

# School Meal In The Time of COVID 19: Impact and Responses **Odisha**

August 28, 2020

# Prelude – State Brief on COVID-19

## Odisha and COVID-19

- Outbreak of COVID-19 is a global challenge beyond health hazards
- With vast experience in successfully handling natural disasters, the state Govt tackled the challenges of COVID-19
- Declared COVID-19 a disaster on 12 March well before the first case was detected on 15 March
- GoO came up with a well thought strategy for all sectors – health, nutrition, protection, well-being
- Innovations in the containment of COVID-19 – TMC at village level, cash incentives for registration of returnees from outside state and institutional isolation, etc.
- Current caseload -



Parameters	Odisha
Capital	Bhubaneswar
Geographical area (sq km)	155,707
Administrative Districts (No.)	30
Population Density (person per sq km)	270
Total Population (million)	41.97
Male Population (million)	27.1
Female Population (million)	25.5
Sex Ratio (female per 1,000males)	989
Literacy rate (%)	72.87

Source: Census 2011, Economic Survey of Odisha

# COVID-19, food and nutrition in Odisha

- Hot-cooked food and dry ration provided to all who needed
- Advance multi-month allocation and door-step delivery of food grain to beneficiaries under PDS, ICDS and MDM and other state supported food-based schemes

Suspension of classes and feeding programme in schools led to impacts on students' learning and nutrition

# MDM Scenario Pre COVID

The largest School Feeding Program (SFP) in the World is implemented by Government of India as **Midday Meal (MDM) Scheme** . A meal programme designed to improve the nutritional status of school going children of Primary (class I-V) and Upper Primary (Class VI-VIII) & NCLP Schools (Govt., Govt-aided, local body, Madrasa & NCLP Schools).

## Objective :

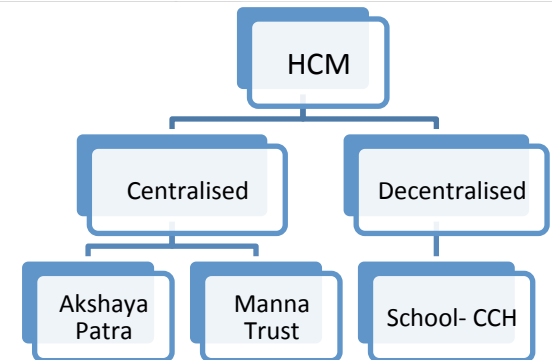
- ✓ To increase enrollment and retention and to curb dropouts
- ✓ To reduce cast prejudices, class inequality & gender gap (in-education)
- ✓ Thrust on right to life & right to food to disadvantaged section of the society.
- ✓ To provide nutritional support to the school children in drought affected areas during summer vacation.

## Mid Day Meal Program in Odisha caters in 57323 schools reaching-

- **2.73 million** primary school children, costing Rs 5.42/ child per meal (exclusive of cost of rice for 100gm per child/ meal)
- **1.64 million** upper primary school children, costing Rs 8.10/ child per meal (exclusive of cost of rice for 150gm/ child/ meal)
- Served for 234 days/year

## Weekly Menu- Hot Cooked Meal (HCM)

DAY	MDM (Class I-VIII)
Monday	Rice and Dalma (Veg. curry )
Tuesday	Rice and Soya Chunk Curry
Wednesday	Rice and Egg Curry
Thursday	Rice and Dalma (Veg. Curry)
Friday	Rice and Soya Chunk Curry
Saturday	Rice and Egg Curry



# MDM Scenario During COVID

- Service for MDM in Odisha ceased with the closure of schools from 13 March due to COVID-19 – to ensure social distancing
- Children provided MDM dry ration for 147 days in two spells [90 days –inclusive of school/non-school days from 16 March to 13 June + 57 school days from 14 June to 31 Aug]
- Food grain distributed through PDS outlet located closest to students' habitation between 1 and 30 April – parents collected PDS ration for 3 months along with MDM ration
- Student specific coupons containing all relevant details including entitlement @ 3 kg and 4.5 kg per child per month in Pry. and UP class respectively and name of PDS outlet were issued by schools
- In compliance to the requirement of payment of Food Security Allowance under NFSA, cooking cost @ Rs 5.42 and Rs 8.10 per child per day in pry and UP class paid via DBT and physical disbursement in schools following SOPs developed for the purpose

# MDM Scenario During COVID

- Total food grain distributed – 75,146 MT
- Total funds disbursed – INR 403 Cr
- State Government took the load of additional financial implication due to distribution of MDM on non-school days
- Daily monitoring and reporting of lifting of food grain under MDM
- District-level enforcement team in action
- Reconciliation of food grain distributed through PDS network is currently underway

# Three Core Response Strategies

Strategy	Coverage	Quantity
Integration of distribution of food grain with PDS		
Distribution of dry food ration- for entire lockdown period – both school/non-school days	43.25 lakh	75, 146 MT
Disbursement of cash towards cooking cost through DBT/ physical disbursement	43.25 lakh	INR 403 Cr

# Way-forward

- Distribution of dry ration to continue if schools remain closed
- On opening of schools –
  - ✓ Sanitisation of kitchen sheds
  - ✓ Infrastructure upgrade – repair of kitchen shed, hand-wash station, toilet, etc
  - ✓ Development of SOP – for daily cleaning, sanitation of school premises, procurement and storage of raw materials
  - ✓ Capacity building of CCH, sensitisation of school teachers
  - ✓ SOP for alternative modality for distribution of MDM
  - ✓ Nutri-garden, Food –fortification and DFS for improved nutrition