take any punitive measures and instead levied only penalty of ₹ 77.25 lakh on 37 defaulting service providers.

In nine states shortfall in supply of foodgrains in the meals served to children against prescribed quantity of foodgrains was noticed in selected schools/districts indicating that this prescribed nutrition was not provided to the children of these areas.

In **Karnataka**, ISKCON, an NGO supplied MDM to the children of 304 schools in the taluks (Ballari and Hosapete) of Ballari district. It however used 1044536 kg rice less than the prescribed norms in preparing MDM. Details are given in **Annex-VIII**.

3.6.7 Use of double fortified salt

As per Ministry's guidelines of July 2013, only "double fortified salt" should be used for cooking MDM.

In **Goa**, all the Self Help Groups were using iodised salt instead of double fortified salt.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, physical verification of 360 test-checked PS and UPS revealed that even iodised salt was not being used in 18 schools.

In **Delhi**, double fortified salt was not being used in kitchens due to its non-availability in the market.

3.6.8 Absence of emergency medical plan in schools

Paragraph (xi) of the guidelines dated 22 July 2013 issued by the MHRD, provides for envisaging emergency medical plan to afford medical treatment to school children in case of any untoward incident in the school. The District authorities should ensure that prompt medical attention is provided to children in the nearby medical facility or by deputing a doctor to the school.

In **Delhi**, Principals of selected schools stated (September to December 2014) that though no formal emergency plan had been envisaged, the

treatment would be done in the nearest Government hospital or by private doctor, in case of any incident.

In **Goa**, it was observed that no doctor was appointed in any of the 60 schools under emergency medical plan. All the schools were dependent on the Public Health Centre in the region, which in many cases was not located in the nearby locality. The department stated that Director of Health Services was requested to make emergency medical plan.

In **Manipur**, no emergency medical plan was envisaged by the sampled schools.

In **Punjab**, audit observed that in 80 out of 90 test checked primary and upper primary schools, no emergency plan was prepared and displayed by the school authorities. Further no instructions at the Directorate/District level were issued in this regard.

In **Tripura**, department did not envisage any emergency medical plan.

3.6.9 Absence of convergence activities

The MDM Scheme guidelines provide that the programme has to be implemented in close convergence with several other development programmes implemented by various Ministries so that all the requirements for implementation of the scheme like kitchen-cum-store, water supply, kitchen devices, school health programme for health check-up, supplementation of micro-nutrients, de-worming medicines etc. could be provided to all schools in the shortest possible time frame. Detail of items requiring close convergence with other scheme/programme is given in **Annex-IX**.

Due to deficient monitoring of the scheme by the Ministry and non-convergence with other schemes audit observed the following:

- Despite availability of central assistance, Kitchen cum Store were not constructed and MDM was cooked in open and unhygienic conditions.

- No health check-ups camps were organised in convergence with National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).
- The role of the Ministry was limited to allotment of budget. It did not attempt to ensure availability of essential facilities like drinking water, kitchen devices for cooking food and proper and timely health check-ups.
- States did not plan convergence of scheme through various centrally sponsored schemes on the various components of the schemes. A few instances of non-convergence and lack of coordination among various stakeholders is given in **Table 3.5** below:

Table 3.5: Cases of Non-Convergence

MDM Scheme component	Lack of convergence/coordination with the schemes	States
Health check-ups	National Rural Health Mission	Kerala
Constructions of Kitchen Shed	Sampoorna Grameen RozgarYojana Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Basic Services for Urban Poor Urban Wage Employment Programme	Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh
Drinking Water	Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme Swajaldhara	Uttar Pradesh
Kitchen Devices	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan	Uttar Pradesh

Further, based on the records made available to audit at the district/block/school level in 34 states/union territories, departments of 19 states did not obtain inputs regarding construction of kitchen sheds, provision of drinking water, school health programmes, etc; from concerned departmental functionaries, leading to disjointed efforts of various agencies towards the same goal. The status of convergence in 19 states is given in **Annex-X**. Thus, convergence activities were not undertaken in a coordinated manner.

3.7 Cooking infrastructure wholly inadequate/unsatisfactory

Provision of infrastructure facilities such as kitchen-cum-store are 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 foodgrains at the school level. Absence of kitchen-cum-store or inadequate facilities would expose children to health hazards as well as possible fire accidents. The provision of kitchen cum store had also been made mandatory under Right to Education Act 2009.

The Ministry sanctioned 10,01,054 units of kitchen sheds for schools as of March 2014. States/UTs have constructed only 6,70,595 units (67 *per cent*) upto 31 March 2014. The construction work had been completed for less than 60 *per cent* of the sanctioned kitchen cum stores in the states/UTs of **Andhra Pradesh** (17 *per cent*), **Kerala** (13 *per cent*), **Tamilnadu** (27 *per cent*), **Manipur** (38 *per cent*), **Maharashtra** and **Rajasthan** (58 *per cent*), **Jharkhand** (53 *per cent*), **Uttarakhand** and **Odisha** (52 *per cent*), **A&N Islands** and **D&N Haveli** (2 *per cent*). **(State wise position in Annex-XI).**

Audit observed that these facilities were mostly deficient in 26 sample checked states as detailed in **Annex-XII.**

Three States/UTs **Dadra** and **Nagar Haveli** (100 *per cent* of the test checked schools), **Manipur** (93.33 *per cent* of the test checked schools) and **Arunachal Pradesh** (77.77 *per cent* of the test checked schools) did not have kitchen sheds. In **Bihar**, **Lakshadweep** (100 *per cent* of the test checked schools), **Arunachal Pradesh**, 98 *per cent* of the test checked schools, **Kerala**, **Manipur** and **Nagaland**, 90 *per cent* of the test checked schools, did not have LPG connections. In **Chhattisgarh**, 100 *per cent* of the test checked schools did not have drinking water facility.

Hence, out of 2854 test checked schools in 26 states/union territories 931 schools did not have pucca kitchen sheds, 648 did not have kitchen devices/utensils, 1389 did not have LPG connections and 396 schools did not have drinking water facility.

In **Madhya Pradesh**, Anuppur district more than one kitchen shed was found constructed under different schemes in six out of 30 test checked schools. Photograph pertaining to a school is given below:



Photo 11: Multiple kitchen sheds constructed at Primary School Moliyatola, Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh dated 01 November 2014

In **Assam**, in three test checked school, no kitchen sheds were available and food was being cooked in corridor of the schools as evident from the photographs given below:



Photo 12: Tarajan HS-Jorhat



Photo 13: 5 No. Ward LPS-Mariani-Jorhat

Similarly, in GPS HB Colony, Hamirpur, **Himachal Pradesh**, in the absence of kitchen shed, the meal was being cooked in the classroom as shown in the photo given below:



Photo 14: Meal cooked in classroom in GPS HB Colony, Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh

In **Tamilnadu**, in Panchayat Union Middle School, Pullarambakkam, kitchen shed was constructed but the same was not handed over by the contractor. In Panchayat Union Primary School, Naikkanur, it was found that due to non-availability of water in school, the children were made to fetch water from outside as shown in the photos below:



Photo 15: KCS was not handed over by the contractor for 2 years as a result the constructed building was not used (PUMS, Pullarambakkam School)



Photo 16: Students were found engaged in bringing water in PUPS, Naikkanur.

In **Odisha**, in seven schools⁹ despite construction of new kitchen shed, meal was not cooked in the shed as the size of the shed was considered inadequate for cooking. As a result, the related expenditure was rendered unfruitful. Photo of kitchen of Akhua Odanga High School, Akhua Odanga is given below:

⁹ Akhua Odanga High School in Kendrapara, Badatarakmunda PS & Pitapada PS in Balangir, Hatapada PS in Kandhamala



Photo 17: Cooking of MDM was not done in the newly constructed kitchen shed due to small size(10'X9')



Photo 18: Cooking of MDM is done in an old class room due to inadequate space in kitchen shed

In one school at district Rajgarh, **Madhya Pradesh** due to non-availability of proper utensils, MDM was being served in the hands of children as shown in the photograph below:



Photo 19: Serving of MDM in hands of students in the absence of proper utensils
Middle School, Modbadli, District Rajgarh, dated 31 October 2014

As a result of non-availability of pucca kitchen sheds the meal was being prepared in the open/verandah/cook-cum-helper's house as well in the classrooms, exposing the children to health hazards besides disrupting classes.

In **Puducherry**, 210 out of 805 vessels utilized for transporting cooked food to schools from various central kitchens were without tight lid (top cover). Transporting cooked meal in vessels without tight lid is fraught with

the risk of wastage and contamination of food. The following photographs capture unhygienic practices:



Photo 20: CK Villianur – Food containers without proper lid and food contaminated by flies

3.8 Excess claim of transportation charges

As per Para 2.3(ii) (b) of the scheme guidelines, the Central Government was to reimburse the actual cost of transportation of foodgrains from the nearest FCI godown to the schools subject to a prescribed ceiling of ₹ 75 per quintal.

In 10 states (**Manipur, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura and Nagaland**) the nodal agencies claimed transport charges in excess of the actuals resulting in excess claim of ₹ 47.49 crore during 2009-10 as detailed in **Annex-XIII**.

3.9 Providing MDM in drought affected areas

Para 5.1(4) of MDM guidelines stipulated that mid day meal would also be served in schools during summer vacation in areas which were formally notified by Government as drought affected. In case notification declaring an area as drought affected is issued at a time when summer vacation has already commenced or is about to commence, State Government should provide mid day meal in primary schools located in such area in anticipation of release of central assistance. In **Tamilnadu** and

Uttarakhand funds of ₹ 116.90 crore could not be utilised in drought affected areas. State-wise details of shortcomings noticed in providing MDM in drought affected areas are given in **Annex-XIV**. Case study highlighting discrepancies in MDM in drought affected area of Odisha is given below:-

Case study

In **Odisha**, the state government declared several blocks in various districts as drought affected during the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. The schools in these blocks were to serve MDM during the summer vacations. However, funds were released by the state government with delays of 370 days, 199 days and 35 days for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013 as given in the table below:

Non-serving MDM during summer vacation in drought affected areas

Name of the cropping season declared as affected	Date of notification declaring the area as drought affected	Numbers of blocks/district affected	Date of released fund to the district	Amount released (in crore)
Kharif 2010	19 April 2011	128 blocks/ULBs covering 17 districts	08 May 2012	17.31
			23 Nov 2012	21.97
Kharif 2011	29 February 2012	167 blocks/ULBs covering 19 districts		
Kharif 2012	18 February 2013	10 blocks covering 04 districts	07 June 2013	0.98

Therefore, funds were released by the department after completion of summer vacations 2011 and 2012. As a result, MDM was not served in these schools during the summer vacations.

Even after release of fund, no follow up action was taken by the State Nodal Office (MDM) to ensure providing mid-day meal to the children during the next summer vacations. In one test checked district (Kendrapara), audit observed that entire funds of ₹ 99.79 lakh provided (May 2012 and November 2012) remained unutilized (September 2014), as no mid day meal was provided during summer vacation in the district.

Thus, due to deficiencies in implementation and lack of co-ordination between the State Office with district offices, children in drought affected

areas were deprived of getting cooked meal in summer vacations. Besides, central assistance thereon could not also be availed. Reply of the Department was awaited (December 2014).

3.10 Revision of transportation cost of foodgrains.

As per MDM guidelines 2006, transport subsidy was fixed at ₹ 100 per quintal for special category states and ₹ 75 per quintal for other states. The rates of transport assistance were revised in subsequent years for special category states. Audit while analysing the utilisation of transport assistance for the year 2013-14 found that the rates fixed by the Ministry were not on actual basis. Some instances are given in **Table 3.6** below:

Table 3.6: Rates of transportation cost

Sl. No.	Name of state	Rate of transport assistance fixed by Ministry (In ₹)	Foodgrain lifted (in MTs) during 2013-14	Expenditure on transport assistance by state (₹ in lakh)	Actual rate of transport assistance per MT incurred by state (In ₹)
1.	Goa	750	3938.02	17.85	453
2.	Rajasthan	750	109630.53	395.13	360
3.	Sikkim	1820	2396.50	51.85	2164
4.	Uttarakhand	1140	21460.22	345.46	1610
5.	Uttar Pradesh	750	275595.69	1945.92	706
6.	Chandigarh	750	910	6.39	702
7.	Daman & Diu	750	358.43	3.63	1013
8.	Delhi	750	30950.87	112.01	362
9.	D&N Haveli	750	952.39	11.19	1175

From the above, it may be seen that the actual cost of transportation of foodgrains was different in each state during 2013-14. In some states, it was more than the rate fixed by the Ministry and in some cases it was less than the prescribed rate.

Thus, the Ministry did not adopt a scientific basis for fixing the rates of transportation of foodgrains. As a result, some states were facing extra financial burden for implementing MDM Scheme.

3.11 Non-utilisation of LPG Subsidy released by GOI

Records of the Ministry relating to release of Central Assistance to various State Governments/UTs Administrations for meeting additional expenditure incurred on the procurement of LPG cylinder after withdrawal of subsidy in September 2012 revealed that the Ministry had released ` 296.52 crore to 15 states/UTs during 2012-13. However all the states/UTs except Karnataka could not utilise this additional central assistance and reported it as unspent. These unspent balances were adjusted from the subsequent releases of central assistance to the states/UTs during 2013-14 as intimated by the Ministry.

Further, during 2013-14 also Ministry released ` 320.35 crore as central assistance towards the procurement of unsubsidised LPG cylinders to 17 states. Audit examination revealed the following:-

- Audit could not find the basis on which the additional central assistance of ` 296.52 crore and ` 320.35 crore was released by the Ministry in 2012-13 and 2013-14 for the procurement of unsubsidised LPG cylinders. The information was called for but was not provided (March 2015).
- In the states of **Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh** the unutilised funds for LPG subsidy amounted to ` 255.55 crore. In Tripura a sum of ` 23.58 crore was irregularly drawn by Inspector of School (IS), Sadar. Details of cases in other states are given in the **Table 3.7** below:

Table 3.7: Cases of non-utilisation of LPG subsidy

Sl. No.	States	Audit findings
1.	Andhra Pradesh	The Ministry released (March 2013) an amount of ₹ 23.34 crore as recurring central assistance for reimbursement of additional funds incurred for procurement of unsubsidized LPG cylinders under MDM Scheme for the year 2012-13. Audit observed that the grant released by the Ministry was lying unutilised as of March 2014.
2.	Assam	The Ministry released central assistance of ₹ 3.23 crore for procurement of unsubsidised LPG cylinders which was received by state government Ministry in March 2013 (₹ six lakh) and February 2014 (₹ 316.64 lakh). The entire fund was not released to State Nodal Office (SNO) till November 2014. Thus the intended objective of utilisation of LPG/gas based cooking under MDM did not materialise as 98 per cent schools were still using firewood.
3.	Punjab	<p>The Ministry released (March 2013) ₹ 21.81 crore as recurring Central Assistance for the year 2012-13 and ₹ 30.80 crore for 2013-14.</p> <p>Audit observed that state government released ₹ 21.81 crore to the implementing agency during 2012-13 and an expenditure of ₹ 1.52 crore was incurred on reimbursement of LPG subsidy and remaining ₹ 20.29 crore were utilized towards cooking cost. The Central assistance of ₹ 30.80 crore for the year 2013-14 remained blocked with State Government. Thus, demand of LPG subsidy without obtaining the requirement from school level resulted in irregular utilization of ₹ 20.29 crore besides blocking of ₹ 30.80 crore.</p> <p>The Department stated (September 2014), that the released funds could not be disbursed to the schools due to lack of original receipt of refilling the gas cylinders. However, the DEO, Hoshiarpur stated that neither any demand for the compensation of unsubsidized cost of LPG cylinder was received from the schools nor any demand was raised by the district. This showed that the State did not send a meaningful demand to the Ministry. Further, regarding ₹ 30.80 crore, the Department stated that the State Government did not release the funds during financial year 2013-14, which were revalidated by Ministry for the year 2014-15. The reply was not tenable as the demand of funds was raised at directorate level without getting the actual requirement of funds from the schools.</p>

4.	Tripura	Government of India sanctioned ₹ 70.71 lakh (2012-13: ₹ 34.50 lakh and 2013-14: ₹ 36.21 lakh) for reimbursement of additional funds incurred by the Government of Tripura for procurement of unsubsidized LPG cylinder. However, it was noticed from the records of Inspector of School (Block level Education Officer) Sadar-A that none of the schools had valid LPG connection. Further, ₹ 23.58 lakh was irregularly drawn by the Inspector of School (IS), Sadar on the basis of vouchers submitted by the 91 schools by collecting from different unauthorized agencies leading to irregular drawal of ₹ 23.58 lakh.
5.	Uttar Pradesh	Ministry released ₹ 198.95 crore during 2012-14 for reimbursement of differential cost of LPG, out of which only ₹ 0.77 crore was utilized which indicates that funds were demanded from the Ministry without assessing the actual requirement.

The instances brought out above indicate that the action of the Ministry to release funds was supply driven rather than the result of a well-conceived plan.

Recommendations:

- The system of inspections must be strengthened to ensure that foodgrains of at least Fair Average Quality as prescribed, are received from FCI Depot. State governments should fix accountability for lapses in this regard.
- The convergence activities with other departments must be accelerated to overcome deficiencies in the infrastructural facilities like provision of kitchen sheds and drinking water facility. Ministry may ensure regular health checks as prescribed and also advise the states to document the results of such health checks in order to ascertain the improvement in nutritional levels of children. Provision of weighing machines and height recorders in each school must be ensured.
- MDM Scheme could be variegated in nature and can be made flexible by making provisions for alternate nutrition, local produce instead of dry ration based meals to lessen monotony, keeping in view regional variations of taste and availability.