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Dated, the 21st December, 2022

Respected Madam/Sir,

As you are aware, Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes implemented in partnership with States and UTs. This Scheme benefits about 12 crore children studying in Balvatika (just before class I) and Classes I-VIII in Government and Government-Aided Schools.

2. This is to inform that the Scheme Guidelines have been comprehensively revised incorporating, inter alia, several focus areas such as Public Financial Management System, Quality and Safety Aspects, Social Audit, Joint Review Mission, School Nutrition Gardens, Cooking Competitions, Tithi Bhojan, Supplementary Nutrition in Aspirational districts and districts having high burden of malnutrition, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) etc.

3. This document is an evolving document, which can be updated as per the changes and developments in the Scheme. These guidelines are designed and formulated keeping the children as the focal point with an aim to help States and UTs towards better and smooth implementation of the PM POSHAN Scheme in an effective and efficient manner. In order to effectively implement these guidelines, States and UTs are requested to develop their own Standard Operating Procedures and undertake training and orientation of officials and other stakeholders at various levels. You are also advised to ensure that these guidelines are disseminated to all concerned upto the school level.

Let us join hands to ensure that every eligible child gets a nutritious hot cooked meal on all school days in a healthy and nurturing environment.

With Regards,

Yours sincerely,

Prachi Pandey
21.12.2021
(Prachi Pandey)

To,

1. The Additional Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries/ Secretaries of Dept. of Education/ Nodal Departments for PM POSHAN of all States & UTs.
2. The Commissioners / Directors of PM POSHAN of all States & UTs.



Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN)

Guidelines

Department of School Education & Literacy
Ministry of Education
Government of India



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1. Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman

1.1 Background

Three States namely Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and UT of Puducherry started to provide cooked mid-day meals to the children of primary classes in mid 1980s from their own resources. By 1990-91, 12 States namely, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh were providing mid-day meal from their own resources, to the children studying in primary classes in the schools.

With a view to enhance enrolment, attendance and retention and simultaneously to improve the nutritional status of children, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE)' was launched on the 15th August 1995. The cooked mid day meal was started under the Scheme on the following direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 28th November, 2001 in Civil Writ Petition No.196/ 2001: Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) Vs Union of India & others:

"We direct the State Governments/ Union Territories to implement the Mid Day Meal Scheme by providing every child in every Government and Government assisted Primary Schools with a prepared mid day meal with a minimum content of 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days. Those Governments providing dry rations instead of cooked meals must within three months start providing cooked meals in all Govt. and Govt. aided Primary Schools in all half the Districts of the State (in order of poverty) and must within a further period of three months extend the provision of cooked meals to the remaining parts of the State."



1.2 Evolution

The coverage of the scheme was extended to upper primary classes in 2008-09. The scheme was renamed "National Programme of Mid-Day Meal in Schools" in 2009 popularly known as Mid-Day Meal scheme and covered children studying in elementary classes (I-VIII) in Government and Government aided schools etc.

Legal backing for food and nutritional security under NFSA, 2013:

The National Food Security Act, 2013 provides that every child up to the age of fourteen years shall have specific entitlements for his/her nutritional needs. Section 5 (1) (b), inter-alia, reads as under:

"in the case of children, up to class VIII or within the age group of six to fourteen years, whichever is applicable, one mid-day meal, free of charge, everyday, except on school holidays, in all schools run by local bodies, Government and Government aided schools, so as to meet the nutritional standards specified in Schedule II."

Schedule II of the NFSA, 2013 mandates provision of hot cooked meal containing 450 calories and 12 gms protein for primary and 700 calories and 20 gms protein for upper primary class children.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the Scheme are to address two of the pressing problems for majority of children in India, viz. hunger and education by:

- i. Improving the nutritional status of children studying in Bal Vatika and classes I – VIII in Government and Government-aided schools and Special Training Centres (STCs).
- ii. Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.
- iii. Providing nutritional support to children of elementary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation and during disaster times.



1.4 Rationale

- a) Preventing classroom hunger:** Many children belonging to disadvantaged sections of society reach school with an empty stomach. Even children, who have a meal before they leave for school, get hungry by the afternoon and are not able to concentrate. School meal can help children from families, which cannot afford a lunch box or are staying a long distance away from schools to overcome “classroom hunger”.
- b) Promoting school participation:** School meals have a significant effect on school participation, not just in terms of getting more children enrolled in the registers but also in terms of regular pupil attendance on a daily basis.
- c) Facilitating healthy growth of children:** School meals can also act as a regular source of “supplementary nutrition” for children and facilitate their healthy growth.
- d) Intrinsic educational value:** A well-organized school meals can be used as an opportunity to impart various good habits to children (such as washing one’s hands before and after eating) and to educate them about the importance of clean water, good hygiene and other related matters.
- e) Fostering social equality:** School meals can help spread egalitarian values, as children from various social backgrounds learn to sit together and share a common meal. In particular, School meal can help to break the barriers of caste and class among school children. Appointing cooks from SC/ST communities is another way of teaching children to overcome caste prejudices.
- f) Enhancing gender equity:** The gender gap in school participation tends to narrow, as the Scheme helps erode the barriers that prevent girls from going to school. The Scheme also provides a useful source of employment for women and encourages employment of women as it eases the burden of



cooking at home during the day. In these and other ways, women and girl children have a special stake in the Scheme.

- g) Psychological Benefits:** Physiological deprivation leads to low self-esteem, consequent insecurity, anxiety and stress. The Scheme can help address these and facilitate cognitive, emotional and social development.

1.5 Beneficiaries under scheme

a) Bal Vatika Children

All children enrolled in Bal Vatika (i.e. just before class I) in Government and Government Aided primary schools and attending school are entitled for one hot cooked meal on all schools days.

b) All children enrolled in classes I-V

All children enrolled in classes I-V in Government and Government Aided schools and attending school are entitled for one hot cooked meal on all schools days.

c) All children enrolled in classes VI-VIII

All children enrolled in classes VI-VIII in Government and Government Aided schools and attending school are entitled for one hot cooked meal on all schools days.

d) All children enrolled in National Child Labour Project (NCLP) schools

All children enrolled in classes I-V in schools run under National Child Labour Project (NCLP) schools of Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India and attending school are entitled for one hot cooked meal on all schools days.

1.6 Components of the scheme

- a. Food grains
- b. Material Cost



- c. Honorarium to Cook-Cum-Helpers
- d. Transportation Assistance
- e. Management, Monitoring & Evaluation
- f. Kitchen-cum-Stores
- g. Kitchen Devices
- h. Repair of Kitchen-cum-stores
- i. Innovation and Flexibility

1.7 Food and Nutrition norms

For children of primary classes, a hot cooked meal per child consists of 100 grams of food grain (rice/wheat/nutri-rich cereals), 20 grams of pulses, 50 grams of vegetables and 5 grams of oil/fat to provide 450 calories of energy and 12 grams of protein. For children of upper primary classes, it consists of 150 grams of food grain (wheat/rice/nutri-rich cereals), 30 grams of pulses, 75 grams of vegetables and 7.5 grams of oil/fat per child to provide 700 calories of energy and 20 grams of proteins.

Nutrition and food norms - Per child per day

S. No.	Items	Primary	Upper Primary
A) Nutritional Norms as per National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013			
1	Calorie	450	700
2	Protein	12 gms	20 gms
B) Food Norms			
1	Food grains	100 gms	150 gms
2	Pulses	20 gms	30 gms
3	Vegetables	50 gms	75 gms
4	Oil & fat	5 gms	7.5 gms
5	Salt & condiments	As per need	As per need

Micronutrients like IFA etc and de-worming medicines are provided in convergence with M/H&FW



1.8 Menu under scheme

- i. State/UT will authorize district/block nodal agency for developing indicative menus using locally available and culturally acceptable food items. The menu may be designed in a manner that different and varied foods are provided on different days.
- ii. School managements may also be encouraged to seek local support for drawing out varied, but wholesome and nutritious menus.
- iii. Local support for drawing out varied, but wholesome and nutritious menus may be encouraged.
- iv. Eating a varied, well-balanced meal means eating a variety of foods from each food groups daily, in the prescribed amounts. It is also important to choose a variety of foods from within each food group in Menu because different foods provide different types and amounts of key nutrients.
- v. Choosing a variety of foods will help to make meals interesting, so that children will not get bored with the served meal. Inclusion of green leafy vegetables in the meal is of utmost importance to reduce the prevalence of anaemia. Inclusion of drumstick, Moringa, Spinach leaves wherever available may be included in the meal as they are good sources of iron in the diet of the children.
- vi. Inclusion of whole legumes shall ensure the availability of good sources of proteins, vitamins & minerals in the diet of the school children.
- vii. Inclusion of Millets which are rich sources of the micro-nutrients may also be actively considered subject to local food habits and availability.
- viii. Discussion with the SMC members, parents of the children during the meeting may be carried out regarding additions of local variation in menu at a frequent interval to increase and maintain the interest of children.
- ix. Participation of the children while preparation of Menu shall add value in the menu and also develop a sense of ownership of the scheme among them.



- x. Discussion with the Nutrition experts from the Home Science Colleges may be carried out during the preparation of menu to include variety in the menu in cost effective way.
- xi. The menu may consider the recipes based on the seasonal availability of the vegetables at a particular place, this may be helpful in reducing the cost as well as increasing the nutritional value in the diet.
- xii. Weekly menu may be prepared to increase the interest of the children in the school meals. (There may be 4 sets of menu for a month, one set for each week)
- xiii. A State/UT specific variety "Recipe Booklet" at State/UT level may be prepared in consultation with nutrition experts etc.
- xiv. Serving of 'Single Dish Meals', occasionally, using broken wheat or rice and incorporating some amount of a pulse or soya beans, a seasonal vegetable/green leafy vegetable, and some amount of edible oil will save both time and fuel besides being nutritious. Broken wheat pulao, leafy khichri, dal-vegetable bhaat are some examples of single dish meals.

1.9 Convergence with other development programmes

In addition to the regular assistance available under the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman for the components under the Scheme, States/UTs shall endeavour for convergence with other line Ministries and Departments like Ministry of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Ministry of Agriculture etc. for kitchen-cum-store, kitchen devices, School Nutrition Gardens, Social Audit, Hand Washing facilities, drinking water, dining halls, supplementary nutrition etc.



1.10 School Health Component (RBSK, WIFS, NDD)

MoE in convergence with M/o Health & Family Welfare effects health check-up of children under Rashtriya Bal Swastha Karyakram. Referrals are being made to nearest hospital or Primary Health Centre if required. Deworming medicine is provided to children biannually on National Deworming Day (NDD). Iron &Folic Acid (IFA) tablets are also provided to children under Weekly Iron & Folic acid Supplementation Programme (WIFS).



2. Implementation Structure and Programme Management – Roles and Responsibilities

A programme of the scale and magnitude of the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman requires a Management structure which is robust and dynamic. It is imperative that the Management system at various levels is clearly articulated and the roles of the different agencies involved clearly delineated. The programme requires close co-operation and coordination of the various agencies involved in the implementation of Scheme. The Scheme envisages putting in place the following Management structures at the National, State, District/Block and Local levels.

2.1 National Level :

- i) **Empowered Committee:** An Empowered Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Shiksha Mantri for monitoring the access, safety, hygiene and quality aspects in the implementation of the Scheme; Review mechanism in place to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the scheme; Review mechanism in place for community participation in the scheme and its effective monitoring.
- ii) **National level Steering cum Monitoring Committee (NSMC):** The Department of School Education and Literacy has set up a National Level Steering cum Monitoring Committee (NSMC) to oversee the implementation of the programme. The composition of the NSMC is given in Annexure I. The NSMC is mandated to:
 - a. Guide the various implementation agencies,
 - b. Monitor programme implementation, assess its impact, and take corrective steps,
 - c. Take action on reports of independent monitoring/evaluation agencies,
 - d. Effect coordination and convergence among concerned departments, agencies (e.g. FCI), and schemes, and



- e. Mobilize community support and promoting public private partnership for the programme. Under the Scheme, the NSMC will also, in addition, be expected to perform the following functions:
 - i. provide policy advice to Central and State Governments, and
 - ii. identify voluntary agencies and other appropriate institutions to undertake training, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation and research connected with the programme at the national level.

iii) Programme Approval Board: The Department of School Education and Literacy has also set up a Programme Approval Board under the chairpersonship of Secretary, School Education and Literacy with membership of nutrition experts and representatives, inter alia, of the Departments of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, NITI AAYOG, Food Corporation of India, etc. The composition of the Programme Approval Board is given in Annexure II. The Programme Approval Board meets at the beginning of each financial year in order to consider and sanction the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) submitted by the State Governments and UT Administrations.

2.2 State/UT level:

- i) Steering cum Monitoring Committee:
 - a. States and UT administrations are also required to set up Steering cum Monitoring Committees (SMCs) at the State, District and Block levels to oversee the implementation of the programme which function, mutatis mutandis, similar to those spelt out in above para for the NSMC. Besides, District and Block level SMCs should also be constituted for all Districts and Blocks. A suggested composition of Steering-cum-Monitoring Committees at various levels is given at Annexure-I. A representative of the Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India,



- should be invariably invited to meetings of the State/UT level Steering cum Monitoring Committee.
- b. The State level Steering cum Monitoring Committee will meet at least once in every six months.
 - c. The District and Block level Steering cum Monitoring Committee will meet at least once in every month.
- ii) Every State Government /UT Administration will designate one of its Departments as the Nodal Department, which will take responsibility for the implementation of the programme.
 - iii) State Governments/UT Administrations may set up Implementation Cell attached to the State Nodal Department to oversee the implementation of the programme by using a part of funds under MME.
 - iv) Taking into account the Central assistance available under the Scheme, every State Government/UT Administration will prescribe and notify its own norms of expenditure on the Scheme which cannot be less than the norms fixed by the Central Government, based on which it will allocate funds for the implementation of the programme. The norms, thus notified, will be referred to as "State Norms". The State Norms would spell out inter alia, modalities for ensuring regular and uninterrupted provision of nutritious cooked meal.
 - v) To ensure uninterrupted supply of cooked food to all eligible children across the State is a challenging task. State Governments/UT Administrations will have to develop and circulate detailed guidelines taking into account common obstacles which may come in the way of regular supply of cooked meal, including for example:
 - a) In case of delay in flow of monetary assistance from the Centre to the States (e.g. due to late or defective Utilisation Certificates or unspent balances). State Governments will have to make adequate provision for the programme (both for centre and state) in their annual budget, in anticipation of actual flow of Central assistance. It must be understood



that Central Assistance as per the PAB approval is committed, and will get transferred in due course. However, if for any reason, there is some delay in its actual transfer, that must not be allowed to interrupt actual provision of hot cooked meal to children.

- b) In case of delay in release of funds sanctioned by the Central Government from the State Finance Department on account of the State's 'ways and means' position, State Nodal Departments will need to ensure that the State Finance Department releases the funds intended for the Scheme expeditiously as per the PFMS guidelines.
 - c) In case of delays on account of hierarchical level-wise releases from State to district to taluk/block to gram Panchayat to School.
 - d) In case of irregular supply of food grains from FCI godown or interruption in their timely transportation to schools. States will need to ensure that FCI gives priority to the Scheme. States should also ensure that a minimum of one-month buffer stock of food grains and cooking costs is available in each school.
 - e) In case of failure of the local implementation agency to adequately procure and stock up cooking ingredients.
 - f) In case of absence of cook for any reason, etc.
- vi) The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education will convey the allocation of food grains and central grants meant for food grains, cooking cost, honorarium to CCH, Transportation Assistance, MME, kitchen-cum-store, kitchen devices as approved by the PAB to the State Nodal Department and the FCI. The State Nodal Department will convey district-wise allocations to all District Nodal Agencies.
- vii) The State Nodal Agency will ensure that the District Nodal Agencies have sub-allocated the monthly district allocation to the sub-district level which in turn will further allocate to each school.



viii) **Nodal agency for transportation of food-grains:** Transportation of food grains from nearest FCI depot to each School is a major logistical responsibility. State Government will be expected to make arrangements in this regard in the following manner: -

- a. Wherever appropriate, a single Govt./Semi-Government agency with State wide jurisdiction and network, e.g. State Civil Supplies Corporation, may be designated as the State Nodal Transport Agency. This Agency will be responsible for lifting food grains from FCI godowns and delivering them to designated authority at the taluk/block level. State Government will also need to make fool proof arrangements to ensure that the food grains are carried from the district/block level to each school, etc., in a timely manner.
- b. Alternatively, District/Block Panchayats may be assigned the responsibility for different districts/blocks or groups of districts/blocks in the State.

2.3 District and Block Level:

- (i) Every State Government/UT Administration will designate one nodal officer or agency at the district and block level (e.g. the District Collector, District/Intermediate Panchayat, etc.) who shall be assigned overall responsibility of effective implementation of the programme at the district/block level.
- (ii) In States which have devolved the function of primary education either by legislation or executive order on Panchayats, the Chief Executive Officer of District Panchayats or the Executive Officer of Block Panchayats will be the Nodal Officer with overall responsibility for effective implementation of the programme at the district level. In such States, the responsibility for implementing the programme within their jurisdiction shall be that of the Panchayats and the Urban Local Bodies concerned which have been assigned the responsibility by the State.



- (iii) The District Nodal Agency will ensure that each school is informed of its monthly allocation of food grains and financial sanctions. It shall also identify the Transportation Agency to transport foodgrains from the nearest FCI godown to school. The transportations could be done once in a month.
- (iv) The district/ block nodal agency will also take responsibility for developing indicative menus using locally available and culturally acceptable food items.

2.4 Village level

In States which have devolved the function of primary education through legislation and/or executive order on Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies, the responsibility of implementation and day to day supervision of the programme shall be assigned to the Gram Panchayat/Municipality.

The School Management Committee mandated under Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 shall also monitor implementation of the PM POSHAN Scheme and shall oversee quality of meals provided to the children, cleanliness of the place of cooking and maintenance of hygiene in implementation of the scheme.

2.5 School level-Teachers, CCH, SMC, Students, Parents

- (i) As far as possible, responsibility for cooking/supply of cooked meal should be assigned to one of the following:-
 - (a) Cook-Cum-Helpers
 - (b) Local women's/mothers' Self-Help Group,
 - (c) Local Youth Club affiliated to the Nehru Yuvak Kendras,
 - (d) A voluntary organization (as specified in guidelines for engagement of CSO/NGO)
- (ii) Responsibility of the day-to-day management of the programme at school level may be given to School Management Committee.



(iii) **Very limited role of teachers:** Under Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman, States and UT have engaged cook-cum-helpers either directly or through women self help groups, for cooking and serving meals under the scheme. Teachers should, therefore, under no circumstances be assigned responsibilities that will impede or interfere with teaching learning. Teachers should, however, be involved in ensuring these:

- a) good quality, wholesome food is served to children, and
- b) the actual serving and eating is undertaken in a spirit of togetherness, under hygienic conditions, and in an orderly manner so that the entire process is completed in 30-40 minutes.
- c) It should however, be ensured that the food prepared is tasted by 2-3 adults including at least one teacher before it is served to children.

(iv) **Community Support:**

- a) School managements should also be encouraged to draw on the support of the community. Gram Panchayats and School Management Committees may be approached for arranging community members to regularly, on a rotation basis, help the school management in ensuring efficient cooking, serving and cleaning operations.
- b) The involvement of teachers and community members in ensuring that children eat together in a spirit of camaraderie and develop sensitivity to their peers with different abilities, by offering them precedence, and instilling values of equality and cooperation would be very valuable support to the implementation of the programme.
- c) Support of the community members, including mothers' groups, could also be solicited to ensure that children wash their hands with soap before eating, use clean plates and glasses, avoid littering and wastage of food, and clean their plates, rinse their hands and mouth after eating.
- d) Scheme also offers wide opportunity of self-employment to poor women who could constitute self-help groups. Such groups can take the



responsibility of cooking and serving meals with the overall assistance of the local level implementing agency.

- e) Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman can provide the groups the scope for income generating activities such as growing & supplying vegetables, preparing condiments, etc.,
- f) Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme could also provide opportunity for involvement of SHGs in the management of the programme, thus ensuring that teaching-learning processes in the classroom are not affected, while SHGs take responsibility for regular. In the selection, priority should be given to SHGs with membership of poor women, and whose children are participating in the programme.
- g) procurement, cooking and distribution process.
- h) Tithi Bhojan is a community participation concept relying on Indian traditional practice of providing food to large number of people on special occasions such as festivals, anniversaries, birthdays, marriages, and days of national importance etc. Under this community provides nutritious and healthy food to the children as an additional food item or full meal on such special occasions/festivals.

2.6 Food Corporation of India (FCI)

It will be the responsibility of the FCI to ensure continuous availability of adequate food grains in its Depots [and in Principal Distribution Centres in the case of North East Region]. It will allow lifting of food grains for any month/quarter up to one month in advance so that supply chain of food grains remains uninterrupted. For the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman, FCI will issue food grains of best available quality, which will in any case be at least of Fair Average Quality (FAQ).

FCI has also appointed a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of food grains under Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme.



The District Collector/CEO of Zila Panchayat will also ensure that food grains of at least FAQ are issued by FCI after joint inspection by a team consisting of FCI and the nominee of the Collector and/or Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat, and confirmation by them that the grain conforms to at least FAQ norms. FCI will keep samples of such food grains supplied by it for future verification and analysis; this will be available in case of any complaints regarding the quality of food grains supplied.

2.7 Civil Society Organisations

CSO/NGO may be engaged for supply of hot cooked meal under the Scheme for a Cluster of Schools in urban areas or in identified rural areas which have good road connectivity, for the purpose of leveraging efficiency gains.

2.7.1 Constitution of a Committee

State may constitute a committee under the chairpersonship of the Principal Secretary/Secretary of the nodal department, comprising of Officers/experts from the fields of Food & Nutrition, Law, Women & Child Development, Health etc.

2.7.2 Pre-requisite for selection Of CSO/ NGO

The above mentioned Committee should keep the following aspects in mind while determining the suitability of a CSO/NGO for supply of cooked meals:

- i) The CSO/NGO should be registered under the Societies Registration Act or the Public Trust Act, and should have been in existence for a minimum period of two years.
- ii) The CSO/NGO should have a properly constituted Management / Governing Body with its powers and duties clearly defined in its constitution.
- iii) Names of all office bearers involved in the establishment and management of such organisations should be disclosed along with their



roles and responsibilities in the organisation. If any of the office bearers hold a public office, then details of that office should also be mentioned specifically.

- iv) Operation of the Centralized Kitchens should be entrusted under the PPP model to reputed CSO/NGO with local presence and familiarity with the needs and culture of the State.
- v) The CSO/NGO should have a valid license under Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- vi) CSO/NGO should give a commitment to supply meals to the cluster of schools on 'No-Profit' basis.
- vii) CSO/NGO should give commitment to abide by the Scheme Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education from time to time.
- viii) CSO/NGO should give willingness to work with PRIs / Municipal bodies in accordance with relevant guidelines of the State Government.
- ix) The CSO/NGO should have financial and logistic capacity to supply the meals on the requisite scale.
- x) The CSO/NGO should have a robust transport system for carrying the cooked meals from Centralized Kitchen to schools.
- xi) The CSO/NGO should not discriminate in any manner on the basis of religion, caste and creed, and should not use the programme for propagation of any religious practice.

2.7.3 Responsibilities of the CSO/NGO

- i) The CSO/NGO shall keep the food grains and other materials in hygienic conditions, free of pests, insects, fungus etc.
- ii) Drinking water should be tested for its potability, as per the schedule decided by the States/UTs.
- iii) Only packed dals, salt, spices, condiments and oil with AG-MARK, FSSAI quality symbol should be used for cooking meals.



- iv) CSO/NGO shall ensure that the food articles shall be used in FIFO basis. Shelf life of the food articles needs to be checked from time to time.
- v) In case the State has provision of egg/milk/fruit in the Menu and the CSO/NGO is not willing to provide the same, the State should make alternative arrangements to supply egg/milk/fruit as prescribed in the menu.
- vi) CSO/NGOs should supply the cooked meal in good quality sealed insulated/stainless steel containers. Temperature of the meal when served should be maintained at or above 65°C.
- vii) CSO/NGO should have adequate Fire safety measures in the Centralized Kitchen.
- viii) Cooked Meal is fit for human consumption for four hours after cooking and it should be transported to schools and consumed by children within that time.
- ix) The CSO/NGO should ensure that the cooked meal is transported and delivered at the school under the supervision of an authorized person.
- x) CSO/NGO shall carry out training of CCHs on health, food safety, hygiene and methods of cooking at regular intervals.
- xi) CSO/NGO shall also ensure that CCH working at centralized kitchens are free from any disease particularly contagious diseases. CSO/NGO shall arrange medical check-up of CCH at least once in six months.
- xii) CSO/NGO shall ensure that the CCH are provided Aprons, Head-gears and gloves during cooking of meals.
- xiii) The CSO/NGO shall ensure that the premises should be clean, adequately lighted and ventilated and have sufficient free space for movement. Floors, ceilings and walls must be maintained in a sound condition. The floor and skirted walls should be washed as per requirement with an effective disinfectant. The premises should be kept free from all insects. No spraying should be done during the cooking of meal, but instead fly swats/ flaps should be used to prevent flies getting into the premises.



Windows, doors and other openings should be fitted with net or screen, as appropriate to make the premise insect free.

2.7.4 Responsibility of the State Government

- i) Material Cost - The State Government will pay/reimburse the material cost to the CSO/NGO as per the instructions/norms of GOI/State Government.
- ii) Supply of Food grains
 - a. The CSO/NGO shall lift the food grains from Food Corporation of India (FCI)'s godown against the 'Release Order' issued by the State Government on the basis of allotted number of children and working days. Subsequently transportation charges will also be reimbursed to the CSO/NGO as per the rates fixed by the Government of India or by the State Government.
Or
 - b. The State Government shall make arrangements for delivery of food grains at the centralized kitchen on the basis of allotted number of children and working days.
- iii) Cook-cum-Helpers — The honorarium to cook-cum-helpers can be apportioned if the Centralized Kitchen is not serving meals at the schools. The States/UTs may lay down the principle and procedure for apportionment of admissible honorarium for cook-cum-helpers deployed at schools and working at the Centralized Kitchen for cleaning of food grains, cutting of vegetables, cooking of meals etc. at Centralized Kitchen.
- iv) The State may ensure that, the cook-cum-helpers already engaged in the schools are not displaced in case of expansion of centralized kitchen. All efforts should be made to retain them as helpers for serving of meals, cleaning of utensils etc. in the schools.



- v) The State Government shall get the samples tested from any reputed laboratory regarding requisite calories and proteins contents at its own cost at regular intervals.

2.7.5 Assets Created through assistance from State Government:

CSO/NGO should give written commitment to return to the State Government the permanent/semi-permanent assets, if any, acquired by it through the grants received under the programme, once the agreement / MoU expires.

2.7.6 Important clauses also to be included in Agreement / Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (Model MoU is available on the Ministry's website)

- i) A contract/MoU between the CSO/NGO and State shall be signed to define the liabilities of the parties and the consequences of non-performance on their parts. It should also include a stringent mechanism to check and supervise the quality and quantity of meal supplied by the CSO/NGO to the children.
- ii) The duration of the agreement should be clearly mentioned in the agreement.
- iii) Further extension of the duration of Agreement/MoU should be done with the prior approval of the competent authority.
- iv) The performance of CSO/NGOs engaged in serving meals to children should be assessed every year through a credible System of evaluation.
- v) Renewal of MoU with a CSO/NGO should depend on its performance evaluation.
- vi) The number of students and schools along with name of the districts/blocks to be covered by the CSO/NGOs should be clearly mentioned.
- vii) Meals would be prepared by CSO/NGOs as per prescribed food and nutrition norms by MoE/State Government.



- viii) Weight norms for the per meal cooked food in accordance with the menu will be finalized by mutual consultation between the State and the NGO, so as to ensure adequate supply of hot cooked food as per the norms.
- ix) The CSO/NGOs should furnish a monthly report to the implementing State/UT on lifting and utilization of food grains and funds as well as number of children covered. The CSO/NGO will also submit the duly verified bills by 7th of the next month. The State Government will ensure payment within one week upon receipt of duly verified bills from the Second Party.
- x) The CSO/NGO shall not entrust/ sub-contract the programme or divert any part of the assistance (food grains/funds) to any other organization/agency.

2.7.7 Report

- i) The CSO/NGO will furnish to the State Government an Annual Report along with audited statement of accounts in terms of all grants received from the State Government and donations received in the name of PM POSHAN both in cash and kind, duly certified by an approved Auditor.
- ii) All accounts, stock and registers maintained by the CSO/NGO should be open to inspection by officers appointed by the State Government / Central Government.

2.7.8 Renewal / termination

- i) The renewal of contract shall be subject to outcome of evaluation by a credible third party commissioned by the State Government. The evaluation study report should be submitted 2 months prior to the closure of agreement
- ii) In the event, CSO/NGO desires to stop the supply of the meal for any reason, it shall give three months' notice in writing to the State



Government, failing which the CSO/NGO shall be liable for penalties as decided by the State Government.

- iii) The State Government shall be at liberty to modify or terminate the agreement at any time during the contract period by giving 30 days' notice.
- iv) The State Government can terminate the agreement by giving 3 months' notice if the MoE, Government of India does object to this arrangement.

2.7.9 Liability/ Penalty clause:

- i) The CSO/NGO will be responsible for any untoward incident such as food poisoning of children due to the serving of adulterated, contaminated or stale meal and entire responsibility for any civil and criminal liability arising out of that shall rest entirely with the NGO.
- ii) If the quality of the meals is found to be sub-standard or not fit for human consumption, the school shall have the right to return the whole/entire or part of the cooked meal supplied to the children. No claim for compensations for such meals from the CSO/NGO shall be reimbursed.
- iii) The meal should be supplied at the fixed time on every school day. In case the CSO/NGO fails to supply the cooked meal on a given day, the authorities shall have the option to procure the supply from any other supplier/market and the cost of the same shall be deducted from the bills of CSO/NGO.

2.7.10 Contingency Plan for Medical Emergency: The State/CSO/NGO should have a Contingency Plan for any untoward incident. The names and telephone numbers of the nearest hospitals, Primary Health Centre, Ambulance, Police, Fire-brigade should be displayed at prominent places.



2.7.11 Arbitration

In the event of any dispute arising out of the agreement the same shall be referred to the sole arbitration of the State Government or any officer appointed by the State Government on its behalf. The proceedings held by the arbitrator in making award will be in accordance With the provisions of Indian Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 or any statutory amendments thereof. The award of the arbitrator shall be final and binding on both the parties.

2.7.12 Any-Other-conditions

State Government may prescribe such other conditions, as they may deem appropriate, in addition to the conditions stated above.



3. Component wise Programmatic Norms and Financial Norms under the scheme

For children of Bal Vatika and primary classes, a cooked meal per child consists of 100 grams of food grain (rice/wheat/nutri-rich cereals), 20 grams of pulses, 50 grams of vegetables and 5 grams of oil/fat to provide 450 calories of energy and 12 grams of protein. For children of upper primary classes, it consists of 150 grams of food grain (wheat/rice/nutri-rich cereals), 30 grams of pulses, 75 grams of vegetables and 7.5 grams of oil/fat per child to provide 700 calories of energy and 20 grams of proteins.

3.1 Food grains:

- i) 100 gram per child per day for children in Bal Vatika and primary classes.
- ii) 150 gram per child per day for children in Upper primary classes and NCLP schools.
- iii) The cost of food grains is borne entirely by the Central Government. At present Rs 3 per kg for rice, Rs 2 per kg for wheat and Rs 1 per kg for coarse grains is provided to States and UTs as per the prevailing rates under NFSA, 2013. The Department of Food & Public Distribution, Govt of India bears the subsidy portion on the food grains.

3.2 Material cost

Material cost covers expenditure on pulses, vegetables, cooking oils, condiments, fuel etc. The cooking cost is Rs 5.45 per child per day for children in Bal Vatika and primary classes and Rs 8.17 per child per day for children in Upper primary classes and NCLP schools w.e.f. 1stOctober, 2022. The material cost is periodically revised by the Central Government.

3.3 Cook-cum-Helpers

One cook-cum-helper can be engaged for up to 25 students, two cook-cum-helpers for schools with 26 to 100 students and one additional cook-cum-helper for every addition of up to 100 students. Each of these Cook-cum-



helpers is paid a minimum honorarium of Rs 1,000 per month. The States are however free to give more honorarium over and above the prescribed minimum to the cooks-cum-helpers from their own resources.

3.4 Transportation Assistance

Rate of Transportation assistance is as per PDS rate prevailing in State / UT, for transportation of food grains from FCI godown to school door steps. This is restricted to a maximum of Rs 1500 per MT for States and UTs other than NER and 2 Himalayan States and 2 UTs.

3.5 Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (MME)

Funds for MME comprise of 3% of aggregate of cost of food grains, cooking cost, Honorarium to Cook-cum-Helpers and Transportation Assistance. 90% of this is released to States and UTs and remaining 10% are utilized as national component.

State shall earmark 50% of the funds released under MME for school level expenditure. Remaining 50% funds may be judiciously apportioned at State, district and block levels.

3.6 Kitchen-cum-Stores

The norms for construction of kitchen cum stores are as per plinth area norm and State Schedule of Rates. A 20 sq meter kitchen-cum-store may be constructed for school having enrolment of 100 students. Additional 4 sq metre may be added for every addition of up to 100 students. The slab of 100 students may be modified by the States / UTs depending upon local conditions. In one State / UT, there can be more than one slab, however, the modified prescription of plinth area have to conform to the above ceiling.

3.7 Kitchen devices- Procurement and replacement

States and UTs have the flexibility to incur expenditure on Cooking devices (Stove, Chulha); Containers for storage of food grains and other ingredients;



Utensils for cooking and serving etc. on the basis of the actual requirements of the schools under the component of kitchen devices. There is a provision of replacement of these kitchen devices after 5 years from the date of sanction. Norm for procurement of kitchen devices is linked with enrolment as per the details given below:

Enrolment (No. of Children) per school	Unit Cost (In Rs)
Up to 50	10,000
51-150	15,000
151-250	20,000
251 & above	25,000

3.8 Repair of kitchen-cum-stores

Rs 10,000/- per kitchen-cum-store, for the kitchen-cum-stores, which were constructed 10 years ago with estimates based on State Schedule of Rates (SoR). However, in case of unconventional items, which are not covered under SoR, the rates would be approved by the State Level Steering cum Monitoring Committee.

3.9 Innovation / Flexibility

Five percent of the aggregate of the cost of food grains, cooking cost, transport assistance, honorarium to cook-cum-helpers and MME with no separate additional budgetary support for this component. The requirement of funds under this component will be met from available funds and implemented as per Department of Expenditure's OM No. 55(5)/PF-II/2011 dated 06.09.2016.

3.10 Provision of meals during summer vacation in drought affected areas and during closure of schools in disaster affected areas.



4. Financial Management under the scheme

4.1 Release mechanism- Conditions of releases

The recurring central assistance under the scheme was released in two instalments in the ratio of 60% and 40% of the approval of Programme Approval Board – PM POSHAN. Till 2021-22, the first instalment was bifurcated into two parts i.e. ad-hoc release and balance of first instalment. The ad-hoc release was made @ 25% of the PAB approval for the number of children and working days in the month of April of each financial year in order to ensure uninterrupted implementation of the scheme without asking for any information on the unspent balance as on 1st April from the previous year's releases with the States and UTs. As per the instructions of Ministry of Finance regarding use of new procedure of release of funds under PFMS, there will be no ad-hoc release and no revalidation of funds. As the amount lying with the SNA at the closure of financial year may be used in the next Financial year without the need for any revalidation. However, if any amount of the central funds released during the financial year is still remaining with the State treasury, which has not been transferred to the SNA, the same will be returned to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) through RBI Advice.

4.2 Expenditure Sharing pattern

Sharing pattern

Central Government provides 100% assistance for

- i) Cost of food grains,
- ii) Transportation Assistance,
- iii) Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (MME), and

Assistance is shared between the Centre and States/UTs as per the approved funding pattern of 90:10 for North Eastern Region (NER) States and 2 Himalayan States and UT of J&K, 100% for Union Territories without



Legislature and 60:40 for other States as well as 2 Union Territories with Legislature (Delhi and Puducherry).

- i) Cooking cost,
- ii) Honorarium to cook-cum-helpers and
- iii) Construction of kitchen-cum-stores
- iv) Kitchen Devices
- v) Repair of kitchen-cum-stores

4.3 Release of 1st Instalment

As approved by the CCEA, the recurring central assistance under the scheme will be released in two instalments of 60% and 40% as per the PAB- PM POSHAN approvals. The first instalment of 60% (after adjusting the funds available with SNA at the beginning of the financial year) will be released, subject to submission of the following information / documents for the preceding year by the State / UT :

- i) Utilisation Certificate (UC) in the prescribed format of GFR-12C, duly signed by the Secretary of the Nodal Department.
- ii) Information of allocation, lifting and utilisation of food grains in the prescribed format.
- iii) Information of release of Central share, release of corresponding State share and expenditure for the following recurring components :
 - a) Cost of Food grains
 - b) Material Cost (earlier known as cooking cost)
 - c) Honorarium to Cook-Cum-Helpers
 - d) Transportation Assistance
 - e) Management, Monitoring and Evaluation
 - f) Flexi component
- iv) Interest accrued towards Central share in the account of State Nodal Agency (SNA) is deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI).



- v) Entire amount of central share released to States/UTs till 31st March of the previous year in full has been transferred to the SNA account. If some amount is still remaining with the State treasury, which has not been transferred to the SNA, the same will be returned to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) through RBI Advice. However, the amount lying with the SNA may be used in the next Financial year without the need for any revalidation.
- vi) Entire due State share against the Central share released in previous year has been released by State Government from their treasury to SNA.
- vii) Funds available in the SNA account including State share at the time of release of funds should not be more than the instalment of Central share likely to be released. In case of UT without legislature, Letter of Authorisation (LoA) should be issued and the UT shall work directly in PFMS without transferring fund to the SNA.
- viii) State has utilised at least 75% of the funds released (both Central share as well as corresponding State share **in the prescribed ratios**).
- ix) Mapping of 100% Implementing Agencies (IA) with the SNA.
- x) Separate budget line for central as well as state share under PM POSHAN Scheme has been opened in the State's Detailed Demand for Grants (DDG).
- xi) Any other information / document as and when sought by the Department of School Education & Literacy.

4.4 Release of 2nd Instalment

The 2nd instalment of remaining 40% of the PAB-PM POSHAN's approval will be released subject to submission of the following information / documents for the current year by the State / UT:



- i) Information of release of Central share, release of corresponding State share and expenditure for the following recurring components :
 - a) Cost of Food grains
 - b) Material Cost (earlier known as cooking cost)
 - c) Honorarium to Cook-Cum-Helpers
 - d) Transportation Assistance
 - e) Management, Monitoring and Evaluation
 - f) Flexi component
- ii) Entire amount of central share released to State / UT during the current financial year in full has been transferred to the SNA account.
- iii) Entire due State share against the Central share released in current financial year has been transferred from their treasury to SNA by State Government.
- iv) **Interest:** The Single Nodal Agency (SNA) in the State shall compute the total interest earned out of the funds received in its account (both from the Central Government and the State Government) in the preceding financial year in the first week of April each year. The interest earned will be apportioned by the SNA between the Central and the State Government as per the approved funding pattern of the scheme and shall be deposited in the respective Consolidated Funds.
- v) Funds available in the SNA account including State share at the time of release of funds should not be more than the instalment of Central share likely to be released. In case of UT without legislature, Letter of Authorisation (LOA) should be issued and the UT shall work directly in PFMS without transferring fund to the SNA.
- vi) State has utilised at least 75% of the funds released (both Central share as well as corresponding State share).
- vii) Mapping of 100% Implementing Agencies (IA) with the SNA.
- viii) Any other information / document as and when sought by the Department of School Education & Literacy.



4.5 Release of central assistance for Non-recurring components:

Under PM POSHAN Central Assistance is released for i) Construction of kitchen-cum-stores, ii) Procurement / Replacement of kitchen devices, and iii) Repair of kitchen-cum-stores constructed 10 years ago. The central assistance for these will be released subject to the following :

- i) Utilisation Certificate (UC) of the previous central assistance released in the prescribed format of GFR-12C, duly signed by the Secretary of the Nodal Department.
- ii) Information of release of Central share, release of corresponding State share and expenditure for the component in the prescribed format.
- iii) Information on Physical progress of earlier sanctioned units in the prescribed format.
- iv) Interest accrued towards Central share in the account of State Nodal Agency (SNA) is deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI).
- v) Entire amount of corresponding State share in full has been transferred to the SNA account.
- vi) Funds available in the SNA account including State share at the time of release of funds should not be more than the instalment of Central share likely to be released.
- vii) State has utilised at least 75% of the funds released (both Central share as well as corresponding State share).
- viii) Separate budget line for central as well as state share under PM POSHAN Scheme has been opened in the State's Detailed Demand for Grants (DDG).
- ix) Any other information / document as and when sought by the Department of School Education & Literacy.



4.6 Release of funds on account of coverage of additional children and / or additional working days in excess of PAB-PM POSHAN approvals.

The quantification of resources on the basis of approvals made by the Programme Approval Board – PM POSHAN Scheme for a particular financial year are only an estimate for release of Central Assistance and allocation of food-grains during that particular financial year under the Scheme. The National Food Security Act, 2013, Rules, Guidelines and Instructions issued under the PM POSHAN Scheme from time to time, provide that every child attending an eligible institution is to be covered under the Scheme and shall be served hot cooked meals or provided with Food Security Allowance, as applicable, on all school days.

However, during the year, if it is noticed by the State / UT that more funds are needed to implement the Scheme, due to increase in the attendance of children, increase in school working days or for any other reason, they may approach Government of India during the year with justification seeking additional Central Assistance and food grains. Similarly, if the Central Government observes less coverage than the approvals, the actual releases may be restricted to actual coverage.

At present, the release of funds under PM POSHAN Scheme is subject to the guidelines contained in Department of Expenditure's OM No. 1(13)/PFMS/FCD/2020 dated 23rd March, 2021 captioned 'Procedure for release under Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and monitoring utilization of funds released'. This shall be governed by the instructions issued from time to time by Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India.



5. Food grains Management

5.1 Allocation of Food grains

- i) Under the scheme, the food grains/ fortified food grains are allocated biannually by the Department of School Education and Literacy with the concurrence of Department of Food and Public Distribution.
- ii) The allocation of food grains, as approved by the PAB are made to the State Nodal Department and the FCI. The payment of the cost of food grains, which was earlier centralized at the National level, has been decentralized with effect from 01.04.2010 to the district level to ensure greater stake holding and role of the district authorities in ensuring prompt lifting of food grains and timely payment to FCI, which has resulted in reducing time lag in making payment to FCI.
- iii) It is the responsibility of the FCI to ensure continuous availability of adequate food grains in its Depots (and in Principal Distribution Centres in the case of North East Region). It will allow lifting of food grains for any month/quarter upto one month in advance so that supply chain of food grains remains uninterrupted.
- iv) FCI will issue food grains of best available quality, which will in any case be at least of Fair Average Quality (FAQ). FCI has also appointed a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of food grains under the Scheme.
- v) The District Collector/CEO of Zila Panchayat will also ensure that food grains of at least FAQ are issued by FCI after joint inspection by a team consisting of FCI and the nominee of the Collector and/or Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat, and confirmation by them that the grain conforms to at least FAQ norms.
- vi) FCI will keep samples of such food grains supplied by it for future verification and analysis; this will be available in case of any complaints regarding the quality of food-grains supplied.



5.2 Frequency of Allocation of food grains- Conditions of releases

- i) The first six monthly allocation will be made in the 1st week of February of the previous financial year on the basis of number of children and number of school days approved by Programme Approval Board of PM POSHAN (PAB - PM POSHAN) for the previous year.
- ii) The second and final allocation of food grains will be made in the first week of August after deducting the unspent balance available with the States/UTs out of food grains allocated during the previous year and also the allocation made for the first six months from the annual allocation approved by PAB-PM POSHAN for the current year.
- iii) To ensure timely final allocation of food grains by Government of India, the States/UTs will send the utilisation certificate of the food grains supplied under the scheme during the previous year latest by 30th June. In the utilisation certificate, only the quantity actually consumed at the school/cooking agency level will be indicated as utilized whatever remains in their stores or godowns at school, cooking agency, Block and District levels will be shown as unspent balance.
- iv) On receiving allocation from the Government of India, the States/UTs will make district-wise allocation of the food grains, in accordance with the number of children and number of working days approved for that particular district.
- v) District administration will ensure that every consuming unit maintains a buffer stock of food grains required for a month to avoid disruption due to unforeseen exigencies.

5.3 Off take of food grains- Periodicity, lifting agency etc.

- i) It will be the responsibility of the FCI to ensure continuous availability of adequate quantity of good quality of food grains, which will be in any case



not less than Fair Average Quality (FAQ), in its depots. FCI will appoint a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of food grains under the scheme

- ii) The District administration on receiving the allocation from the State/ UT will send a schedule (periodicity and date/week) of lifting of food grains to the local FCI Depot depending on its requirement, transportation convenience and storage capacity. Districts can lift food grains on monthly, bimonthly or quarterly basis as indicated in their schedule.
- iii) The FCI will allow lifting of foodgrains as per the allocation of the State Government and lifting schedule provided by the District administration starting from 1st day of the month preceding the allocation quarter and upto 25th of the last month of the allocation quarter. For example, the validity period for lifting of foodgrains for the quarter beginning April, 2023 will be from 1st March, 2023 to 25th of June, 2023.
- iv) FCI will not make any modification in the quantity to be lifted.
- v) The District administration and the FCI Depot will ensure that no lifting is done in excess of the allocated quantity.

5.4 Quality of food grains- FAQ, joint inspection at the time of lifting, Maintenance, Storage

- i) The District Collector/CEO of Zila Panchayat will ensure that food grains of at least FAQ are received from FCI Depot after Joint inspection by a team consisting of FCI official and the nominee of the Collector and/or Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat and confirmation by them that the food grain conforms to at least FAQ norms. The consignee receipt (in triplicate) should be jointly signed by the in charge of FCI Depot and nominee of District Collector One copy of the receipt will be retained by the lifting official and another one is sent to District level paying authority for its record.



- ii) The sample (in triplicate) of stocks proposed to be lifted will be drawn jointly in the presence of the representatives of the State Government and the FCI and the sample slips will be jointly signed and sealed. One such sealed sample will be given to State Government representative, one will be sent to FCI District Office and one will be retained at the depot.
- iii) Samples of lifted food grains shall be retained for 3 months in token of quality of grains received from FCI. In case any complaint of low quality of food grains is received within this period, these samples can be used to ascertain the veracity of the complaint.
- iv) The process followed at the time of receipt of foodgrains from FCI depots should be repeated at each level till the foodgrains reach the end user to ensure that only good quality foodgrains is delivered for consumption by children.

5.5 Payment of Cost of food grains

- i) FCI will raise the bills pertaining to supply of foodgrains during a month to the District administration by the 10th day of the next month in the prescribed format and the District administration will ensure payment within 20 days.
- ii) State Government will nominate an officer who will be responsible for receiving the bills submitted by FCI and ensuring payment to it in time. FCI will intimate its account number and mode of receiving of payment to the nodal officer who should be made responsible for payment.
- iii) For the purpose of making payment to FCI in time, the States/UTs will make adequate provision in its budget keeping in view the annual requirement of funds for this purpose and release the same in advance to the districts. The Govt. of India shall also release the funds to States/UTs in advance as soon as the budget is passed.
- iv) It has been observed that in several States/UTs, it takes around 2-3 months for the funds to reach the district level. In such an event, payment



to FCI may get delayed for want of funds leading to disruption in the scheme. In order to avoid such a situation, State Government should authorize the district administration to draw money under the relevant Treasury Rule (usually TR-27) to make payment to FCI for supply of food grains under the scheme in case no budget is available. This payment will be adjusted after receipt of budget by the districts. However, in the light of new system for release of funds under PFMS, States may issue appropriately suitable revised instructions.

5.6 Monitoring System

- i) A monthly meeting will be held by the District administration with FCI District Manager or his representative and all other concerned officials in the last week of the month to resolve all the issues pertaining to lifting, quality of food grains and payment and submit a report to the State Headquarters by 7th of the next month.
- ii) States/UTs will monitor the lifting, payment and quantity of food grains sent to School/Cooking Agency on the 10th of every month in a meeting with the State nodal officer of the FCI and send a report to this Department, by the 15th of every month.



6. Quality and safety aspects under the scheme

The cooked meal should contain adequate nutrients and should be, palatable, hygienic, and operationally feasible. These food safety guidelines are for school level kitchens only, where the meal is cooked for children. Quality assurance of the meal and food safety should be an integral part of food handling procedures at the school kitchen. The food provided through these kitchens should be nutritious, free from food adulterants, contamination pathogens, artificial non food grade colours, and additives and adhere to food safety and quality norms. Food safety encompasses selection, handling, preparation, and storage of food in ways that prevent food borne illness and contamination. This includes a number of routines that should be followed to avoid potentially severe health hazards.

Food contamination refers to the presence in food of harmful chemicals and microorganisms which lead to illness. The types of contaminants can be categorised as under:

- a) Biological contaminant:** includes bacteria, yeasts, moulds, viruses or parasites that are present in air, food, water, soil, animals and humans etc.
- b) Physical contaminant:** Foreign bodies in food are usually due to accidental contamination and / or poor handling practices these are visible particles like pebbles.
- c) Chemical contaminant:** Includes Chemicals used for cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces; Pest control chemicals, paints and water treatment chemicals; Pesticides, fertilizers, fungicides.

6.1 Lifting and transportation of food grains

- i. As mandated under scheme, food grains are provided by Food Corporation of India. Food grains are to be allocated bi-annually by the Department of School Education & Literacy with the concurrence of



Department of Food and Public Distribution for primary and upper primary school level separately. FCI is to ensure continuous availability of adequate quantity of food grains, which will be in any case not less than of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) in its Depots. FCI will appoint a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of food grains under the scheme.

- ii. The sample (in triplicate) of stocks proposed to be lifted will be drawn jointly in the presence of the representatives of the Collector and/or Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat and the FCI and the sample slips will be jointly signed and sealed. One such sealed sample will be given to State Government representative, one will be sent to FCI District Office and one will be retained at the depot.
- iii. Samples of lifted food grains shall be retained for 3 months in token of quality of grains received from FCI. In case any complaint of low quality of food grains is received within this period, these samples can be used to ascertain the veracity of the complaint

6.2 Procurement of oil, pulses and condiments

- i. Only packed dals, salt, spices, condiments and oil with AGMARK quality symbol should be purchased. Any ingredient being sold loose should never be bought. The packaging and expiry date of the ingredients should be checked.
- ii. Only “double fortified salt” should be used for cooking meals. Food grains should be stored in standard bins while, plastic food grade containers are ideal for storage of dals, spices, condiments and other ingredients.

6.3 Procurement of perishable raw material

- i. Vegetable, fruits and perishable food commodities should be procured fresh and storing for longer time/duration should be avoided.



- ii. Perishable items should not be stored in plastic bags as these get spoilt quickly due to lack of transpiration. Such items have to be stored away from sunlight, in a cool place.
- iii. Zero energy cool chambers are a low cost alternative to store horticulture produce. This is an on-farm storage chamber, for fresh fruits, vegetables to extend their marketability. Due to their high moisture content fruits and vegetables have very short life and are liable to spoil. The zero energy cool chambers can be constructed easily with materials like brick, sand, bamboo, khaskhas/straw, gunny bag etc. The chamber can keep the temperature 10-15^o C cooler than the outside temperature and maintain about 90% relative humidity. It is most effective during the summer.
- iv. Storage of raw materials, ingredients should be subject to FEFO (First Expire First Out) or FIFO (First in, First Out) stock rotation system as applicable. Containers made of non-toxic materials should be provided for storage of raw materials. The food materials shall be stored on racks / pallets such that they are reasonably well above the floor level and away from the wall so as to facilitate effective cleaning and prevent harbouring of any pests, insects or rodents.
- v. No raw material or ingredient should be accepted if it is known to contain parasites, undesirable micro-organisms, pesticides, veterinary drugs or toxic items, decomposed or extraneous substances, which would not be reduced to an acceptable level by normal sorting and/or processing.
- vi. All raw materials, food additives and ingredients, wherever applicable, should conform to all the regulations and standards laid down under the relevant laws.
- vii. All raw materials should be physically checked & thoroughly cleaned. Raw materials should be purchased in quantities that correspond to storage/preservation capacity. Packaged raw material must be checked for 'expiry date'/ 'best before'/ 'use by' date, packaging integrity and storage conditions.



6.4 Storage of raw material

- i. The supply of food grains like wheat and rice should not be stored for more than a quarter; they may be stored in airtight bins or stacked neatly in gunny bags or bins and stored in area free of rodents and insects. Food grain should not be stored directly on the ground; a wooden plank should be used for stacking of food grains.
- ii. In respect of storage of other raw materials, it should be stored in bags, should be away from the walls (about one feet) to avoid absorption of moisture; the height of the wooden plank may be at least 8 to 12 cms above the floor.
- iii. Ingredients like double fortified salt, condiments, oils soya bean, pulses etc. should be stored in airtight containers.
- iv. All containers should be of materials that do not impart toxicity to food. These containers should be cleaned at regular intervals and thoroughly dried before use. It should be ensured that ingredients used for cooking such as food grains, pulses, vegetables, cooking oil and condiments, are free from adulteration, contaminants, pest and infestation.
- v. All stored raw materials and ingredients must be kept under dry & cool and ventilated conditions that will prevent spoilage, protect against contamination by pathogenic microorganisms, insects, rodents, foreign bodies, chemicals and damage. This implies that food and non-food materials should not be stored in the same area and not all food materials can be stored together because of risk of contamination.
- vi. Storage of fuels, disinfectants, detergents, cleaning agents should be strictly away from the stored raw materials and under lock and key.



6.5 Food Safety Measures:

6.5.1 Food Safety measures during preparation

- i) The cereals and pulses should be manually cleaned before cooking to remove any extraneous matter.
- ii) 'Single Dish Meals' using broken wheat or rice and incorporating some amount of a pulse or soya beans, a seasonal vegetable/green leafy vegetable, and some amount of edible oil will save both time and fuel besides being nutritious.
- iii) Cereal pulse combination is necessary to have good quality protein. The cereal pulse ratio could range from 3:1 to 5:1. Sprouted pulses have more nutrients and should be incorporated in single dish meals.
- iv) Leafy vegetables when added to any preparation should be thoroughly washed before cutting and should not be subjected to washing after cutting.
- v) For chopping vegetables a clean chopping board should be used.

6.5.2 Food Safety Measures during Cooking

- i. Recipes requiring fermentation and sprouted pulses lead to increase in nutrition value and accordingly should be considered as an option in the menu.
- ii. Cooking must be done with the lid on to avoid loss of nutrients and contamination.
- iii. The containers should be checked for its cleanliness.
- iv. Temperature of the meal when served should be maintained at 65°C. Microorganisms multiply at a fast pace when the food is kept at temperature between 5°C and 60°C which represents the danger zone due to thermophilic and thermoduric nature. Therefore, food should be served to children immediately after being cooked.



- v. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian items should be segregated. Fridge wherever available should be cleaned at least once a week to remove stains, ice particles and food particles. The temperature in the fridge should be in the range of 4°C - 6°C
- vi. Requisite number of CCHs should be deputed at school level for the distribution of food from centralized kitchen for the distribution of meals with proper gear (gloves, apron and caps etc).
- vii. The school management should be encouraged to draw on the support of the community. Gram Panchayats and School Management Committees/Village Education Committees may be approached for involving community members in regular inspections, on a rotation basis, to help the school management in ensuring efficient quality cooking, serving and cleaning operations. Support of the community members, including mothers' groups, should also be solicited to ensure that children wash their hands with soap before eating, use clean plates and glasses, avoid littering and wastage of food, and rinse their hands and mouth after eating.

6.6 Tasting of the meals by teacher

The tasting of the food by a teacher just before serving is mandatory. The teacher is to maintain a record of tasting in a register. SMC member should also taste the food on a rotation basis along with the teachers before it is distributed to the children.

6.7 Testing of meals

Hot cooked meal provided to children shall be evaluated and certified by the Government Food Research Laboratory or any laboratory accredited or recognized by law, so as to ensure that the meal meets with the nutritional standards and quality specified in Schedule II to the Act. The Food and Drugs Administration Department of the State may also collect samples to ensure the nutritive value and quality of the meals. The Department shall collect the



samples at least once in a month from randomly selected schools or centralised kitchens and send such samples for examination to these laboratories. In case of the samples do not meet the prescribed standards, appropriate remedial action shall be taken.

6.8 Cleaning of cooking areas

The floors of kitchen and the slabs should be cleaned every day before and after the food is cooked. Special attention should be paid to the cleaning of obstructed sites including cooking areas and at the junction of floors and walls. The cooking areas must be kept cleaned at all times. It is important that surfaces in direct contact with food must be both clean and dry before use. Cracks, rough surfaces, open joints etc. must be repaired as soon as possible.

6.9 Cleaning of utensils, equipment and other materials

- i. Cleaning accessories such as clothes, mops and brushes carry a very high risk of cross contamination. They must therefore be thoroughly washed, cleaned and dried after use. Cleaning accessories used in the cooking area/packing area should not be used in other parts of the kitchen. Sun drying of the cleaning accessories in a clean and tidy place should be done.
- ii. Tables, benches and boxes, cupboards, glass cases, etc. shall be clean and tidy. Cooking utensils and crockery should be clean and in good condition. These should not be broken/ chipped.
- iii. Utensils should be cleaned of debris, rinsed, scrubbed with detergent and washed under running tap water after every operation. Wiping of utensils should be done with clean cloth. Clean cloths should be used for wiping hands and for clearing surfaces. Cloth used for floor cleaning should not be used for cleaning surfaces of tables and working areas and for wiping utensils. Dust or crumb from plates or utensils should be removed into dustbin by using cloth or wiper.



- iv. Accessories and containers that come in contact with food and used for food handling, storage, preparation and serving should be made of corrosion free materials which do not impart any toxicity to the food material and should be easy to clean and /or disinfect.
- v. Equipment and utensils used in the preparation of food should be kept at all times in good order and repair and in a clean and sanitary condition. Such utensil or container should not be used for any other purpose.
- vi. Every utensil or container containing any food or ingredient of food should at all times be either provided with a properly fitted cover/lid or with a clean gauze net or other material of texture sufficiently fine to protect the food completely from dust, dirt and flies and other insects.

6.10 Personal hygiene, cleanliness and health check-ups of Cook cum Helpers

- i. Cooks and helpers should maintain a high degree of personal hygiene and cleanliness.
- ii. The person suffering from infectious disease should not be permitted to work. Biannual health checks up should be undertaken to ensure fitness for the job of CCH. Cooks/helpers should report immediately to their supervisors, if they are suffering from any disease likely to be transmitted via food, e.g. diarrhoea or vomiting, infected wounds like, skin infections, jaundice or sores.
- iii. All food handlers should remain clean, wear washed clothes and keep their finger nails trimmed, clean and wash their hands with soap/detergent and water before commencing work and every time after touching, raw or contaminated food or using toilet. All Cook cum helpers should avoid wearing loose items that might fall into food and also avoid touching or scratching their face, head or hair.
- iv. It should be ensured that all CCHs are instructed and trained in food hygiene and food safety aspects along with personal hygiene



requirements commensurate with their work activities, the nature of food, its handling, preparation, service and distribution. Training programmes should be regularly reviewed and updated wherever necessary.

- v. Nail polish or artificial nails should not be worn because they can become foreign bodies and may compromise on food safety. No watches, rings, jewellery and bangles should be worn during cooking, serving and distribution where there is a danger of contamination of product.
- vi. Chewing, smoking, spitting and nose blowing should be prohibited within the premises especially while handling food.
- vii. The CCHs should have adequate and suitable clean protective clothing, head covering hair should be tied up neatly and ensured that the CCHs at work wear only clean protective clothes and head covering essentially during operation.
- viii. The CCHs should wash their hands at least each time work is resumed and whenever contamination of their hands has occurred; e.g. after coughing / sneezing, visiting toilet, using telephone, smoking etc; avoid certain hand habits - e.g. scratching nose, running finger through hair, rubbing eyes, ears and mouth, scratching beard, scratching parts of bodies etc.- that are potentially hazardous when associated with handling food products, and might lead to food contamination through the transfer of bacteria from the employee to product during its preparation. When unavoidable, hands should be effectively washed before resuming work after such actions.

6.11 Pest Control

- i. Cleanliness is essential for effective control of all pests (mainly rodents, birds, and insects). Wire mesh screens, for example on open windows, doors and ventilators will reduce the problem of pest entry.
- ii. Generally no pesticides/insecticides should be encouraged or used in cooking area. However if unavoidable, care must be taken to protect people, food, equipment and utensils from contamination before these are



applied. Pesticides should always be kept in its original containers, clearly marked and be stored in a locked storage separate from cooking ingredients storage areas. Records of pesticides / insecticides used along with dates and frequency should be maintained.

- iii. Kitchen and the store area should be kept clean and tidy to prevent pest access and to eliminate potential breeding sites. Holes, drain covers and other places where pests are likely to gain access should be kept in sealed condition or fitted with mesh / grills / claddings or any other suitable means as required and animals, birds and pets should not be allowed to enter into the food storage and cooking area. The school maintenance grant made available under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan may be used for this purpose.
- iv. Adequate arrangements including installation of fire extinguishers should be made to deal with incidents of accidental fire in the kitchen area of the school.

6.12 Hand-Washing for Children

- i. There should be a dedicated time within the daily time table that will allow enough time for all children, cooks and teachers in the school to wash their hands with soap. The hand washing of the children should be supervised and monitored vigorously.
- ii. Hand wash with soap before and after eating should be vigorously promoted. The schools may define an area for hand washing where very simple scalable and cost effective multiple hand washing facilities can be installed to be used by large groups of children at a time. Empty plastic bottles can be filled with liquid soap and diluted with water. 20-30 plastic bottles filled with diluted hand wash liquid can be used for approximately 200 children for hand washing.



- iii. Wherever proper hand washing facilities are either not available or inadequate for all children, buckets and mugs can be used to supplement the available facilities.

6.13 Infrastructural requirements for Food Safety And Hygiene

Guidelines for Safety and hygiene of Kitchen-cum-Store

- i. The Kitchen cum Store should be located in a clean and open place and free from filthy surroundings and should maintain overall hygienic environment.
- ii. The premises should be clean, adequately lighted and ventilated and have sufficient free space for movement.
- iii. Floors, ceilings and walls must be maintained in a sound condition. They should be smooth and easy to clean with no flaking paint or plaster.
- iv. The floor and skirted walls should be washed as per requirement with an effective disinfectant. The premises should be kept free from all insects. No spraying should be done during the cooking of Meal, but instead fly swats/ flaps should be used to kill flies getting into the premises. Windows, doors and other openings should be fitted with net or screen, as appropriate to make the premise insect free. The water used in the cooking shall be potable.
- v. Continuous supply of potable water should be ensured in the premises. In case of intermittent water supply, adequate storage arrangement for water used in food or washing should be made.
- vi. Arrangements for cleaning of containers, tables, working parts of machinery, etc. should be provided.
- vii. All utensils should be kept clean, washed, dried and stored at the Kitchen cum store to ensure freedom from growth of mold/ fungi and infestation.
- viii. All utensils should be placed well away from the walls to allow proper inspection.



- ix. There should be efficient drainage system and there should be adequate provisions for disposal of refuse.
- x. Potential sources of contamination like rubbish, waste water, toilet facilities, open drains and stray animals should be kept away from kitchen.
- xi. Kitchen should be separate from classrooms, preferably located at a safe, but accessible distance. The current norm for a kitchen shed is 20 sq.m of floor space for every 100 children enrolled and thereafter 4 sq. m for every additional 100 children.
- xii. As far as possible, the layout of the kitchen should be such that food preparation/processes are not amenable to cross-contamination from washing vegetables/cereals/Pulses/ etc). Floors, ceilings and walls must be maintained in a sound condition to minimize the accumulation of dirt, condensation and growth of undesirable moulds.
- xiii. Floors should be sloped appropriately to facilitate drainage and the drainage should flow in a direction opposite to the direction of food preparation. Adequate control measures should be in place to prevent insects and rodents from entering the processing area from drains. Windows, doors & all other openings to outside environment should preferably be covered with wire-mesh or insect proof screen as applicable to protect the premise from flies and other insects / pests / animals.
- xiv. Ventilation systems natural and /or mechanical including air filters, exhaust fans, wherever required, should be designed and constructed so that air does not flow from contaminated areas to clean areas.
- xv. A display board mentioning do's & don'ts for the CCHs should be put up inside at a prominent place in the premise in local language for everyone's understanding.
- xvi. Properly constructed chimneys are required in the kitchens. Chimneys should not be the entry point of insects; reptile's etc. Fuel (kerosene/fuel



wood/ charcoal/LPG) should be stored/installed safely, so that there is no fire hazard. Smokeless chulhas should be used to the extent possible. The Kitchen should have full visibility with sunlight or artificial light.

- xvii. If kerosene/gas is used for cooking, the CCHs should be specifically trained in safe handling of stoves, gas cylinders, etc. Raised platform for cooking, adequate light, proper ventilation and arrangement for drainage and waste disposal. The dustbin should have a lid and should be always covered.
- xviii. The Right to free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 provide the legal framework for the quality education in India and mandates minimum norms and standards for infrastructure in schools including kitchen cum store.

6.14 Water supply

- i. Continuous supply of potable water should be ensured in the premises. In case of intermittent water supply, adequate storage arrangement for water used in food or washing should be made. Water used for cleaning, washing and preparing food should be potable in nature.
- ii. Water storage tanks, if available, should be cleaned periodically and records of the same should be maintained. Non potable water can be used provided it is intended only for cleaning of equipment not coming in contact with food.
- iii. Non potable water pipes should be clearly distinguished from those in use for potable water.

6.15 Testing of Water

In the kitchens of bore water/tap water/hand-pump water is being used (in general) for cooking, drinking and washing. Water needs to be tested for chemical as well as microbiological contamination. The testing of water can



be done in convergence with the concerned water supply/Public Health Engineering departments of the States/UTs.

6.16 Drainage and Waste Disposal

- i. Adequate drainage, waste disposal systems and facilities should be provided and they should be designed and constructed in such manner so that the risk of contaminating food or the potable water supply is eliminated. Waste storage should be located in such manner that it does not contaminate the food process, storage areas, the environment inside and outside the kitchen and waste should be kept in covered containers and removed at regular intervals. Periodic disposal of the refuse/ waste should be made compulsory.
- ii. Waste material generated during the cooking of food should be kept in a separate container of adequate size with a proper cover preferably one which need not be touched to open should be provided in the premises for collection of food waste material. This should be emptied and washed and dried daily before next use.

6.17 Food serving area

If the meals are served in a dining room, or school veranda/class room or a hall in the schools, this should be spacious enough, well ventilated and with windows having wire mesh. The room should be cleaned every day before the school starts functioning.

6.18 Disaster management plan/Contingency measures

The States and UTs shall also develop dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible (like toll free call facility etc.). The important phone no. viz., Primary health Centre, Hospital, fire brigade, police Station may be painted on the wall of the school building at a place visible to all.



7 School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens

Most people are familiar with the critical importance of learning a lifelong skill. Setting up a School Nutrition Garden (also called Kitchen Garden) seeks to achieve a similar goal as it is both a place and an activity where children learn the skill of growing their own food.

7.1 The concept of a School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens has the following features:

- i) Teaching students that a Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden can actually be set up anywhere, even in a School in a crowded urban area. This learning is critical because most people feel that a Nutrition Garden requires a large plot of vacant land. However, the fact is that healthy vegetables, fruits etc. can be grown in pots and containers on terraces, roofs or even in the entrance area of the School. Climbing varieties such as the snake gourd can be cultivated as they will creep up the walls and need no land at all.
- ii) Teaching students that, with a few exceptions, every part of the vegetable or fruit can be eaten. In many parts of the country, different parts of vegetables such as the flowers, the leaves, and the stems, are all eaten. For example while banana flowers are considered a delicacy in some cuisines, papaya leaves are in the limelight for their medicinal properties. Thus, instead of throwing all leaves and stems away children should be encouraged that most parts of the vegetable and fruit can be eaten, and to include these in their diets. Cooking competitions should accordingly be organized to support cooks in the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme to come up with innovative recipes using all parts of vegetables.
- iii) Teaching students to think out of the box and find a way. No land available in the school? Not enough rainfall? Let these not be reasons not to start Nutrition Gardens. Children should be encouraged to work



actively in their School Eco-Clubs to identify local species which are best suited to local conditions of topography, land and climate and also identify different ways to provide water such as simple methods of drip irrigation. Schools can invite local experts and farmers to share their expertise with the children. The focus should be on finding innovative solutions.

- iv) Teaching students to follow the same learning and start a School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden in their own homes. The purpose of setting up such a Kitchen Garden in Schools is to give students a lifelong skill and to encourage them to go home and start their own garden, in whatever space is available using their knowledge learnt in School.
- v) The MoE has asked all schools both in rural and urban areas to develop and maintain a School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden with teachers, students, parents and even local residents being involved. Technical assistance, training, provision of seeds, sapling, organic manure etc can be obtained in convergence with various line departments/agencies like Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Department of Agriculture/Horticulture, Food & Nutrition Board, State Agriculture Universities, Forest Department etc. Moreover, activities like construction of boundary wall, levelling of land etc can be taken up under MGNREGA.
- vi) Working in the open and cultivating their own food is one of the finest examples of experiential learning for school children and the benefits of setting up these gardens in schools are manifold. The joy of watching something they have planted is untold and students learn about responsibilities, about learning to care for living organisms, teamwork, social skills and about healthy food alternatives. These activities can also be used for numeracy skills including measurement, areas and volumes, data gathering and presentation.
- vii) Plantation in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden may be carried out under the activities of Eco-Clubs, which is being set up in every school.



An Eco-Club is a group of children and teachers in schools who work to contribute towards improving environmental conditions. Eco-Clubs in schools shall empower students to participate and take up meaningful environmental conservation activities and projects.

7.2 Objectives of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden

The main objectives of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden are as follows:

- i) To help in addressing malnutrition & micro nutrient deficiencies by consumption of freshly grown vegetables.
- ii) To give children first-hand experience with nature and gardening.
- iii) To enhance the knowledge of children regarding nutritional aspects of vegetables and harmful effects of junk food.

7.3 Need and benefits of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens:

School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens have many advantages; some of them are as under:

- i) Good for learning: School Nutritional (Kitchen) Gardens are good for learning: they are highly practical and a direct form of education, where children can learn how to grow good food, which not only improves health, but also provides opportunities for livelihood and increased self-sufficiency. Apart from practical skills in agriculture and horticulture, gardens are a living laboratory for the study of environmental issues and life sciences.
- ii) Essential for children's health: These Gardens are good for children's health and education: A good diet is essential for cognitive abilities which help in learning. Children who eat well are likely to learn well. School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens are not just for food, but for better eating and they can make a direct and immediate improvement in children's diet. They can provide fruit and vegetables, rich in vitamins and minerals, add nutritional value to Meals, increase the variety that is so important



for health and growth, and help children to appreciate and enjoy this variety.

- iii) Improve environment: School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens improve the environment: Respect for the immediate environment begins at home - and also at School. The school grounds have elements of the natural environment, the built environment and the social environment: earth, plants and trees, insects and wildlife, sun and shade; water supply and sanitation facilities, paths and fences, buildings and shelters; places for recreation and study, social life and contacts with the outside world. Children's awareness of these, and the way they learn to treat them, will help them to grow into responsible adults.
- iv) School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens are good for the earth: Organic gardening conserves the soil, protects the environment and works with nature rather than against it. It is a method of growing food that relies on the earth's natural resources, such as land, sun, air, rainfall, plants, animals and people. It uses natural methods to keep the soil fertile and healthy and to control insects, pests and diseases. Organic methods can help keep our water sources clean and free of chemicals. It is also safer for children because there are no dangerous chemicals.
- v) Good for child's well-being: Children who are close to nature relate to it as a source of wonder, joy, and awe. Wonder, rather than books, words, or learning all the facts, provides the direction and impetus for environmental education in early childhood. Environmental education during the early years should be based on this sense of wonder and the joy of discovery.
- vi) Increases confidence in students: It is a forum through which students can reach out to influence, engage their parents and neighbourhood communities to promote sound environmental behavior. It will empower students to explore environmental concepts and actions beyond the confines of a syllabus or curriculum. While everyone, everywhere, asserts



the importance of 'learning to live sustainably,' environment largely remains a peripheral issue in the formal schooling system. Students of all the Schools need to be encouraged to participate in the Eco- Club as an active member.

7.4 Impact of Climate Change and how School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens will be helpful:

- i) There is overwhelming evidence that human activities are affecting the climate and this has implications for human health.
- ii) Role of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens in reducing the negative impact of climate change: Plants, trees, vegetable and fruits play an important role in reducing the harmful effects of climate change. Deforestation is one of the major reasons why the quality of air has degraded to an all-time low. The loss of trees and other vegetation can cause climate change, desertification, soil erosion, fewer crops, flooding, increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere etc.
- iii) According to scientists, planting of trees, vegetable and fruits is the biggest and cheapest way to tackle the climate crisis. As trees grow, they absorb and store the carbon dioxide emissions that are driving global heating. Planting of new trees can help mitigate against climate change by removing CO₂ from the atmosphere. Combined with the sun's energy, the captured carbon is converted into trunks, branches, roots and leaves via the process of photosynthesis. It is stored in this "biomass" until being returned back into the atmosphere, whether through natural processes or human interference, thus completing the carbon cycle.
- iv) The School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden is therefore not only good for the School but it is also good for the environment because it reduces the carbon footprint of food by decreasing the number of miles it takes to get vegetables, fruits, legumes and pulses from the farm to school kitchen . If plants, trees, vegetable and fruits are planted in the School Nutrition



(Kitchen) Garden and at home, it will help store carbon from the atmosphere into the soil.

- v) Organic local vegetable and fruits that are in season may be planted in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden rather than transporting food from far away, whether by truck or jeep which uses fossil fuels for fuel and for cooling to keep foods in transit from spoiling thereby increasing the carbon footprints.
- vi) Planting trees in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens shall be an initiative towards reducing the harmful effects of climate change. Development of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens in about 11.20 lakhs Government and Government aided schools covered under the scheme can have a significant positive impact on the climate.

7.5 Setting up of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden: Planning and Monitoring

- i) Set up Eco-Clubs in all Schools: The Eco Clubs established in the School shall be headed by the Principal/Headmaster/Head Teacher. Preferably, two teachers per School and one class in charge will assist in carrying out activities. All the Students, teachers, and parents of the children may be members of Eco Clubs. The Students Coordinator, in each class may encourage the participation of students. The head of the Eco –Club shall be responsible for execution of the activities of the Club with the help of another Teacher. Plantation activities may be carried out under Eco-Club activities.
- ii) The Principal / Head teacher may be the team leader for establishment and maintenance of the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens at School level with the help of students, SMC members, and interested persons from community through 'Shram Daan' etc. It is also a good idea to establish an executive team of senior students who will be able to carry on the activities without much supervision after training.



- iii) A committee may be formed at district level under the chairpersonship of District Collector / CEO of Zilla Parishad with the following members:
- a) District Collector / CEO of Zilla Parishad - Chairperson
 - b) KVK in-charge from the district
 - c) Representative from Forest Department
 - d) Representative from Rural Development,
 - e) Representative from Agriculture/Horticulture department
 - f) Child Development Project Officers.
 - g) District Education Officer - Convenor
- iv) The District Magistrate may tie up with all schools for the setting up of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens in every School by converging with concerned local departments, agencies and experts.
- v) The place outside the School boundary may also be used for the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden. As the involvement of children is the foremost purpose, it does not matter even if the school has little space. Three or four small beds (Kyaries) can make up a model School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden. In general, it is advised to choose crops, plants and trees that are adapted to local conditions, easy to cultivate and fit into the School term and are culturally accepted in the area. The produce should fit in with local food habits. Most important of all is to have a supportive Head teacher who fosters the interest of the whole school i.e., teachers, students, members of School Management Committee, Parent-Teacher Association etc.
- vi) Under the 'flexi fund component for innovative interventions' in Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman, an amount of Rs 5000/- per School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden may be utilized for purchase of seeds, equipment, compost etc. on sharing basis between Centre and States & UTs. Moreover, as the power for implementing the scheme with minor modifications from the existing guidelines has been delegated to District Level Committee chaired by the District Magistrate, the committee may



rationalize and allot funds on the basis of School specific requirement, within the overall average of Rs 5000/- per School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden.

7.6 Planning and Monitoring of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens

- i) Schools may consider each class putting in one to two hours a week, with children taking on occasional extra responsibility for an extra half hour to an hour a week on a voluntary basis or in rotation. Each class can work separately from the others, with some coordination to avoid overlap. The class can be divided into teams or groups which can work on their own beds and also contribute to assigned tasks. This arrangement can foster class pride. Individual students or small teams can specialize in particular technical responsibilities, with impressive titles such as “Pump Engineer”, “Tool Manager”, “Security Team” and “Compost King”.
- ii) Children should be able to call on these “specialists” for information and advice. It is very important to decide on a calendar of activities. It is vital to incorporate the activities of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden – e.g. when does the garden season begin and end, timings for different activities, planting of vegetables etc. Children should inspect their crops every day - on the way to class, during breaks, or going home. Establishing this habit early in the year by leading the whole class out for five minutes every morning will be very beneficial. Younger children can observe and report orally; older students can collect measurements and data to produce weekly reports to be kept in a portfolio or in their group’s Garden File.
- iii) Students may not be able to do all the work needed to establish a garden, but they should be involved as much as possible. They can participate by mapping and studying the site, discussing and researching supplies and equipment needed, observing and recording garden works, guiding visitors round the site and keeping families informed, studying garden layout and



garden beds. Discussions may be carried out with SMC members and community to decide on what measures to be taken to save School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden from chicken, birds, goats, wild pigs, buffalo, monkeys etc

7.7 Preparing the site and layout:

- i) Plain Terrain is most convenient. Steep slopes need terracing. Stones and pebbles can be used for making walls. Tools may also be provided by KVVKs. Some schools manage without any tools or equipment of their own at all.
- ii) The main elements are beds, paths, plant nurseries, compost heaps and a garden shed. Activities like construction of boundary wall, levelling of land etc can be take up under MGNREGA. Good water supply provides an opportunity to decide when to plant and when to harvest. If water is scarce or expensive, measures like water conservation, drip irrigation may be taken to optimise water use. Remember that plants need plenty of sunlight (at least eight hours a day).

7.8 Composting

- i) Compost is rich in nutrients. It is used, in gardens and organic farming. The compost itself is beneficial for the land in many ways, including as a soil conditioner, a fertilizer, addition of vital humus or humic acids, and as a natural pesticide for soil. Compost is useful for erosion control, land and stream reclamation, wetland construction, and as landfill cover.
- ii) At the simplest level, the process of composting requires making a heap of wet organic matter (also called green waste), such as leaves, grass, and food scraps, and waiting for the materials to break down into humus after a period of months.
- iii) Composting is an aerobic method (meaning that it requires the presence of air) of decomposing organic solid wastes. It can therefore be used to



recycle organic material. Composting requires the following three components: human management, aerobic conditions, development of internal biological heat. Composting organisms require four equally important ingredients to work effectively:

- a) Carbon — for energy; the microbial oxidation of carbon produces the heat, if included at suggested levels. High carbon materials tend to be brown and dry.
- b) Nitrogen — to grow and reproduce more organisms to oxidize the carbon. High nitrogen materials tend to be green (or colorful, such as fruits and vegetables) and wet.
- c) Oxygen — for oxidizing the carbon, the decomposition process.
- d) Water — in the right amounts to maintain activity without causing anaerobic conditions.

7.9 Let the children prepare their vermicomposting pits:

Vermicomposting is a type of composting in which worms are used to convert organic materials (usually wastes) into a humus-like material known as vermin-compost. Vermicompost enhances plant growth, suppresses disease in plants, increases porosity and microbial activity in soil, and improves water retention and aeration. Vermicompost also benefits the environment by reducing the need for chemical fertilizers and decreasing the amount of waste going to landfills. Rules for Vermicomposting are as under:

- i) The school children may be encouraged to carry out the activity.
- ii) A bin made from untreated, non-aromatic wood may be used in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens for vermicomposting.
- iii) Children may be encouraged to prepare the pit with some form of bedding, such as shredded paper, residues of cereals, pulses and peels of vegetable and fruits from school kitchen and decaying leaves may be used to fill the bin and mix with a few handfuls of soil and the worms.



- iv) The vermicomposting process takes three to six months. The quality of the compost depends on many factors. Let the school students explore what they may be.
- v) Earthworms are helpful in a vermicompost. There are two types of earthworms namely burrowing and non-burrowing types. Red earthworm species, like *Eisenia foetida*, are most efficient in compost making. The non-burrowing earthworms eat 10 percent soil and 90 percent organic waste materials; these convert the organic waste into vermicompost faster than the burrowing earthworms. They can tolerate temperatures ranging from 0 to 40°C. The burrowing types of earthworms come onto the soil surface only at night.
- vi) Technical support regarding vermicomposting may also be obtained from KVKs, State Agriculture/Horticulture departments.

7.10 Organic solid waste: green waste

Composting is a process for converting decomposable organic materials into useful stable products. Therefore, landfill space can be used for other wastes by composting these materials rather than dumping them on landfills. The green waste from the school kitchens may be used to fill the land fill for composting.

7.11 Water Harvesting

- i) Water harvesting means capturing rain where it falls or capturing the run off in the School or home and taking measures to keep that water clean by not allowing polluting activities to take place in the catchment. Water harvesting can be undertaken through a variety of ways.
- ii) In general, water harvesting is the activity of direct collection of rainwater. The rainwater collected can be stored for direct use or can be recharged into the groundwater. Rain is the first form of water that we know in the hydrological cycle, hence is a primary source of water for us. Rivers, lakes



and groundwater are all secondary sources of water. In present times, we depend entirely on such secondary sources of water. Water harvesting means to appreciate the value of rain, and to make optimum use of the rainwater at the place where it falls.

- iii) The rain water may be stored in school and used to water the plants in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens. MoE has issued guidelines for school children on how to save one litre of water per day. Various methods and activities have been suggested to be carried out by school children to use water judiciously.

7.12 Importance of Reuse and Recycling of Water:

- i) If school/home water is recycled for use in one area, this means that the school/home does not have to take water from other areas. When the water is recycled, it makes it easy for places like the wetlands to keep their water supplies. Reusing and recycling alternative water supplies is a key part of reducing the pressure on water resources and the environment.
- ii) Helping the children to learn about the importance of reusing and recycling water is of utmost importance and it may be one of the activities to be carried out under the Eco-Clubs in schools.
- iii) Letting children learn to Reuse and Recycle Water in School and at home: Some of the suggested activities are listed below, which may be carried out in school as well as in homes.
 - a) The water that is being used to wash fruits or vegetables is suitable for reuse. This water can be used in School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens.
 - b) Water used in boiling vegetables etc. shouldn't be discarded. Instead, once this water has cooled down, it may be used to water the garden or for other purposes at school and home.



- c) Children should be encouraged that while doing laundry or washing hands, the water that usually goes down the drain should be redirected for other purposes at home and school. For example, water draining from the laundry can be diverted to flush the toilet.
- d) If a water bottle has been in the fridge for too long or water in kitchen at home is kept for too long, and you do not wish to drink it, then go to the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden and feed a thirsty plant with it.

7.13 Drip Irrigation for School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens:

- i) Drip irrigation is a type of micro-irrigation system that has the potential to save water and nutrients by allowing water to drip slowly to the roots of plants, either from above the soil surface or buried below the surface. The goal is to place water directly into the root zone and minimize evaporation. Drip irrigation systems distribute water through a network of valves, pipes, tubing, and emitters. Water and nutrients are delivered across the garden in pipes called 'dripperlines' featuring smaller units known as 'drippers'. Each dripper emits drops containing water and fertilizers, resulting in the uniform application of water and nutrients direct to each plant's root zone, across an entire field.
- ii) Depending on how well designed, installed, maintained, and operated it is, a drip irrigation system can be more efficient than other types of irrigation systems, such as surface irrigation or sprinkler irrigation. With the technical support from KVKs and the local Horticulture/Agriculture Department a drip irrigation system may be put in place in Schools.
- iii) Drip Irrigation is an efficient and simple way to grow plants and the major benefits are as under:
 - Higher consistent quality yields
 - Huge water savings: no evaporation, no run off, no waste



- 100% land utilization - drip irrigates uniformly in any topography and soil type
- Energy savings: drip irrigation works on low pressure
- Efficient use of fertilizer and crop protection.
- Less dependency on weather, greater stability and lower risks

7.14 Involvement of children in drip irrigation

- i) Under the activities of Eco-Club children can calculate the water used to irrigate the plants in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden through traditional methods and the amount of water used via drip irrigation.
- ii) This activity will enable the Students to learn the actual requirement of water in cultivating plants, and therefore how to save water.

7.15 Using the water from the School kitchen in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden:

- i) The water used in the kitchen for washing the cereals and pulses may be utilized to water the plants in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden. Students should be encouraged to start this practise in their own homes also.
- ii) Methods may also be developed to store the water used in kitchen for future use in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden if required.

7.16 Support from Experts of the Krishi Vigyan Kendras

- i) Krishi Vigyan Kendras work under the Indian Council of Agriculture Research. Presently, over 700 KVKs are functional under the jurisdiction of various Agricultural Technology Application Research Institutes (ATARIs) across the country.
- ii) KVKs are an integral part of the National Agricultural Research System (NARS), which aims to identify location specific technology modules in agriculture and allied enterprises, through technology assessment, refinement and demonstrations.



- iii) KVKs have been functioning as Knowledge and Resource Centers in agricultural technology supporting initiatives in the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- iv) KVKs can play a crucial role in the establishment of School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens through provision of technical support, free seeds/seedlings, sapling, organic manure, and training of all the stakeholders at all levels as well as continuous capacity building.

7.17 Support from Experts of the Forest Department

The Forest Department in every State/UT is a rich source of expertise and plant saplings. All schools should work actively with the local Dept.

7.18 Child safety in the School Nutrition Garden

It is essential that the garden is safe for children and the following safeguard are required to ensure this:

- i) Select the correct-sized tool.
- ii) Keep sprays and fertilizers out of reach.
- iii) Do not use chemicals. Garden organically whenever possible.
- iv) Provide safe storage for equipment and tools.
- v) Secure fences and gates.
- vi) Limit the exposure to high sunlight and warm temperature.
- vii) Make sure that where it's appropriate, children wear suitable clothes.
- viii) Do not leave buckets of water unattended around very young children.

7.19 Getting children interested in gardening

Children can be involved and motivated to create a garden by letting them carry out the following activities:

- i) Simple activities under Eco-Clubs for gardening.
- ii) Give them their own garden space, this does not have to be big and you can start with a large container or a few pots.



- iii) Involve older children in the planning and design of the garden.
- iv) Use lightweight, easy-to-handle, correct-sized tools and garden equipment.
- v) Encourage children to dig in the soil. (younger children love making mud structures)
- vi) Grow interesting plants such as sunflowers, corn, pumpkins, tomatoes and potatoes
- vii) Plant flowers that attract butterflies, ladybirds and other interesting insects or birds.
- viii) Install a water feature (a birdbath) .
- ix) Set up a vermicomposting pit.
- x) Visit community gardens, children’s farms or botanic gardens for ideas

7.20 Setting up a School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden in schools which don’t have adequate vacant land

Today with the rapid rate of urbanization, many Schools do not have free space to grow vegetables etc. For them there is an effective alternative that is simple and practical way i.e. gardening in “Containers”. Such a garden has many benefits for Schools in urban areas as they help to "green" the school and reduce air pollution. Other major benefits are:

- i) Students learn to grow vegetables and fruits in containers, understanding that a large piece of land is not essentially required for this.
- ii) Utilizes and reuses discarded containers
- iii) Organic garbage such as kitchen scraps and anything that decays, can be processed into compost in such containers
- iv) Through a careful selection of the plants, the temperature of the immediate area of the School can be lowered. This is very useful in the hotter parts of the country.



- v) Students will learn to think creatively and out of the box, understanding that a garden can be effectively created everywhere.
- vi) The greenery will definitely beautify the School and make it a visually more appealing place.
- vii) It will enable school children to practice “intensive” gardening through maximum utilization of limited space.
- viii) It will provide an opportunity to practice “intercropping” (i.e. planting a variety of plants in one container) which ensures the health of plants due to diversity.
- ix) Such gardens “make use of unused School spaces” (vacant staircases, school entrance sites, etc.)

7.21 Selection of Plants

- i) Climber vegetables may be grown because they need less space to grow and almost all the parts of the plant are edible. Climbers can also be moulded into different shapes of arches and railings.
- ii) Though most climbers are grown against walls and pulled upto to the next floor, the container should be slightly away from the walls and after the plant is put in it, the roots may be covered with soil and pressed. If the climber has tendrils then some kind of net can be hung from the maximum height of the wall. The tendrils will hook themselves on to the net and keep pulling themselves up. Thin ropes and string can also be used. Tendrils or winding shoots will gradually climb up the wall. Best climbing vegetables are:
 - a. Pumpkin (Kaddu)
 - b. Bottle Gourds, (lauki) Ridge Gourds, Bitter Gourds
 - c. Cucumbers
 - d. Beans
 - e. Tomato
 - f. Tinda



7.22 Containers which can be used to grow plants

- i) While most containers can be used, it is essential that no container which earlier held any material that could be considered poisonous (e.g.kerosene) is used. This kind of garden is an excellent way to reuse discarded items that would otherwise have reached the landfill sites only. Pots and containers viz., cement pots, damaged bowls / water tanks/ buckets, tin boxes, boxes, crates, bags, unused water cans, drums of different sizes, damaged sink / wash basin, etc can be used for growing fruits and vegetables.
- ii) Earthen pots made of burnt porous clay in various sizes can be used to hold enough quantity of soil for cultivation. They have straight sides and are wider at the top than at the bottom to hold the compost and also facilitate easy removal of soil. In India, pots of varying sizes viz., tube pots, $\frac{1}{4}$ size, $\frac{1}{2}$ size and $\frac{3}{4}$ size are used commonly.
- iii) Old plastic pots of round and square types can be used for raising plants.
- iv) Old polythene bags with punched holes at the bottom for drainage and filled with a porous rooting medium can be used for propagation. Sometimes, young seedlings which are raised in the nursery are subsequently transplanted in these polythene bags (e.g., papaya, curry leaf etc.). The soil mixture is filled in polythene covers and used for the cultivation of vegetables like tomato, brinjal, chilli, turmeric, coriander, etc.

7.23 What shall we grow in the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden?

A huge range of vegetables and fruits including roots & tubers, pulses & legumes, medicinal plants and herbs can be grown in School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens.



- i. Roots and tubers: (e.g. sweet potato, potato) are very good sources of carbohydrates, energy and some vitamins, but have less protein than cereals. They can be eaten with many other foods and can be grown in the School Nutrition(Kitchen) Gardens as per the season.
- ii. Legumes: (e.g. cowpeas, chickpeas, beans, soya beans)are a rich source of protein. Some also have fat, vitamin E, calcium, iron and zinc, which children need to grow for the development of their brains.
- iii. Vegetables and Fruits: are rich in many different vitamins and minerals and other substances which protect health, especially dark green leafy vegetables and yellow or orange fruits and vegetables (e.g. pumpkin, yellow/orange sweet potatoes, papaya, mango, carrots). Dark green leafy vegetables release all their nutritional value when combined with other foods. It is essential to select only those vegetables and fruits for the SNG which are local and best suited for the topography and weather conditions. Please consult your local KVK, and also ask experts including farmers for their advice before making the final selection. Some suggested vegetables and fruits which are appropriate for the SNG are:

Vegetables

Amaranth Leaves (Chaulai)
 Ash Gourd (Petha)
 Brinjal Eggplant (Baigan)
 Beetroot (Chukandar)
 Bitter gourd (Karela)
 White gourd (Lauki /ghia)
 Cabbage (Patta Gobi)
 Carrot (Gajar)
 Capsicum (Shimla mirch)
 Cauliflower (Phoolgobhi)

Fruits

Apple (Seb)
 Banana (Kela)
 Black currant (Falsa)
 Black berry (Jamun)
 Custard apple (Sharifa)
 Fig (Anjeer)
 Gooseberry (Amla)
 Grapes (Angur)
 Guava (Amrud)
 Mango (Aam)



Cluster Beans (Guar ki phalli)	Orange (Santara)
Cucumber (Kheera)	Papaya (Papita)
Fenugreek leaves (Methi)	Pear (Nashpati)
Spinach (Palak)	Pineapple (Annanas)
Mushroom (Khumb)	Pomegranate (Anar)
Mustard leaves (SarsokaSagg)	Sweetlime (Mausmi)
Okra, lady finger (Bhindi)	Water-melon (Tarabooj)
Pumpkin (Kaddu)	Plum (Allobukhara)
Potato (Aloo)	Peach (Aadoo)
Turnip (Shalgam)	Mulberry (Shahatut)
Tomato (Tamatar)	Grapes (Angoor)
Moringa (Drumstick) (Sehjan)	Muskmelon (Kharabooja)
Jack fruit (Katahal)	

- iv. Suggestive Plants (Medicinal): Medicinal plants, also called medicinal herbs, are a good option which may also be grown in School Nutrition (Kitchen) Gardens in schools. These plants have been used in traditional medicine practices and many are helpful in the treatment of common diseases.
- Papaya Leaves: Papaya leaves have high levels of antioxidants, like saponins, flavonoids, tannins, and alkaloids. These antioxidants, along with vitamins C and A, improve blood circulation count. It is claimed that papaya leaves help the body to heal faster from dengue fever by increasing the platelet count drastically.
 - Tulsi: For centuries, Tulsi (the queen of herbs), has been known for its remarkable healing properties. Tulsi is taken as a herbal tea and its juice gives relief in cold, fever, bronchitis and cough. It is very effective against indigestion and headaches.



- c. Aloe Vera: Sap from aloe vera is extremely useful to speed up healing and reduce the risk of infections for wounds, cuts, burns and for reducing inflammation. Apart from its external use on the skin, aloe vera is also taken internally in the treatment of digestive problems.
- d. Ginger: Ginger is one of the most delicious and healthiest spices. It is full of nutrients and bioactive compounds that are beneficial for the brain and the body, helping to alleviate symptoms of motion sickness, chronic indigestion, etc.
- e. Garlic: This has a unique flavor, which makes it an indispensable element in many dishes. It has several health benefits which make it a very desirable part of any SNG.
- f. Curry leaves: Curry leaves or curry patta is popular because of its aroma. The leaves are rich in Vitamin A,B, C and B2. They are also a good source of iron and calcium.
- g. Moringa: Fresh Moringa leaves are incredibly nutrient dense and they are rich in Antioxidants.

7.24 What parts of plants can we eat?

Most plant foods are grouped into two categories i.e. vegetables and fruits. We usually eat the roots, leaves or fruits of the plant. But some parts of some plants, which we may not usually eat and discard, are very nutritious. For example, Beet greens have more than 8 times the nutritional content of beet roots. Some parts of plants which have high nutritional content other than the Vegetable and fruit are:

- a) Pumpkin leaves and flowers: Pumpkins are very versatile in their use for cooking. Most parts of the pumpkin are edible, including the fleshy shell, the seeds, the leaves, and even the flowers.
- b) Potato's skin: The skin of the potato is rich in fiber and many recipes can be prepared with this.



- c) Carrots tops: Carrot tops are rich in vitamin A and minerals that can be added to vegetable curries.
- d) Cauliflower Leaves: Often cut off at source, these leaves are just like cabbage and can be used in preparing a meal as they are a good source of iron.
- e) Pea-shoots: The young leaves and tendrils of pea plants taste like peas. These can be lightly cooked or eaten raw and are rich in proteins.
- f) Beet root leaves: Beetroot leaves can be used as spinach, in salads or can be added to pulses also.
- g) Sweet potato leaves: They have edible leaves and tendrils which make a nice spinach substitute and the greens are easier to grow than the tubers.
- h) Banana stem and flower: Banana stem and flower are good sources of Iron and minerals which can be used in the preparation of vegetables.
- i) Citrus peel: Peels of citrus fruits (such as lemons) can be used as flavouring agents in vegetables and pulses. They are rich in vitamin C.

It is recommended that these parts of such vegetables should be used in the Meal prepared in the School. Competitions can be organized and the cooks who prepare the best meals may be appreciated.



8 Supplementary Nutrition in Aspirational districts and districts having high burden of malnutrition

Appropriate provision for supplementary nutrition may be made in aspirational districts/tribal districts/districts with identified high cases of malnutrition etc. over and above the existing provisions under the scheme. State may use a maximum of 5% of total recurring Central and minimum mandatory State share for this purpose. There will be no separate additional budgetary support for this component and this expenditure will be met from the funds available with the State (recurring Central Assistance + State Share).

8.1 Selection of district

In addition to the aspirational districts, selection of the other district(s) shall be based on the level of prevalence of malnutrition and prevalence of anaemia.

8.2 Selection of supplementary food item

Selection of the supplementary food item with proven nutrition values, shall be made on the basis of acceptability of food choices and food preferences of the children and the geographical area. The selection of the food items may be done on the basis of shelf life of the food item. Utmost care should be taken in the preparation and its distribution.

8.3 Time frame for distribution – amount and frequency of provision

Preferably the distribution may be made in such a manner that the nutritional benefits to the children are maximised.

8.4 Baseline and end line data along with regular monitoring

The baseline health data may be captured before the intervention. After the intervention of supplementary food is made the end-line data may also be captured to understand the efficacy of the intervention to replicate in the



other districts also if required. The health data may be captured in convergence with the State/UT level health department.



9 Information, Education and Communication (IEC)

9.1 Display of entitlements of children at prominent place:

9.1.1 At the school level, the following information related to per meal entitlements of children should be displayed at a prominent place visible to common public:

S. No.	Items	Primary	Upper Primary
A) Nutrition norm per child per day			
1.	Calorie	450	700
2.	Protein	12 gms	20 gms
B) Food norms per child per day			
1.	Food grains	100 gms	150 gms
2.	Pulses	20 gms	30 gms
3.	Vegetables (leafy also)	50 gms	75 gms
4.	Oil & fat	5 gms	7.5 gms
5.	Salt & condiments	As per need	As per need
C) Per child per day cooking cost			
	Latest cooking cost		

9.1.2 In addition to the above, the following information may also be displayed on weekly/monthly basis as suomoto information under the Right to Information Act.

- i) Weekly menu and its ingredients
- ii) Quantity of food grains received and utilized
- iii) Other ingredients purchased, utilized
- iv) Number of children provided meals.
- v) Roster of Community Members involved in the programme.

9.2 Display of logo: Logo of the Scheme may be displayed at a prominent place for the visibility and awareness generation of the community.



9.3 Public Grievance Redressal: The States and UTs shall also develop dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible (like toll free call facility etc.).

9.4 Publicity of scheme : IEC activities in connection with the programme, are extremely important that following messages are communicated to parents of the children in the target group, the community at large, and other persons connected with the programme, so as to derive optimal benefit from it:-

- i) It needs to be explained to parents belonging to weaker sections that School meal is meant to be in addition to, and not a substitute for, meals which parents should in any case provide to children at home.
- ii) Importance of balanced and nutritious meals, and how to provide them economically.
- iii) Safety, health and hygiene aspects. Good storage, cooking, serving and eating practices.
- iv) Community participation/contribution in, and supervision of the programme.

9.5 IEC through convergence: State Governments/UT Administrations, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Municipal Bodies will be expected to undertake above IEC activities using their regular budget for publicity as also by mobilizing contributions from media groups, philanthropic organizations and the community.

9.6 Awards: State / UT may institute Awards for Best school, Best cook-cum-helpers, School Nutrition gardens and any other best practices at different levels in order to popularise and encourage the best practices under the Scheme. This is only illustrative and not exhaustive, State / UT may devise their own such awards. At district and block level this information may be publicised in various social media platforms.



10 Vocal for Local & Atmanirbhar Bharat

10.1 Involvement of FPOs and SHGs: Scheme encourages enhanced involvement of Farmers Producer Organizations (FPO) and Women Self Help Groups in implementation of the scheme widely.

10.2 Use of millets and local Food items: Usage of locally grown food items like millets, vegetables, condiments etc. may be systematically undertaken by States/UTs under the Scheme. This not only promotes nutrition through local traditional food items, but also contributes to local economic growth.

10.3 Flexibility to District Collector: District Collector / District Magistrate may be given enhanced powers to decide the menu suitable to the local conditions within the prescribed nutrition and food norms and to procure locally grown food items from Farmers Producers Organizations, Federation of Women's Self-Help Groups etc. so as to promote local employment generation and economic development while simultaneously improving the nutrition status of children.



11 Grievance Redressal Mechanism

11.1 Grievance Redressal Mechanism

- i) States and Union Territories are required to develop a dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible.
- ii) In addition to above, the States and UTs shall also develop dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible (like toll free call facility etc.).

11.2 Contingency Plan for Medical Emergency:

The Implementing Agencies should have a Contingency Plan for any untoward incident. The names and telephone numbers of the nearest hospitals, Primary Health Centre, Ambulance, Police, Fire-brigade and any other relevant information should be displayed at prominent places.



12 Tithi Bhojan

12.1 Concept of Tithi Bhojan:

- i. The Concept of “Tithi Bhojan”, a community participation programme was originally initiated by the State Government of Gujarat under the erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme by relying on the Indian traditional practice of providing food to large number of people on special occasions such as festivals, anniversaries, birthdays, marriages, and days of national importance etc.
- ii. Members of the community provide nutritious and healthy food to the children as an additional food item or full meal on such special occasions/festivals.
- iii. This is completely voluntary, and the people in the community contribute either a complete full meal or contribute food items in the form of sweets, namkeens, fruits or sprouts etc. as an additional item. Tithi Bhojan is not a substitute to school meal. This only supplements or complements the meal provided in the school.
- iv. To encourage the community participation in the scheme the concept of “Tithi Bhojan”, in which the community provides nutritious and healthy food to the children as an additional food item or full meal is being initiated in all the States and UTs under Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN). Under this programme the members of the community contribute /sponsor either utensils or food on special occasions/festivals in the form of sweets, namkeen, fruits etc as an additional item or complete full meal.

12.2 Benefits of Tithi Bhojan:

Tithi Bhojan helps to develop a sense of belonging among the community. It also helps in supplementation of the nutritional value of meal provided under PM POSHAN. Tithi Bhojan facilitates development of rapport between a school



and the local community. The concept also helps in inculcating the feeling of equity among the children of all communities. Tithi Bhojan through the supplementary nutrition helps in strengthening the immunity of the school children during this challenging pandemic period.

12.3 Initiatives already taken to promote the concept:

A D.O. letter No. F.1-7/2014-Desk (MDM) dated, 20th November, 2014 from Honorable Shiksha Mantri, Govt of India has been issued to all the State/UTs to encourage this concept. Several States and UTs have enthusiastically initiated the concept in different forms and given State specific name to popularize this nutritional intervention.

Some of the States and UTs have given a State specific name to Tithi Bhojan viz., Gujarat (Tithi Bhojan), Assam (Sampriti Bhojan), Andhra Pradesh ((Vindu Bhojanam), Punjab (Priti bhojan), Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (Tithi Bhojan), Karnataka (Shalegagi NaavuNeevu), Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra (Sneh Bhojan), Chandigarh (Tithi Bhojan), Puducherry (Anna Dhanam), Haryana (Betika Janamdin-School mein Abhinandan) and Uttarakhand (Tithi Bhojan), Rajasthan (Utsav Bhoj) Tamil Nadu (Nal Virundhu) etc.

12.4 Provision of Tithi Bhojan :

Possibilities may be explored for the provision of nutritious and healthy food to the children as an additional food item or full meal under Tithi Bhojan. This will help in facilitating restoration of children joy of sitting and eating together which was disturbed during the closure of schools due to pandemic. Moreover, Tithi Bhojan is also likely to be helpful in alleviating malnutrition.

12.5 Identification of the potential donors:

- i. Possibilities may be explored to find potential donors in the community, who can provide Tithi Bhojan at least once a month on rotation basis.



- ii. The donors may be honoured during school functions/annual day of the schools etc. to encourage them.
- iii. The nature of the food donation could be termed as a major donation e.g for a class or many classes or the whole school then the Donor may be invited to be present during the serving of Tithi Bhojan or Donor's name may be announced in the morning assembly.

12.6 Items to be provided under Tithi Bhojan:

- i. Food items to be provided may be a full meal or as an additional item or ingredients for a full meal or additional item.
- ii. The food articles, ingredients to be provided may be as per food habits of the children of the region.
- iii. Combination of cereal, pulse & vegetable may be provided in case of full meal.
- iv. Fruits, milk, sweets, eggs, biscuits, halwa, Chikki (groundnut and jaggery), sprouts or any other item liked by children may be provided.
- v. Seasonal fruits should be selected as they are nutritious and cost effective.
- vi. A list of food items preferred by children may also be prepared and shared with the concerned interested community people for future use to ensure maximum satisfaction of the children.
- vii. The concept was started in Gujarat where cash/cheque donations are not accepted. The same model may be followed by other States and UTs.

12.7 Frequency and sense of involvement in Tithi bhojan:

- i. To strengthen deeper involvement the community may be encouraged to provide "Tithi Bhojan" to school children at least once a month by adhering to hygiene and cleanliness protocols.
- ii. Children may sit together and enjoy a meal/additional food items in its true spirit.



12.8 Issues related to Food Safety and Hygiene:

Issues related to Food Safety and Hygiene along with some of the important points from 'Guidelines on Food Safety and Hygiene for School Level Kitchens under PM POSHAN, are reiterated as under:

- i. Freshly prepared food items may be provided to children. The expiry date should be checked in case of any packed items.
- ii. The food items should contain adequate nutrients and should be palatable, hygienic, and operationally feasible.
- iii. Vegetables, fruits and perishable food commodities should be selected fresh for consumption.
- iv. Perishable items should not be stored in plastic bags as these get spoilt quickly due to lack of transpiration. Such items have to be stored away from sunlight, in a cool place.
- v. The containers used for serving of meal should be made of non-toxic materials.
- vi. The food articles should be tasted by the teachers/SMC members/ cook cum helpers just before serving to the children.
- vii. Accessories and containers that come in contact with food and used for food handling, storage, preparation and serving should be made of corrosion-free materials which do not impart any toxicity to the food material and should be easy to clean and / or disinfect.
- viii. Every utensil or container containing any food or ingredient of food should at all times be either provided with a properly fitted cover/lid or with a clean gauze net or other material of texture sufficiently fine to protect the food completely from dust, dirt and flies and other insects.
- ix. All food handlers should maintain cleanliness, wear washed clothes and keep their finger nails trimmed, clean and wash their hands with soap / detergent and water before commencing work and every time after touching, raw or contaminated food or using toilet.



- x. All food handlers shall strictly adhere to Covid protocols and conduct themselves in accordance with covid appropriate behavior.
- xi. All Cook cum helpers / the person serving the food items, should avoid wearing loose items that might fall into food and also avoid touching or scratching their face, head or hair

12.9 Role of School Management Committee :

- i. During the meetings of the School Management Committee the provision of Tithi Bhojan, identification of donors, schedule of Tithi Bhojan distribution may be discussed.
- ii. The type and quantity of food items to be provided to children during Tithi Bhojan may be discussed in the SMC meetings.
- iii. Adequate care shall be taken in providing food items that are culturally acceptable.

12.10 SabkaPrayas

To encourage community participation, concept of "***SabkaPrayas***" may be practiced to augment Tithi bhojan. SabkaPrayas may be an effort of the community for which the community may be made aware about the following:

- i) Nutritional benefits of the provision of additional food items for school children. Seasonal fruits that are low-cost and full of vitamins and micronutrients may be provided to children.
- ii) A roster may be prepared at school level of all the community members interested in providing additional meal under tithi bhojan.
- iii) The community member who made the maximum contribution may be felicitated at Independence day / Republic day celebration.
- iv) It's actually through SabkaPrayas in which all the community members shall put in efforts to provide food items in the form of either full meal or



fruits/sweets etc the concept of Tithi Bhojan may successfully be made a Janandolan.

12.11 Monitoring of the initiative:

- i) A Register may be maintained for recording the information of number and type of meals/additional food items provided and periodicity.
- ii) State and UTs may develop State specific IT tools to gather information in this regard in conjunction with their MIS systems.

12.12 Awareness generation and Publicity of the initiative:

- i. Creatives, booklets, pamphlets, posters, memes, small videos may be prepared and disseminated for awareness generation at all levels.
- ii. Various official media platforms like departmental websites and social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp etc. may be appropriately used for awareness generation and publicity.
- iii. To ensure the publicity of the scheme States and UTs also may consider to award/felicitate the good performing schools/blocks/districts at appropriate frequency to elevate this noble nutritional intervention to a **Janandolan.**



13 Capacity Building

13.1 Training of CCH

Preparation of hygienic and wholesome meal under the scheme is contingent upon the knowledge and skills of staff and cook-cum-helpers engaged for providing meals in the school

The Self Help Groups and cook-cum-helpers who are the pillars of the scheme, mainly come from the deprived sections of the society, where they have limited information about nutrition, cooking processes, health and hygiene, preparation of raw grains and vegetables, recipes, serving skills etc.

It is, therefore, essential that the capacity of the workforce at the field level is built on an on-going basis. States / UTs may take up Training of cook-cum-helpers in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India through their Institutes of Hotel Management and Food Craft Institutes, FSSAI, State Agricultural Universities etc.

13.2 Training of personnel involved in PM POSHAN

State / UT may impart training to personnel involved in implementation of scheme at all levels on various aspects of implementation of scheme like – Financial management, use of IT for management and monitoring etc.



14 Social Audit

Social audit is an audit that is conducted by the people, especially by those people who are affected by, or are the intended beneficiaries of the scheme being audited and facilitated by the Government. Thus Social Audit can be described as verification of the implementation of a scheme and its outcomes by the community with the active involvement of the primary stakeholders i.e. children and their parents. This should be done by comparing official records with actual ground realities. Social audit is not only an audit of expenditure or decisions but also covers the issue of equity and equality in program implementation.

14.1 Social Audit under PM POSHAN

14.1.1 Mandate for social audit

Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman(PM POSHAN) is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). Section 28 of National Food Security Act, 2013 inter alia envisages that every local authority, or any other authority or body, as may be authorised by the State Government, shall conduct or cause to be conducted, periodic social audits on the functioning of the scheme and cause to publicise its findings and take necessary action, in such manner as may be prescribed by the State Government. The Central Government may, if it considers necessary, conduct or cause to be conducted social audit through independent agencies having experience in conduct of such audits.

14.1.2 Objectives of Social Audit

Social Audit aims to promote transparency and accountability in the implementation of the scheme by informing and educating people about their rights and entitlements under the scheme. Social Audit is also a collective



platform for people to express their needs and grievances while promoting people's participation in all stages of implementation of the scheme alongwith improving capacity of local stakeholders who participate in social audit. The objectives of Social Audit under PM POSHAN can be put down in the following manner:

- i. To verify that the entitlements of a child as guaranteed under the NFSA, 2013 are being provided in the school, in a timely and equitable manner.
- ii. To check the enrolment, attendance and retention of students in the school.
- iii. To check that hot cooked meals is provided during all school days to all children present in the school.
- iv. To verify that no discrimination is meted out to any child or other stakeholder under the scheme.
- v. To verify the timely allocation and utilisation of food grains and funds.
- vi. To check implementation of extant Rules and Guidelines in letter and spirit.
- vii. To check the Status of infrastructure (Kitchen-cum-store, Kitchen devices, Eating utensils, School Nutrition Garden, Drinking Water etc.) in the schools.
- viii. To develop a participatory approach towards school development through community support like Tithi Bhojan, School Nutrition Garden etc.

14.1.2 General Principles

The following General Principles should be followed in all aspects of the Social Audit and by all the agencies involved including the Social Audit Team.

1. There is a clear distinction between conduct of social audit and facilitation of social audit. The mandate for the conduct of social audit rests with the statutory body of the Gram Sabha.
2. The Social Audit Unit is to be tasked with the mandate of facilitating the Gram Sabha in conducting Social Audit. The facilitation is required for:



- i) Consolidating information, translating and sharing records in to information that can be easily understandable to the stakeholders,
- ii) Verifying the information recorded in official documents with primary stakeholders,
- iii) Facilitating and open, participatory and inclusive discussion in the Gram Sabha where people can speak freely,
- iv) Documenting the decisions taken,
- v) Submission of the audit reports and
- vi) Follow up on the action being taken by the Governments and display the same in public domain.

14.1.3 Social Audit by its own nature is distinct from Financial audits in the following aspects

- i) Social audit is more interactive. The members of the Gram Sabha, who are members of the social audit team, are active auditors and at the same time users of its findings and conclusions.
- ii) In addition to relying on documentary evidence, Social audit uses significant inputs of oral evidence, school visits and views expressed at the public hearing while meticulously documenting the evidence.
- iii) Social audit needs to rely more on school visit and interaction with the stakeholders while adhering to preponderance of probabilities.

14.1.4 Children as the focus:

The PM POSHAN scheme is aimed at providing nutrition to the children, the primary focus of the social audit shall be children while co-opting their parents as well as cook-cum-helpers.



14.1.5 Transparency:

- i) The functioning of the Social Audit Team should be transparent.
- ii) A clear and complete introduction of the Social Audit Facilitators must be provided to the community.
- iii) All findings of the audit should be presented in their true form and with supporting evidence.
- iv) All findings of the Social Audit process should be made available in the public domain.

14.1.6 Accountability:

- i) Accountability shall be fixed within the Department implementing the PM POSHAN scheme.
- ii) Timelines shall be fixed against each entitlement/activity and its violation must be redressed within that time frame by the relevant authorities.
- iii) Overall responsibility for taking action and ensuring compliances on the Social Audit findings rests with the State/UT Nodal Department implementing the PM POSHAN scheme.

14.1.7 Participation:

- i) The Social Audit should be based on community participation (*children and parents*) as they have a direct stake in the PM POSHAN Scheme.
- ii) In particular, participation of persons from marginalized communities must be ensured.
- iii) During the social audit there should be no discrimination based on gender, religion, caste and occupation and participation should be encouraged from across all backgrounds.
- iv) There should be equal opportunities for all stakeholders to make a representation to the Social Audit Facilitation Team.



14.1.8 Objectivity:

- i) The Social Auditors should maintain objectivity and neutrality throughout the audit process. No sides must be taken during the auditing process and nor should it be dictated by anyone's personal agenda or viewpoints.
- ii) No special favour should be given or solicited from the teachers or any official or public representative who is related to the implementation of the PM POSHAN Scheme.
- iii) No politicization of the monitoring process should be allowed.
- iv) Decisions to resolve irregularities in implementation reflected during the auditing process should be taken only after both sides are given a fair chance to present their views/clarifications.

14.1.9 Dialogue:

- i) Solutions to the problems identified in the Social Audit should as far as possible be resolved through a process of dialogue between the community and the administration.
- ii) Platforms for dialogue should be established at different levels, especially close to the people to facilitate their participation.
- iii) Dialogue process should be recorded and its proceedings should be formalized/ institutionalized.
- iv) Action should be initiated on the basis of the dialogue process.

14.2 Roles and Responsibilities at various levels in social audit

A significant societal intervention such as Social Audit of PM POSHAN calls for well concerted participation and synergised action by various functionaries at all levels.

14.2.1 School level

- a) The Head teacher/Principal will facilitate Social Audit team during the verification at the school level.



- b) The Head teacher/Principal will provide all the information related to the school such as details of students, teachers, SMC representatives, attendance registers.
- c) The Head teacher/Principal will provide various registers including food grain stock register, account books, tasting of meal register and other relevant records as prescribed by the State Government.
- d) The Head teacher/Principal along with SMC members will also facilitate physical visit of the school and interaction with students, parents, cook-cum-helpers and teachers.

14.2.2 Block / Taluka level

- a) The conduct and follow up action of Social Audit shall be discussed in the meeting of Block level Steering cum Monitoring Committee.
- b) The Block Education Officer shall try to organise the public hearings in convergence with other line Departments like Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Health, Women and Child Development, Drinking water and sanitation etc.
- c) The Block Education Officer shall notify in writing the dates of the Social Audit to all the public representatives and concerned staff implementing the PM POSHAN Scheme well in advance.
- d) The Block Education Officer shall instruct the concerned Head teachers to proclaim the dates of Social Audit through beat of drum (*Dugdugi*) or any other suitable means.
- e) The Block Education Officer shall endeavour that all stakeholders are kept informed about the entire process and shall take adequate measures for their presence during the Social Audit and Public Hearings.



14.2.3 District level

- a) The conduct and follow up action of Social Audit shall be discussed in the meetings of District level Steering cum Monitoring Committee.
- b) The conduct and follow up action of Social Audit shall also be discussed in the meetings of District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) under the chairpersonship of senior most Member of Parliament of Lok Sabha.
- c) The District Collector shall cause to organise the public hearings in convergence with other line Departments like Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Health, Women and Child Development, Drinking water and sanitation etc. for efficiency gains and quick follow up action.
- d) The District Education Officer (DEO) shall notify in writing the dates of the Social Audit to all the public representatives well in advance.
- e) The DEO shall ensure that administrative machinery cooperates in conduct of the social audit processes.
- f) The DEO shall facilitate organize the training of the Cluster Social Auditors (CSAs) at the district level.
- g) The District Collector and DEO shall attend at least one Social Audit public hearing at the school level, cluster and block level in every quarter and all meetings at District level to discuss the findings and corrective actions.
- h) The DEO shall ensure that remedial / corrective action is initiated on the findings and recommendations of social audit reports as per applicable rules and procedures prevalent in the State.

14.2.4 State / UT level

- a) The State Nodal Officer (SNO) shall coordinate with the Social Audit Unit (SAU) engaged for Social Audit.



- b) The SNO shall cause the SAU to prepare a comprehensive action plan detailing all activities at various levels for conducting Social Audit.
- c) The SNO shall provide the information related to the scheme within the stipulated period to the SAU.
- d) The SNO shall obtain list of District wise Master Trainers and Cluster Social Auditors (CSAs) from Social Audit Unit.
- e) The SNO shall arrange the training of Master Trainers from NIRD&PR, NIN and SIRD in coordination with SAU.
- f) The SNO shall facilitate Master Trainers to impart training of Cluster Social Auditors (CSAs) at district headquarters in coordination with SAU.
- g) The SNO shall organize sensitization programs for all implementing functionaries of the scheme and especially for the functionaries at school level such as teachers and headmasters about the objective, process and expected outcomes of social audit.
- h) The SNO shall communicate in writing information regarding the Social Audit process and date of the Social Audit public hearings to the PM POSHAN functionaries and ensure smooth functioning of the entire process.
- i) The SNO shall take immediate corrective action on the issues arising out of social audits and shall ensure that decisions taken during social audit public meeting translate into administrative action.
- j) The SNO shall dispose-off any dispute or complaint recorded in the Social Audit report in a time bound manner.

14.2.5 Ministry of Education / Dept of School Education & Literacy

- a) Prepare the Social Audit module including training materials, field verification formats, Social Audit calendar of activities in coordination with NIRD&PR, NIN and State Nodal Officers for conducting Social Audit of PM POSHAN.



- b) Design and develop MIS portal/dashboard in convergence with NIC, NIRD&PR, NIN and State Nodal Officers to monitor Social Audit findings and action taken. It may also provide an 'app' for field level data collection through mobile phone.
- c) Review the Social Audit findings and the action taken reports submitted by the States/UTs regularly.
- d) The details of Social Audit findings and action taken shall form an integral part of Annual Work Plan & Budget to be submitted by the States and UTs. These will be reviewed in the Programme Approval Board meetings.
- e) On the basis of the Social Audit Reports, Ministry shall handhold the State Governments to take necessary corrective measures in implementing PM POSHAN.
- f) A Social Audit cell, as required, may be constituted in the Department of School Education & Literacy for monitoring and continuous improvement in implementation of the Social Audit process.

14.3 Social Audit Unit (SAU)

The Social Audit Unit (SAU) is an independent organisation, that would facilitate conduct of Social Audit by Gram Sabha and identifies, trains and deploys suitable resource persons at village, block, district and State level drawing from primary stakeholders and other civil society organisations having domain knowledge and experience of working for the rights of the people.

The SAU is registered as a Society under the Societies Registration Act. It is responsible for planning and conducting social audits, technically supporting the audits, collating and consolidating reports and following up persuasively on the results of audit. SAU must maintain a higher standard of transparency, accountability, objectivity, impartiality and professionalism for itself.



14.3.1 The roles and responsibilities of the SAU

- a) The SAU Resource Persons along with the primary stakeholders shall
 - i) Visit the schools and kitchens,
 - ii) Verify the records related to payment, procurement of materials and financial records
 - iii) Verify the actual stock of food grains with the stock register
 - iv) Contact the children, parents, cook-cum-helpers, PDS dealers / Fair Price Shop dealers, doctors of PHC, local health workers / ASHA worker, members of local women self-help groups
 - v) Collate records and convene a Gram Sabha to discuss the findings of the verification exercise and to review the compliance on transparency and accountability, fulfilment of rights and entitlements of the children and proper utilisation of funds.
- b) The Social Audit report shall be prepared in the local language. The Resource Persons shall not be resident of the same village.
- c) The SAU shall facilitate the conduct of social audit through recruited and identified Resource Persons at various levels including Master Trainers and Cluster Social Auditors
- d) The SAU shall establish and periodically review minimum training requirements for engaging Resource Persons at each level.
- e) The Resource Persons under SAU shall display qualities of domain knowledge, competency, accountability, honesty and integrity peppered with joyful disposition during the conduct of Social Audit
- f) The SAU shall access all the relevant official records at the levels of school, block, district & State and will do the verification as mentioned in the scheme guidelines



- g) The SAU shall conduct focused group discussion with children, their parents, during door to door visit in the community.
- h) The SAU shall create awareness amongst the beneficiaries about their rights and entitlements under the scheme
- i) The SAU shall ensure that conclusions in opinions and reports are based exclusively on evidence obtained and inputs received from the functionaries and collated in accordance with the auditing standards.
- j) The SAU shall enter the data in the MIS and host reports in the public domain
- k) The SAU shall depute personnel to attend various public hearings and ensure that periodic reports on the social audit findings are prepared
- l) The SAU shall Review the ATRs and close issues or escalate it to DoSEL
- m) Prepare annual report containing summary of social audit findings and ATRs and disseminate it widely
- n) The SAU shall designate a Grievance Redressal Officer for accepting complaints, if any in such manner which is easily accessible to all, from citizens about the staff and practices of SAU.
- o) The SAU shall develop and maintain a quality assurance and improvement programme covering all aspects of the Social Audit activities in order to ensure Social Audits are conducted conforming to consistently high quality standards.

14.3.2 Engaging a Social Audit Unit

- a) The State/UT will sign a MoU with the Social Audit Unit established in the State which is registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act. The Social Audit Unit of neighbouring State may be selected for conducting Social Audit, if the State does not have a SAU.
- b) All the States/UTs will appoint a Nodal Officer of sufficient seniority for the Social Audit of PM POSHAN Scheme. The Nodal Officer will coordinate



with the DoSEL, Ministry of Education, Nodal Department at State and Social Audit Unit to facilitate the Social Audit process.

14.4 Phases of Conducting Social Audit

The conduct of Social Audit involves detailed operational plan that includes laying out the school wise schedule of activities to be carried out for the year and accordingly assigning and deploying Social Audit teams. The various important phases of conducting Social Audit are elucidated below:

14.4.1 The Preparatory or Pre-Audit Phase

This process includes the following steps:

- i. A one-day workshop/orientation programme on Social Audit will be held at Ministry level with the Nodal Officers of States/UTs designated for social audit in the beginning of financial year.
- ii. The State Government will organize a briefing meeting with the State Government officials including the designated nodal officer for Social Audit, officials from SAU etc. Representative/s from the Ministry of Education may also be invited to participate in the meeting.
- iii. The SAU will share the district wise list of master trainers and cluster wise social auditors with the Nodal Officer. The district-wise master trainers will be mapped with the cluster/s of the respective districts.
- iv. Training will be provided to Master Trainers at the State/UT level in coordination with SIRD and School Education Department. The Master Trainers will then be deployed at the district level to provide training to the Cluster Social Auditors (CSAs) for PM POSHAN Scheme. The Master Trainers will also provide training to SAFT members in conjunction with DIET.



- v. The Cluster Social Auditor (CSA) will collect the data and records from the school and verify it during the Social Audit phase. The list of data to be collected from the school is attached at Annexure-III.
- vi. The Cluster Social Auditor (CSA) deployed by the SAU at each cluster will intimate Gram Panchayat about the schedule of conducting Social Audit in the schools under their jurisdiction. The BEO shall also notify the schedule to Gram Panchayat in writing and ensure that it is advertised publicly in order to maximise the community participation in public hearings at Village/Cluster and Block level i.e. at Gram Sabha and at Block respectively.
- vii. Block Panchayat will constitute a team for the facilitation of Social Audit process at cluster level. The team will be constituted with the people who are interested to be part of the Social Audit on volunteer basis. This team may be termed as Social Audit Facilitation Team (SAFT). The team will visit the school/s and facilitate the Social Audit for the Scheme under the supervision of the CSA. The SAFT will consist of 6-8 persons and the composition of the team will be as follows:
 - i) Two parents (one parent belonging to the EWS or socially backward category/CWSN category).
 - ii) Two representatives from Village Organization of Woman (VOW) / Women Self Help Groups (under NRLM) or in case, VOW is not available in a particular village, two youths (preferably girls) from nearby college
 - iii) One representative of a Civil Society Group working on education
 - iv) One retired Govt. Official or Rt. Defence Personnel
 - v) One representative of Local Authority (LA)



- viii. The following persons shall not be included in SAFT:
- i) Any person directly or indirectly involved in activities associated with PM POSHAN.
 - ii) Any Government official currently associated with the education or related department.

14.4.2 The Social Audit Phase:

14.4.2.1 Social Audit Process at School/Community Level:

The Social Audit in the school will include the following:

- i) Understanding the role played by the different functionaries involved in the scheme.
- ii) The Social Audit should be conducted in a manner that does not disrupt the regular functioning of the school.
- iii) The SAFT must make an effort to meet not just the teachers and the headmaster but also the SMC members.
- iv) The Social Audit facilitators must also speak to a sample of children from each class using child-friendly methods to get information from them.
- v) A sample of parents, other than the SMC members should also be part of the SAFT's mandatory list of respondents.
- vi) The SAFT's visit (under the supervision of CSA) should be publicized widely to enable parents or other community members to give their inputs to the Team if they so desire.
- vii) The SAFT should be accessible to seek inputs from all stakeholders during the Social Audit period.
- viii) The views of the students & parents related to various aspects of the PM POSHAN scheme should also be sought and recorded.

The detailed checklist of documents to be provided to social audit team is attached at ***Annexure III***.



The major points which may be paid more attention during the actual verification/audit at the school level are attached to ***Annexure IV***.

14.4.2.2 Public Hearings

- a) **Support for Public Hearings:** Public Hearings open to all will be organized at Village, Block and district level as a culmination of the Social Audit process phase. The administration will widely publicize about the Public Hearings including its date and venue for participation of public to the hearings. The basic facilities including drinking water, microphones and video recording set up etc. will be arranged by the administration. The hearing must be attended by all elected representatives and functionaries at that level. The District Magistrate may attend or depute a senior official to attend the public hearings.
- b) **Village level Public Hearing:** Within three days after the Social Audit in all identified schools in particular GP, a village level Public Hearing open to all shall be conducted at the *Gram Panchayat*. In the Public Hearing, the school-wise Social Audit findings will be read out. In scheduled areas, public hearing shall be held at the block level only.
- c) **Public Hearing at Block/District level:** After completion of social audits at GPs in a block, a Block Panchayat/ Mandal Panchayat/ Panchayat Samiti level public hearing should be organized within 15 days. The Block level public hearing panel may include representatives of the Deputy Commissioner, SAU, District Panchayat, SHG federation, CSO, media and academic representative. The Block level public hearing shall:
 - i) Conduct the social audit of PM POSHAN expenditure at the Intermediate Panchayat level i.e. Block level
 - ii) Hear appeals on decisions taken at the GP level and pass orders



- iii) Pass orders on issues which were referred to it from the GP
 - iv) Review the issues on which no action has been taken
 - v) Review issues on which appropriate action has not been taken
 - vi) Refer certain issues to the district level for deliberation and decision
 - vii) Give suggestions to improve the implementation.
- d) Similarly, at district level, findings of audit will be presented before public authorities. The line Departments are required to attend the meeting/public hearing to address the issues pertaining to their department.
- e) The following points should be paid attention while organizing the Social Audit public hearings for the PM POSHAN scheme:
- i) The local community shall be informed about the Public Hearing by the Department as well as the Social Audit Unit to ensure full participation
 - ii) The PM POSHAN scheme functionaries of various levels including officials/representatives from MoE, Government of India, may participate in the Social Audit public hearings
 - iii) All participants shall be encouraged to testify, and the concerned official/functionary will respond by giving a clarification or an explanation in public as to why a certain action was taken or not taken
 - iv) The functionary will specify the time period and mode of action to be taken by him/her to rectify gaps or lapses identified during the audit process in the implementation of the scheme
 - v) Nodal Department for PM POSHAN Schemes shall ensure that timely remedial / corrective action is taken on the findings and



recommendations of social audit reports as per applicable rules and procedures prevalent in the State. In case of inaction or delay, the SAU may escalate the issue to DoSEL, Ministry of Education, Govt of India.

14.4.2.3 Periodicity of School Social Audit

- a) The SAU shall finalise the schedule to conduct Social Audits in active consultation with the DoSEL / Nodal Department implementing PM POSHAN scheme in the State. The schedule shall be designed in such manner that all activities of social audit are completed within the finalised time frame. A suggestive timeline for different activities is given at ***Annexure – V***.
- b) At least 2% of the schools or 20 schools, whichever is high, in each district will be covered under social audit. Also, the social audit of centralised kitchens shall be conducted every year including visits to the centralised kitchen.
- c) The Social Audit Facilitation Team (SAFT) will conduct the social audit in such a manner that all schools are covered within the prescribed timelines.

14.4.3 The Follow-up or Post Audit Phase - Action on the social audit findings

- a) Action on social audit findings shall be taken in a time-bound manner.
- b) It is mandatory for the representatives of the implementing agency of the State as well as District level to be present at the social audit public hearing and shall ensure that corrective action is taken on the findings and shall implement the decisions taken at the public hearing positively;



- c) Wherever, in the course of a social audit, if evidence, through written and oral testimonies against those who have misappropriated funds or food grains etc, remedial / punitive action shall be initiated, and recovery shall be made. The action for recovery shall be without prejudice and action to be taken against the person / agency should be as per relevant laws/rules;
- d) The reporting formats to conduct the Social Audit must include all the information starting from the basics. The format should consist of the information received by CSA in pre-Audit Phase, verification reports and the reports of issues found during the Audit Phase. Separate formats for ATR may be included in the reporting format. (See ***Annexure VI, VI A, VI B and VI C***)

14.5 Training and Capacity Building of Social Audit Resource Persons

The training of various Resource Persons constitutes an important activity in implementing and institutionalizing social audit:

- a) National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR) and National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) along with State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs) shall be the training partners for capacity building and training of the Social Audit Resource Persons.
- b) NIRD&PR, NIN and SIRDs shall prepare Field Verification formats, and training materials etc. in collaboration with Department of SE&L, on:
 - i) Framework for implementation of PM POSHAN scheme including the availability of school infrastructure, entitlements of children under NFSA etc.
 - ii) Social Audit process, preparation of annual calendar, ethical guidelines, mobilization, facilitation of Gram Sabha, public hearing, conduct of group discussion, interaction with beneficiaries etc.



- iii) PM POSHAN Social Audit guidelines.
- iv) MIS Module for social audit including data entry on the portal.

14.5.1 Training of Master Trainers

The district wise Master Trainers identified and selected by the SAU will be trained at the State/UT level. The training will be imparted by the SIRD and the SAU, based on training modules prepared by NIRD&PR and NIN. Further, the training modules will be modified according to the language and culture of States/UTs by the respective SIRDs.

14.5.2 Training of Cluster Social Auditors

The Cluster Social Auditor (CSA) identified by the SAU for conducting the Social Audit at the cluster level will be responsible for conducting the Social Audit in the schools of that cluster. The Master Trainers (SAU Resource Person at district level) will train the CSAs (SAUs Resource Persons at Cluster Level) from a theoretical and practical point of view. The CSAs will be trained on the basic concepts of Social Audit, details of entitlements and interventions under PM POSHAN scheme, National Food Security Act, the roles and responsibilities, records & data collection, use of MIS, Methodology of conducting Social Audit, including filling up the various formats and report preparation on the findings during the Social Audit process.

14.5.3 Training of the Social Audit Facilitation Team (SAFT)

It must be ensured that the persons involved in conducting the Social Audit have a clear understanding of the PM POSHAN scheme, Social Audit process and the National Food Security Act. For this, thorough training must be organized for the SAFTs at BRC/CRC level. The training to SAFT shall be imparted by Master Trainer immediately after the constitution of



SAFT. The training of 4-5 SAFTs may be conducted together. The SAFT members will be trained on entitlements under PM POSHAN scheme, community involvement in PM POSHAN scheme, social accountability, social audit etc.

14.6 Submission of Reports

- a) The SAU engaged for conducting social audit should submit the report to the State Government within one month of completion of public hearings.
- b) The State Nodal Officer shall take action/ensure appropriate action is taken by implementing officials at village/Block/District/State nodal department and submit Action taken reports to Principal Secretary of Nodal Department within 30 days of receipt of report.
- c) The Principal Secretary of Nodal Department shall review the ATR and recommend whether the issues can be closed. If no action is taken or ATR is not satisfactory, the issues will be reverted to the State Nodal Officer for re-examination within 15 days of receipt of ATR from SNO. Thereafter, the SNO shall address the issues within 15 days and apprise the Principal Secretary of Nodal Department.
- d) The State / UT will share the final State level report and ATR thereon with DoSEL, MoE within 3 months of receipt of report from SAU.
- e) Reports of Social Audit and action taken thereon may be uploaded on MIS portal available in public domain.
- f) MoE shall review of the progress of Social Audit of PM POSHAN scheme on half yearly basis. State/UT shall prepare a consolidated report on Social Audit progress highlighting the major issues found and Action Taken. The officials from SAU should also participate in the half yearly review meeting of the Social Audit of PM POSHAN Scheme.



14.7 Funding for Social Audit

For the conduct of Social Audit, funds will be required for various activities such as hiring of resource persons for facilitation of Social Audit, training of resource persons, organizing seminars/meetings/workshops, monitoring and evaluation of Social Audit process, preparation and submission of reports etc. The expenditure on conducting Social Audit will be met from the Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (MME) funds under PM POSHAN Scheme. Upto 10% of the funds available under MME component may be earmarked for Social Audit. Moreover, States and UTs shall endeavour to pool-in resources in convergence with other schemes.



15. Monitoring of the scheme

Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman also provided for a 4-tier institutional mechanism for programme management, through the constitution of Steering-cum-Monitoring Committees at the National, State, District and Block levels as mentioned earlier. Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education has prescribed a comprehensive and elaborate mechanism for monitoring and supervision of the Scheme. The monitoring mechanism includes the following:

15.1 Arrangements for local level monitoring: Representatives of Gram Panchayats/ Gram Sabhas, members of SMCs, VECs, PTAs, SDMCs as well as Mothers' Committees are required to monitor the (i) regularity and wholesomeness of the meals served to children, (ii) cleanliness in cooking and serving of the meals, (iii) timeliness in procurement of good quality ingredients, fuel, etc, (iv) implementation of varied menu, (v) social and gender equity on a daily basis.

15.2 Display of Information: In order to ensure transparency and accountability, all schools and centres, where the programme is being implemented, are required to display the following information at a visible place in the campus for the notice of the general public:

- a) Quantity of food grains received, date of receipt.
- b) Quantity of food grains utilized
- c) Other ingredients purchased, utilized
- d) Number of children provided meals.
- e) Daily Menu
- f) Roster of Community Members for supervision and monitoring.

15.3 Block Level Committee: A broad based Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee also monitors implementation of the Scheme at the block level.



- 15.4 Inspections by State Government Officers:** Officers of the State Governments/UTs belonging to the Departments of Revenue, Rural Development, Education and other related sectors, such as Women and Child Development, Food, Health etc. are also required to inspect schools and centres where the programme is being implemented. It has been recommended that 25% of the schools/special training centres are visited every quarter.
- 15.5 District Level Committee:** Besides a District Level Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee for monitoring the scheme, a District Level Committee under the Chairmanship of senior most Member of Parliament (MP) of the district has been constituted to monitor the scheme on quarterly basis.
- 15.6 Periodic Returns:** The State Government/UT is also required to submit periodic returns to the Department of School Education and Literacy, GOI to provide information on (i) coverage of children and institutions, (ii) number of school days (iii) Progress in utilization of central assistance (iv) availability of necessary infrastructure in schools, (v) any untoward incident etc.
- 15.7 Grievance Redressal :** States and Union Territories are required to develop a dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible
- 15.8 State level Monitoring:** States and UT Administrations are also required to set up a Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee at the State level to oversee the implementation of the Scheme. States/UTs have deployed independent institutions for the evaluation of the Scheme.



15.9 National level:

- a) **Empowered Committee** has been set up under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Education for monitoring the access, safety, hygiene and quality aspects in the implementation of the scheme; Review mechanism is in place to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the scheme; Mechanism is in place for community participation in the scheme and its effective monitoring.
- b) National Level Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee (NSMC) under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (SE&L)
- c) Programme Approval Board (PAB) under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (SE&L).
- d) National Meetings with Education Secretaries and Regional Review Meetings are also held to monitor implementation of the scheme.
- e) The Department of School Education & Literacy may engage third party independent monitoring institutions like food and nutrition departments of various Central/ States universities, National Institute of Nutrition under ICMR, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, etc. who are domain experts, to collect anthropometric measurement data of children like height, weight, food quality etc. which will be useful to monitor periodically the health, nutrition, food parameters towards better implementation of the scheme.
- f) Field visits for monitoring the implementation of the scheme in the States & UTs.

15.10 Monitoring by Students of DIETs and RIEs etc: States and UTs have been advised to involve students of eminent Universities / Institutions and also trainee teachers of District Institute of Education Training and Regional Institutes of Education, for enhanced monitoring of implementation of scheme at field level.



15.11 Joint Review Missions

- a) DoSEL has constituted Joint Review Missions Headed by Deans/ HOD of Home Science Colleges/ Scientists of NIN, members from MoE, State Governments, members from UNICEF and Consultants of TSG – PM POSHAN visit State and UTs as per defined Terms of Reference and submit report for necessary actions.
- b) Every year the JRM shall visit 8-10 States to review the implementation of the scheme at State, district and at school levels on defined parameters. The report helps in understanding the status of the scheme at all levels and provides actions points to deal with the issues with the available resources.
- c) The report also brings out the status of nutritional status of the identified children through anthropometric measurements and dietary intake. The nutrition experts help in recording Anthropometric data such as Body Mass Index (BMI), dietary intake on real time basis etc.
- d) The concerned State / UT will submit Action taken report on the findings of JRM within a period of one month of submission of report for review by the Bureau Head.
- e) Follow up visits will be undertaken within six to nine months of visit of JRM.
- f) The Terms of Reference of JRMs are as under:
 - i. Review the fund flow from State to Schools/implementing agencies.
 - ii. Review the coverage of the Scheme
 - iii. Review the availability of Management Structure at State, District, Block level
 - iv. Review the delivery mechanism of food grains from State to Schools
 - v. Review the smooth implementation of the Scheme with particular reference to Interruptions.
 - vi. Review the Creation of Capital Assets



- vii. Construction of Kitchen-cum-stores
- viii. Procurement/Replacement of Kitchen Devices
- ix. Review the involvement of NGO's/Trust/Centralized kitchens in the Scheme
- x. Review the payment of Cost of Food grains to Food Corporation of India
- xi. Review the convening the meetings of District Level Committee under Chairpersonship of senior most Member of Parliament.(Lok Sabha)
- xii. Review the Management Information System (MIS)
- xiii. Review the implementation of Automated Monitoring System
- xiv. Convergence with Rastriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram for health check-up, supplementation of micronutrients under WIFS & deworming medicine under National deworming day and health checkups and supply of spectacles to children suffering from refractive errors.
- xv. Operationalization of Mid-Day Meal Rules, 2015
- xvi. Dissemination of Food Safety Guidelines up to District, Block and School
- xvii. Enrolment of children and Cook-cum-Helpers under Aadhaar
- xviii. Payment of Honorarium to Cook-cum-Helpers
- xix. System of Storage food grains and other ingredients
- xx. Role of Teachers in PM Poshan.
- xxi. Tasting of meal by Teacher, Parents and Community.
- xxii. Testing of meals
- xxiii. Involvement of Community
- xxiv. Bank Account of Cook-cum-helpers
- xxv. Awareness of the Scheme
- xxvi. Contingency Plan



Nutritional aspects:

- xxvii. To assess the anthropometric measurements of a sample of children availing Meal
- xxviii. Height, Weight, Mid arm Circumference
- xxix. To Calculate the Body Mass Index (BMI) on the basis of measurement of height and weight.
- xxx. To identify the children who are undernourished and over nourished.
- xxxi. To review the quality and quantity of the served Meal.
- xxxii. To review the satisfaction of the children parents and community on the served meal in respect of quality and quantity.
- xxxiii. To suggest some nutritionally balanced region specific recipes.



16. Management Information System & Automated Monitoring System

16.1 Management Information Systems:

- i. Web enabled PM Poshan-MIS has been launched for effective online monitoring of the Scheme.
- ii. The portal captures information on important parameters like category wise enrollment, teacher details, cook-cum-helpers details with social composition, availability of Infrastructural facilities like Kitchen-cum-stores & Kitchen devices, mode of cooking, drinking water, toilet facilities etc. on annual basis.
- iii. The States/UTs are also feeding monthly data into the portal, which helps in monitoring the critical components/ indicators of the scheme such as no. of meals served, utilization of food grain & cooking cost, honorarium paid to cook-cum-helpers, school inspection details etc.
- iv. State will ensure that monthly data for 100% schools is entered in the MIS portal by 15th of succeeding month.
- v. The data available on MIS in the form of a dashboard may be used for monitoring purposes.

16.2 Automated Monitoring System (AMS) :

- i. This department has put in place an automated system of data collection for real time monitoring of PM POSHAN.
- ii. Such data (on number of meals served on that particular day and reasons if meals not served) is being captured from schools with no cost to school Head Master/Teacher.
- iii. Under the automated monitoring system, States/UTs have set up a suitable system of data collection (i.e. Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS)/SMS/Mobile Application/Web Application) from schools on a daily basis and using it for purpose of monitoring and timely follow up action.



- iv. States/UTs are pushing data on specific fields in a predefined format on a real time basis to the Central Server maintained by NIC.
- v. A central portal for analysis and display of data at the Central level. Based on the data collected, various drill down reports are made available for real time monitoring of the scheme at National/State/District/Block level. Data on important parameters available on dashboard may be used for monitoring purposes.
- vi. Daily email alerts are sent to States/UTs regarding number of schools which have reported data on that particular date and schools where meals have not been served. It has been implemented in all the States and UTs.



17. Annual work Plan & Budget and Periodic Returns

17.1 Preparation of AWP&B

- i) Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme assigns importance to the preparation of Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B) by States/UT Administrations based on information maintained at school level and aggregated in Block, District and State level. It envisages a bottom-up approach, rather than a top-down approach to planning. It is necessary that there is documentation of the process of plan preparation to ensure that they have been prepared at the School level through participatory planning processes.
- ii) The AWP&B framework is designed to provide a comprehensive picture of present scenario in the State as far as implementation of Scheme is concerned. It contains details of Management Structure, Implementation processes, Monitoring systems, infrastructure position, findings of evaluation studies, strategies to tackle problems, community participation, best practices and new initiatives etc.,
- iii) State governments and UT Administrations will prepare a comprehensive AWP&B, inter alia, with detailed district-wise vital information on coverage of children, working days and schools; enrolment in schools; utilisation of food grains, utilisation of cooking cost, Transportation Assistance, MME, payment of honorarium to CCH, payment of cost of food grains to FCI, Engagement of CCH, construction of kitchen-cum-stores, procurement of kitchen devices etc. The AWP&B also contains proposals on the above parameters for the ensuing year also.

17.2 Assistance for Drought Affected Areas and Disaster Affected Areas:

- i) Central Assistance will also be given to schools during disaster times and during summer vacations in areas which are formally notified by the State



Government as 'drought affected' in accordance with its established procedure and guidelines of Government of India, if any.

- ii) Since the notification is valid for a period of one year, the State Government may submit their Action Plan in the framework of Annual Work Plan & Budget itself.
- iii) 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 Govt. should provide meals in schools located in such areas in anticipation of release of Central assistance. Food grains for implementing the programme in summer vacation should be drawn against the concerned district's annual allocation, which will be suitably augmented by the Ministry in due course to cover the resultant additional requirement of food grains for the year. Such arrangements apply to disaster affected areas also.

17.3 Meetings of Programme Approval Board:

- i) The AWP&B presented by the State Governments and UT Administrations will be placed before the Programme Approval Board. Approval will be contingent on the budgetary commitments made by the concerned State Governments and UT Administrations for the State's contribution towards its minimum mandatory share. Based on the deliberations and approval accorded by the PAB, Central Assistance would be sanctioned/ released:
- ii) While seeking Central Assistance States and UTs will be required to give an undertaking that they have not actually reduced their own budgetary allocation in any year below the level of BE.
- iii) It will also be mandatory for State Governments and UT Administrations to ensure that in case of any saving in material cost (per child per meal), the same may only be utilised for providing supplementary nutritional items to those children. In case such savings are not used for supplementary nutrition the same shall be added to the unspent balances.



17.4 The AWP&B formats shall have Write up and Tables, these may be reviewed and revised from time to time and are available on the Ministry’s website:

- i. **State and District Write up:** shall contain information on all the components in brief. Implementation of the scheme throughout the year along with the proposal for next year.
- ii. **State and District Tables** shall have district wise information on all the components in a tabular format. Implementation of the scheme throughout the year along with the proposal for next year.
- iii. **Appraisal of AWP&B:** the appraisal of implementation of scheme and proposal for coming year shall be carried out prior to the PAB meeting at MoE. On the basis of the State/UT wise appraisal the recommendations shall be made for PAB meeting for consideration. During the PAB meeting the proposal of the State/UT Administration are considered and approvals along with appropriate advisories and directions for the next year are given by the PAB.

17.5 Periodic Return

The State Nodal Department will furnish progress reports as per the formats made available on the Ministry’s website, on the Scheme to the Ministry of Education, as per following details: -

S No	Title of the Return	Due date for receipt in the Ministry
1	Monthly Report on Off-take of Food grains	15 th of the following month
2	Quarterly Progress Report (QPR)	Within one month from the end of the Quarter



It may be noted that the proforma for the QPR includes, inter alia, information regarding coverage of children, progress of provision of infrastructure, and unspent balance of Central assistance at the end of the quarter. Failure to furnish information about unspent balance will affect further release of Central assistance.



18. Cooking Competition

18.1 Cooking Competition as “Janandolan Movement”

States & UTs may organize the competition like “Janandolan movement” basis in all blocks/Tehsils to ensure wider participation.

18.2 Schedule (Time, Venue, days) for Competition

- i) The competition may be organized preferably on a school holiday (Sankranti, Onam, Bihu, Chatt, Navratri etc to create festive atmosphere) may be selected so that meals preparation during the school days is not affected due to the participation of the cook cum helper in the competition and number of participants increases.
- ii) A suitable place may be selected for competition to ensure that the competition is held in a safe and hygienic environment.

18.3 Identification/selection of CCH/others interested to participate

- i) All cook-cum helpers may be encouraged to participate in the competition. Interested community members may also be allowed to participate along with CCHs in the competition.
- ii) They may also be informed about the prize to be given to the winner of the competition. Two participants (cook cum helpers/community members) may be rewarded per block after competition.

18.4 Identification of activities to be carried out

- i) Cooking of pulses/cooking of vegetables/different types of chapattis
- ii) Methods of cooking,
- iii) Methods of washing and cleaning food items,
- iv) Food safety aspects,
- v) Personal hygiene, hand washing etc.



18.5 Selection of Judges for the competition

Students (2 children each from primary and upper primary classes), teachers, nutritionists, community members etc of that block/district may be made judges for these competitions.

18.6 Award for winners and publicity

- i) The winners of these competitions may be awarded suitably. Expenditure for the cooking competitions may be met from MME funds.
- ii) A compendium of the winning recipes may be circulated to all the districts and a copy may also be shared with MoE.
- iii) Publicity in social/local media before and after competition may be carried out.

18.7 Other significant benefits

- i) The whole cooking completion may be very interactive, for creating interest and increased effectiveness. Discussions during the Cooking competition may be carried out among the cook-cum-helpers, experts of nutrition and children regarding the importance of green leafy vegetables, (as sources of minerals and vitamins) pulses (as a source of good proteins) and Double fortified salt (importance of iron and iodine in diet) etc.
- ii) Discussions may be done with nutrition experts regarding food safety measures viz., washing vegetables before cutting, cooking a recipe in a container with lids on to preserve vitamins and essential nutrients during the process of cooking may be helpful.
- iii) These cooking competitions among the cook cum helpers of different districts of the same State and UT shall bring out the local variation in a same recipe through addition of different condiments or modes of preparation (i.e. frying/boiling/shallow frying etc).



- iv) During the Cooking Competition emphasis may be given on making a recipe more interesting so that the children are motivated for consumption, as if the children are satisfied while eating a recipe he/she shall converse in family and the parents shall also learn the ways to prepare same recipe the way the child wants to consume. This way the cooking competition may act as a source of training about a recipe in a cascading way up to family level also.
- v) State and UTs may need to develop their own standard operating procedures and undertake the cooking completion in a holistic manner on a continuous basis.



Suggested Composition of Steering cum Monitoring Committee at National, State, District and Block Levels under PM POSHAN Scheme

Sl. No	Position	National	State	District	Block
1.	Chairman	Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy	Chief Secretary / Additional Chief Secretary / Dev. Commissioner	Collector/CEO-Zila Panchayat	Sub-Divisional Officer/Block Panchayat Officer
2.	Ex-Officio Members	1. Joint Secretary in charge of the Programme in Deptt. of School Education & Literacy	1. Ppl. Secy./Secy. School Education 1A. Ppl. Secy/Secy in charge of Nodal Deptt. for the Programme (where it is a Deptt. other than school Edn.)	1. Distt. Education Officer 1a. Distt. Level Officer of Nodal Deptt. for the Programme (where it is a Deptt. other than School Education)	2. Block Edn. Officer 1A. Block level Officer of Nodal Deptt. for the Programme (where it is a Deptt. other than School Education)
		2. Fin. Advisor, Ministry of Education	2. Ppl. Secy/Secy, Finance Department	-	-
		3. Advisor (Education), Planning Commission	3. Ppl. Secy/Secy, Planning Commission	-	-
		4. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health & FW	4. Ppl. Secy/Secy, Health & FW	2. Civil Surgeon / Distt. Med. Officer	2. Med. Officer in-charge. PHC
		5. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Food & PD	5. Ppl. Secy./Secy. Food & Civil Supply	3. Distt Food & Civil Supplies Officer.	3. Block / Sub Divn. Level Officer of Food Deptt.
		6. Joint Secretary, Deptt. of WCD (in charge of Nutrition)	6. Ppl. Secy/Secy. Deptt. of WCD	4. Distt. Level Officer of FCI	4. Block / Sub Divn. Level Officer of FCI.
		7. Jt. Secretaries in the Ministries of i) Rural Development ii) Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation	7. Ppl. Secy/Secy.: i) Rural Development ii) Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation	5. i) CEO. Zila Panchayat. ii) One rep. Of a Municipal body / Deptt. of MPL. Admn.	5. i) CEO. Block Panchayat ii) One rep. Of a MPL. Body.
		8. Managing Director, FCI or his Representative	8. State Level Officer of FCI	6. Distt. Level Officer of FCI	6. Block / Sub Dvn. Level Officer of FCI
3.	Other	1. Two Experts in	1. Two Experts in the	1. One Expert in	1. One Expert in



Sl. No	Position	National	State	District	Block
	Members to be nominated by Chairman	the area of nutrition 2. Four persons of whom at least two shall be women, with significant contribution / achievements in the area of nutrition / child welfare / community/women's mobilization / school education / child health. 3. Representatives of five State Govts. (one from each region) 4. At least one representative of teachers	area of nutrition 2. Four persons of whom at least two shall be women with significant contribution/achievements in the area of nutrition / child welfare/community / women's mobilisation / school education / child health 3. Representatives of 3-5 Districts 4. At least one representative of teachers	the area of nutrition/child development 2. Four persons of whom at least two shall be women, with significant contribution / achievements in the area of nutrition / child welfare / community / women's mobilization / school education / child health 3. Representatives of 3-5 Blocks / Municipal Bodies 4. At least one representative of teachers	the area of nutrition / child development (if available) 2. Four persons of whom at least two shall be women with significant contribution/achievements in the area of nutrition's / child welfare / community women's mobilization / school education / child health 3. Representatives of 3-5 Gram Panchayats 4. At least one representative of teachers
4.	Member Secretary	Deputy Secretary/Director in-charge of the Prog. in Department of School Education & Literacy	State level HOD of the Nodal Department for the Programme	District level Officer of the Nodal Department	Block/Sub-Divisional level Officer of the Nodal Department.

Note:-

1. In addition to the membership suggested above, State Governments should also nominate MPs and MLAs on State and District level SMCs, in a suitable manner.
2. One of the six persons to be nominated in State-level SMC under sub categories (1) and (2) of category 3, may, as far as possible, be the senior most officer of Food & Nutrition Board of the Govt. of India, posted in the State/UT capital. Other experts could be drawn from institutions like:-
 - I. National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad.
 - II. Nutrition Foundation of India
 - III. National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), New Delhi.
 - IV. All-India Institute of Hygiene & Public Health, Kolkata.
 - V. Central Food & Technological Research Institute, Mysore.
 - VI. University Department /Faculty of Nutrition (Wherever in existence)



No. F. 5-1/2006-Desk(MDM)
Govt. of India
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
Mid-Day Meal Division

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
9th March, 2006.

ORDER

With the approval of the competent authority it has been decided to constitute a Programme Approval Board for Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM-PAB) to examine the Annual Work Plan of programme implementation of each State/UT before releasing Central Assistance. Each State Government's Department incharge of Mid-Day Meal Scheme shall furnish all essential/relevant information in the Annual Work Plan (district-wise) including new initiatives/innovations/good practices, and the same shall be considered by the MDM-PAB at the commencement of each financial year for approval.

As Central Assistance under MDM Scheme is being released biannually in two instalments, the progress of implementation would also be appraised by the MDM-PAB before releasing the IInd instalment.

2. In pursuance of the above, the MDM-PAB shall comprise of the following persons:-

1.	Secretary to Govt. of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy	Chairperson
2.	Director, NIEPA, or his representative	Member
3.	Director, NCERT, or his representative	Member
4.	Joint Secretary, Elementary Education-II, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy	Member
5.	Joint Secretary, Elementary Education-I, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy	Member
6.	Joint Secretary, Adult Education, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy	Member
7.	Joint Secretary, Planning, Department of Secondary & Higher Education	Member
8.	Financial Advisor, HRD	Member
9.	Advisor (Education), Planning Commission or his representative	Member
10.	Joint Secretary, Women & Child Development Department	Member
11.	Joint Secretary, Department of Food & Public Distribution	Member
12.	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Incharge of SGRY	Member



13.	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Development of North-Eastern States	Member
14.	Dr. (Mrs.) Shashi Prabha Gupta, Technical Advisor, Food & Nutrition Board, Department of WCD, New Delhi.	Member
15.	Dr. (Mrs.) Prema Ramachandran, Director, Nutrition Foundation of India, New Delhi	Member
16.	Director/ Dy. Secretary/ Dy. Ednl. Adviser incharge	Member Secretary

3. The non-official members shall be reimbursed TA/DA as per Central Govt. rules.

Sd/-
(P. K. Mohanty)
Dy. Educational Advisor

Copy:

1. Private Secretary to Minister of Human Resource Development
2. Private Secretary to Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development
3. Sr. Principal Private Secretary to Secretary, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
4. Sr. Principal Private Secretary to Secretary, Department of Secondary & Higher Education
5. Financial Adviser, MoHRD
6. Adviser (Education), Planning Commission
7. Director, NIEPA, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016.
8. Director, NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016.
9. Joint Secretary (Elementary Education-II), Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
10. Joint Secretary, Adult Education, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
11. Joint Secretary, Planning, Department of Secondary & Higher Education
12. Joint Secretary, Women & Child Development Department
13. Joint Secretary, Department of Food & Public Distribution
14. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Incharge of SGRY
15. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Development of North-Eastern States
16. Joint Secretary (Elementary Education-I) Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
17. Dr. (Mrs.) Shashi Prabha Gupta, Technical Advisor, Food & Nutrition Board, Department of WCD, Jeevan Deep Bldg, 2nd Floor, Parliament Street, New Delhi.
18. Dr. (Mrs.) Prema Ramachandran, Director, Nutrition Foundation of India, 1-13, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi-110016.
19. Principal Secretary / Secretary of the Nodal Department for NP-NSPE in all State Governments / UT Administrations, for information.



List of Documents and Data to be provided by the school to Social Auditor

- 1) Stock register of Food grains
- 2) Stock register of other ingredients i.e. pulses, oil, condiments & Salt etc
- 3) Daily attendance register
- 4) Statement certifying payment of honorarium to Cook-cum-Helpers
- 5) Tasting of meal register
- 6) Monthly and Annual data entry report under MIS
- 7) Document certifying the prominent display of entitlements
- 8) Detailed list of representatives in SMC
- 9) Minutes of SMC meetings
- 10) Details of complaints and ATR
- 11) Account statements
- 12) Any other relevant record



Indicative parameters for verification during Social Audit

1. Regularity of provision of hot cooked meal
2. Food grains
3. Utilisation of cooking cost
4. Cook-cum-Helpers
5. Prominent Display of information
6. Kitchen-cum-stores
7. Kitchen Devices
8. School Nutrition Garden
9. Tithi Bhojan
10. Availability of children health cards
11. Health check up of children – regularity
12. Distribution of IFA, de-worming tablets, spectacles
13. Safety and hygiene aspects
14. Disaster mitigation preparedness
15. Tasting of meal by SMC / teachers / parents
16. Grievance Redressal Mechanism
17. Community Involvement
18. Vocal for Local
19. Involvement of women self help groups
20. Involvement of farmers producer organisations
21. Cooking competition
22. Inspection reports of officials – points raised, followup remedial action



Activities and Suggestive timelines for conducting Social Audit

S. No.	Activity	Timeline
1	A one-day workshop/orientation programme on Social Audit at national level with States & UTs	By 15 th April
2	Briefing meeting with the State Government officials involved in Social Audit. Representative from MoE may also be invited.	Within the month of April
3	Selection of schools (20 schools or 2% of the total schools in the district, whichever is higher)	By 15 th May
4	District wise mapping of Master Trainers with Cluster wise social auditors	By 15 th May
5	Training of social audit teams	By 15 th June
6	Data collection from schools	By 15 th August
7	Notification of Public Hearing (Jan Sunwai) schedule to Gram Panchayats in writing and its advertisement and wide publicity to maximise community participation	Within 7 days of data collection
8	Conduct of Public Hearing (Jan Sunwai)	Within 15 days of data collection (By 31 st August)
9	Submission of Report by SAU to SNO	By 30 th September
10	Action Taken report by SNO to Principal Secretary of Nodal Department for PM POSHAN Scheme	By 30 th October
11	If no action is taken or ATR is not satisfactory, the issues will be reverted to SNO for re-examination by Principal Secretary	By 15 th November
12	SNO addresses the issues and submits revised ATR to the Principal Secretary of Nodal Department	By 30 th November
13	Discussion on social audit findings and action taken thereon in State Steering cum Monitoring Committee (SSMC) meeting	By 15 th December
14	Submission of final State level report and ATR thereon, incorporating the remarks of SSMC to DoSEL, MoE	By 30 th December
15	Discussion of findings from Social Audit in PAB meeting of Respective State / UT	PAB meeting of respective State/UT



Reporting Formats

The reporting after each social audit consists of three sections (Basic Data, Verification Details, and Issues) as detailed below:

1. Basic Data

S. No.	Data	Remarks
1.	Social Audit Period	
2.	Public hearing dates	
3.	Number of people who attended public hearing	
4.	Observer name and designation	
5.	Photos/Videos (if possible) #	

Note: Minutes of the meeting should be attached.

Photos/Videos may be uploaded on Google drive and the link may be shared.

2. Verification Details

- For each school that was visited, certain core information such as current school infrastructure, photo of the school, details of free books and uniforms distributed to the students.
- The response of each beneficiary (students and parents) who was interacted should be provided.
- It should be verified whether the beneficiary is aware of the benefits and entitlements provided.

3. Issues

- All issues, irregularities, grievances noticed during the audit should be noted down and the implementing agency should respond to each of these, in a time bound manner.



Annexure – VI (A)

Issues & Decisions in Public Hearings at Village Level and Block Level:

Category /component	Sub-category/Sub-component	Issue Description	Response / Decision in Gram Sabha	Responsible Person for taking corrective measures (HM/Teacher /BEO/ DEO etc.)



Action Taken Report (ATR)

Issue	Action Taken	Verification by Resource Person	Issue status(closed/open) If open, why?



Annual Report (School/Cluster/Block or District/State)

S.N.	Issue Category/Sub-category	Brief description of the issue	Number of issues filed	Number of issues closed satisfactorily
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Note:

- The annual report shall be prepared at different levels – school, cluster, district & State.
- The reports at shall be made public at corresponding level e.g. School shall display a copy of report on the notice board.
- The State and SAU shall upload various reports on their websites.
State wise consolidated reports shall be uploaded on portals/websites of DoSEL.

