

2. Mid Day Meal

Background

1.1 Mid Day Meal in schools has had a long history in India. In 1925, a Mid Day Meal Programme was introduced for disadvantaged children in Madras Municipal Corporation. By the mid 1980s three States viz. Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and the UT of Pondicherry had universalized a cooked Mid Day Meal Programme with their own resources for children studying at the primary stage. Mid Day Meal was also being provided to children in Tribal Areas in some States like Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. By 1990-91 the number of States implementing the mid day meal programme with their own resources on a universal or a large scale had increased to twelve, namely, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh. In another three States, namely Karnataka, Orissa and West Bengal, the programme was being implemented with State resources in combination with international assistance. Another two States, namely Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan were implementing the programme entirely with international assistance.

1.2 It is an incontrovertible fact that school meal programmes exert a positive influence on enrolment and attendance in schools. A hungry child is less likely to attend school regularly. Hunger drains them of their will and ability to learn. Chronic hunger can lead to malnutrition. Chronic hunger also delays or stops the physical and mental growth of children. Poor or insufficient nutrition over time means that children are too small for their age, and susceptible to diseases like measles or dysentery, which can kill malnourished children. Malnutrition adversely affects Universalization of Elementary Education. Even if a malnourished child does attend school, she finds it difficult to concentrate on and participate in the teaching learning activities in school. Unable to cope, she would drop out. Some details in regard to major nutritional deficiencies, and their incidence among children of elementary school-going age group, are given in

Annexure-1.

1.3 There is also evidence to suggest that apart from enhancing school attendance and child nutrition, mid day meals have an important social value and foster equality. As children learn to sit together and share a common meal, one can expect some erosion of caste prejudices and class inequality. Moreover, cultural traditions and social structures often mean that girls are much more affected by hunger than boys. Thus the mid day meal programme can also reduce the gender gap in education, since it enhances female school attendance.

1.4 With a view to enhancing enrollment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 15th August 1995, initially in 2408 blocks in the country. By the year 1997-98 the NP-NSPE was introduced in all blocks of the country. It was further extended in 2002 to cover not only children in classes I-V of government, government aided and local body schools, but also children studying in centres run under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and innovative Education (AIE) Scheme. Central Assistance under the scheme consisted of the following:

- (a) free supply of food grains @ 100 grams per child per school day, and
- (b) subsidy for transportation of food grains up to a maximum of Rs 50 per quintal.

1.5In addition to foodgrains, a mid day meal involves two other major inputs, viz., “cost of cooking” and “provision of essential infrastructure”, which are explained below:

(a) Cost of cooking includes cost of ingredients, e.g. pulses, vegetables, cooking oil and condiments. It also includes cost of fuel and wages/ remuneration payable to personnel, or amount payable to an agency (SHG, VEC, SMC) responsible for cooking.

(b) Provision of essential infrastructure includes kitchen-cum-store, adequate water supply for cooking, drinking and washing, cooking devices (stove, chulha, etc), containers for storage of foodgrains and other ingredients and utensils for cooking and serving.

1.6 In NP-NSPE, 1995 the cost of cooking was to be borne by the State Governments/ UT administrations. Unable to provide adequate funding for meeting the cooking costs, many State Governments/ UT Administrations resorted to distribution of food grains, rather than providing cooked mid day meals. To ameliorate some of the difficulties experienced by the States and UTs, Planning Commission requested State Governments in December 2003 to earmark a minimum of 15% of Additional Central Assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) towards cooking cost under the mid day meal scheme. Nonetheless, the programme continued to suffer on account of budgetary constraints in the States and UT Administrations.

1.7 Central Government’s commitment to a universal cooked meal programme found reflection in the budget speech of the Union Finance Minister in July 2004, which stated: *“The poor want basic education for their children: we shall provide it... We shall also make sure that the child is not hungry while she or he is at school...”* The budget speech further promised: *“...the whole of the amount collected as cess will be earmarked for education, which will naturally include providing a nutritious cooked mid day meal. If primary education and the nutritious cooked meal scheme can work hand in hand, I believe there will be a new dawn for the poor children of India”*.

1.8 In keeping with the promise made in the budget speech of 2004, the NPNSPE, introduced in 1995, was revised in September 2004 to provide cooked mid day meal with 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein to all children studying in classes I – V in Government and aided schools and EGS/ AIE centres. In addition to free supply of food grains, the revised scheme provided Central Assistance for the following items:

(i) Cooking cost @ Re 1 per child per school day

(ii) Transport subsidy was raised from the earlier maximum of Rs 50 per quintal to Rs. 100 per quintal for special category states, and Rs 75 per quintal for other states

(iii) Management, monitoring and evaluation costs @ 2% of the cost of foodgrains, transport subsidy and cooking assistance

(iv) Provision of mid day meal during summer vacation in drought affected areas.

1.9 Infrastructural requirements continued to be met through convergence with other development programmes, including inter alia Sampurna Grameena Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUO), Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP) for the construction of kitchen-cum-stores. Water supply requirements were met through convergence with Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), Swajaladhara and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

1.10 The revised NP-NSPE, 2004 scheme 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.

1.11 Today, the NP-NSPE is the world's largest school feeding programme reaching out to about 12 crore children in over 9.50 lakh schools/EGS centres across the country. Several independent evaluation studies were conducted in 2005 including (a) a study by Pratiche Trust in Birbhum district, (b) University of Rajasthan/ Unicef in Rajasthan, (c) Samaj Pragati Sahyog in Madhya Pradesh. (d) Seva Mandir in Udaipur district, etc. A summary of the main findings of these Reports is given at *Annexure-2*.

These reports testify to the increase in enrollment, particularly of girls and to the narrowing of social distance. The reports also point out that the programme provides an important rallying point for the involvement of parents in school governance. At the same time some operational difficulties have been experienced by State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.

CHAPTER 2

REVISION OF NP-NSPE IN 2006

2.1 Need for revision

Following main difficulties were experienced in the implementation of NPNSPE, 2004:

(i)The existing rate of Re. 1 towards cooking cost was found to be inadequate for meeting the cost of nutritious meal as per prescribed norms, particularly after discontinuation of PMGY w.e.f 1.4.05.

(ii)Absence of kitchen sheds in schools had emerged as a critical factor impacting the quality of the programme. Though convergence with other centrally assisted programmes was envisaged for construction of kitchen sheds, progress in construction has been poor. Consequently, classrooms tend to be used for storage and cooking purposes, which is not only undesirable, but also fraught with risk. In the alternative, cooking is done in the open, which is unhygienic & hazardous.

(iii)The existing nutritional norm of 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein was felt to be inadequate to meet the growing needs of young children, necessitating therefore, the need to review and enhance the norm, and also provide for essential micronutrients and de-worming medicines. Against the above background a Sub Committee of the National Steering cum Monitoring Committee (NSMC) was constituted in August 2005 in order to make recommendations, inter alia, on the adequacy of the present norm of Central Assistance to meet the cooking cost, as well as the manner in which the infrastructure gap should be met. Recommendations of the Sub-Committee were considered by the NSMC in its meeting held on 29th September 2005 and were approved with some modifications. Based on the recommendations of the NSMC, Central Government approved the revised scheme with effect from June 2006. State Governments and UT Administrations were informed of the main features of the revised scheme vide letter No. 1(9)/2006/Desk(MDM) dated 06.07.2006 read with letter dated. 08.08.2006, appended at *Annexure-3*. This document spells out the detailed guidelines of the revised scheme.

2.2 NP-NSPE, 2006: Objectives, Programme Intervention and Coverage:

2.2.1 Objectives

NP-NSPE, 2006 seeks to address two of the most pressing problems for the majority of children in India, namely, hunger and education by:

(i)Improving the nutritional status of children in classes I – V in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools, and EGS and AIE centres.

(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 primary stage in drought-affected areas during summer vacation.

2.2.2 Programme Intervention and Coverage:

To achieve the above objectives a cooked mid day meal with nutritional content as shown in column 3 of the table below will be provided to all children studying in classes I – V: -

Central Government will provide assistance for implementing a mid day meal programme with the above nutritional content for children in classes I – V in:-

- (i) Government, Local Body and Government – aided schools, and
- (ii) EGS and AIE Centres.

Explanation:

1. “Government-aided School” means a school in receipt of regular annual recurring aid from the Central or State Government, or a competent Local Body, and recognized/categorized by it as an “aided school”.

2. An “EGS/AIE Centre” means a Centre run by a State Government/UT Administration, Local Body or non-Government agency, and receiving Central assistance in accordance with the EGS/AIE Scheme

of the Ministry of HRD. Children studying in Madarsas/Maqtabs which fall within the category of a Government-aided school or EGS/AIE Centre as defined above, would also be

See “Handbook for Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative & Innovative Education”, Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2001. covered under the Mid-Day Meal Programme.

A tentative costing for a mid day meal with the above-mentioned content, worked out by the sub-committee of NSMC mentioned in para 2.1 in August 2005 is given in **Annexure-4**.

A statement showing nutritional values of 100 grams of wheat, rice & chapattis is given in **Annexure-5**.

2.3 Components and Norms for Central Assistance:

Under NP-NSPE, 2006, Central Government will provide w.e.f 16.6.06 the following assistance to State Governments/UT Administrations:

- (i) Supply of free food grains (wheat/rice) @100 grams per child per School Day from the nearest FCI godown;
- (ii) Reimburse the actual cost incurred in transportation of food grains from nearest FCI godown to the Primary School subject to the following ceiling:
 - (a) Rs.100 per Quintal for 11 special category States viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal, and
 - (b) Rs.75 per quintal for all other States and UTs.
- (iii) Provide assistance for cooking cost at the following rates:-
 - (a) States in North- Eastern Region :- @Rs. 1.80 per child per school day, provided the State Govt. contributes a minimum of 20 paise
 - (b) For Other States & UTs :- @Rs. 1.50 per child per school day provided the State Govt./UT Admn. Contributes a minimum of 50 paise

State Governments/UT Administrations will be required to provide the above minimum contribution in order to be eligible for the enhanced rate of Central assistance mentioned above.

(iv) Provide assistance for cooked Mid-Day Meal during summer vacations to school children in areas declared by State Governments as “drought-affected”.

(v) Provide assistance to construct kitchen-cum-store in a phased manner up to a maximum of Rs. 60,000 per unit. However, as allocations under MDMS for construction of kitchen-cum-store for all schools in next 2-3 years may not be adequate, States would be expected to proactively pursue convergence with other development programmes for this purpose. (Also please see para 2.5 in this regard).

(vi) Provide assistance in a phased manner for provisioning and replacement of kitchen devices at an average cost of Rs. 5,000 per school. States/ UT Administration will have the flexibility to incur expenditure on the items listed below on the basis of the actual requirements of the school (provided that the overall average for the State/ UT Administration remains Rs 5000 per school):

- a. Cooking devices (Stove, Chulha, etc)
- b. Containers for storage of food grains and other ingredients
- c. Utensils for cooking and serving.

(vii) Provide assistance to States/ UTs for Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (MME) at the rate of 1.8% of total assistance on (a) free food grains, (b) transport cost and (c) cooking cost. Another 0.2% of the above amount will be utilized at the Central Government for management, monitoring and evaluation.

2.4 Continuation of Central Assistance at existing rates as an interim measure:

As stated in para 2.3 (iii) State Governments and UT Administrations are required to provide the minimum contribution towards cooking costs equal to 0.50 paise/ 0.20 paise as the case may be. State Governments and UT Administrations shall notify the enhanced contributions. Pending issue of the said notification, States/ UT Administrations may avail Central assistance for cooking costs at the pre-revised rate of Re. 1 per child per school day.

2.5 Convergence with other development programmes:

Though NP-NSPE, 2006 will provide some assistance, *inter alia*, towards infrastructural elements, viz., kitchen-cum-store and kitchen devices, the programme will continue to have to be implemented in close convergence with several other development programmes as detailed below so that all requirements of the Programme are fully met in the shortest possible time frame.

Health Mission.

2.6 Overall Responsibility

The overall responsibility for providing nutritious, cooked mid day meal to every child in classes I – V in all Government Schools, EGS and AIE Centres will lie with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. This will include, *inter alia*:

- Ensuring adequate budgetary provisions towards assistance for cooking cost and establishing systems for timely flow of funds towards all components of the programme, namely cooking costs, infrastructure, procurement of kitchen devices, etc.
- Formulating State Norms of expenditure under the different components of the scheme, which will be not less than the minimum contribution prescribed under the scheme, as amended from time to time.
- Formulating safety specifications for construction of kitchen-cum- store.
- Establishing systems for continuous and uninterrupted flow of foodgrains to all eligible schools, EGS/ AIE Centres from FCI.
- Ensuring that all logistic and administrative arrangements are made for regular serving of wholesome, cooked mid day meal in every eligible school, EGS/AIE Centre. Similarly, ensuring logistic and administrative arrangements for timely construction

of infrastructure and procurement of kitchen devices through funding made available under the scheme and by convergence with other development programmes.

□ Formulating guidelines that would promote and facilitate peoples' participation in the programme including criteria for identifying and associating genuine voluntary agencies and civil society organizations.

CHAPTER 3

Programme Management

A programme of the scale and magnitude of the Mid Day Meal Scheme 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 cooperation and coordination of the various agencies involved in the implementation of Scheme. NP-NSPE, 2006 envisages putting in place the following Management structures at the National, State, District/ Block and Local levels

3.1 National level:

(i) National level Steering cum Monitoring Committee : Vide Notification dated 20.12.04 read with Notification dated 31.12.04, 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 NSMC is given in *Annexure-6*.

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 publicprivate partnership for the programme. Under NP-NSPE, 2006, the NSMC will also, in addition, be expected to perform the following functions:
- (f) provide policy advice to Central and State Governments,
and
- (g) 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.

(ii) Programme Approval Board : Vide Order dated 9.3.06, 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 Panchayat Raj, Planning Commission, Food Corporation of India, etc. The composition of the Programme Approval Board is given in *Annexure-7*.

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.

(iii) National Mission for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): The General Council and Executive Council of the National Mission for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) will, in addition to SSA itself, review, from time to time, Mid Day Meal Scheme also.

3.2 State/UT level:

(i) States and UT administrations are also required to set up Steering cum Monitoring Committees at the State, District and Block levels to oversee the implementation of the programme which function, *mutatis mutandis*, similar to those spelt out in para 3.1 for the NSMC. Besides, city level SMCs should also be constituted for all cities having a Municipal Corporation. A suggested composition of Steering-cum-Monitoring Committees at various levels is given at **Annexure-8**. 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.

(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. State Governments / UT Administrations may set up Implementation Cell attached to the State Nodal Department to over see the implementation of the programme by using a part of funds under MME.

3.3 State/ UT-specific Norms of Expenditure:

Taking into account the Central assistance available under NP-NSPE, 2006, every State Government/UT Administration will prescribe and notify its own norms of expenditure on the Scheme, 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. To ensure uninterrupted supply of cooked food in thousands of primary schools and EGS-AIE Centres scattered 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 mid-day meal, including for example:

(i) 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 norms given in para 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 cooked mid-day meal to children.

(ii) 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 mid day meals expeditiously.

(iii) Delays on account of hierarchical level-wise releases from State to district to taluk/ block to gram Panchayat to School. Wherever possible States/ UT Administrations may consider electronic transfer of funds from State to Village level through banking channels.

(iv) 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 mid-day meal programme. States should also ensure that a minimum of one-month buffer stock of foodgrains and cooking costs is available in each school.

(v) Failure of the local implementation agency to adequately procure and stock up cooking ingredients.

(vi) Absence of cook for any reason, etc.

3.4 Functions of State Nodal Department:

(i) The Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD will convey the district wise allocation of food grains, cooking costs, construction of kitchen-cum-store, cooking-cum-kitchen devices as approved by the MDM-PAB to the State Nodal Department and the FCI. In addition the Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD will also convey sanctions relating to MME allocations. The State Nodal Department will convey district-wise allocations for the next financial year to all District Nodal Agencies.

(ii) In States where the function of Primary Education has devolved to Panchayat Raj Institutions, the State Nodal Department will convey the district-wise allocation to the District Panchayats. 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.

3.5 Nodal Responsibility at the 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 over-all 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 for construction of kitchen-cum-store, cooking costs, kitchen-cum-cooking devices, etc. 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/ taluk nodal agency will also take responsibility for developing indicative menus using locally available and culturally acceptable food items.

3.6 Management at the Local Level:

(i) 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. Standing Committees may be constituted by the Gram Panchayats and Municipalities to oversee the implementation of the programmes. Alternatively, already existing Standing Committees, which have been assigned the task of supervising education related issues may be entrusted the task of monitoring, review and taking other necessary steps for the smooth implementation of the scheme. The Gram Panchayat/Municipality may, in turn, assign responsibility of the day-to-day management of the programme at school level to the Village Education Committee/ School Management & Development Committee or Parent-Teacher Association as the case may be. The VEC/SMD/PTA shall be responsible for the programme to the Gram Panchayat/Municipality.

(ii) Responsibility for Cooking/Supply of Cooked Mid-Day Meal

As far as possible, responsibility for cooking/supply of cooked midday meal should be assigned to one of the following:-

- (a) Local women's/mothers' Self-Help Group,
- (b) Local Youth Club affiliated to the Nehru Yuvak Kendras,
- (c) A voluntary organization fulfilling requirements laid down in para 3.9, and
- (d) By personnel engaged directly by the VEC/SMDC/PTA/Gram Panchayat/Municipality.

(iii) In urban areas where a centralized kitchen setup is possible for a cluster of schools, cooking may wherever appropriate, be undertaken in a centralized kitchen and cooked hot meal may then be transported under hygienic conditions through a reliable transport system to various schools. There may be one or more such nodal kitchen(s) in an urban area, depending on the number of clusters which they serve.

3.7 Responsibility of 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 upto one month in advance so that supply chain of food grains remains uninterrupted. For the NP-NSPE, 2006, 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 MDM Programme. 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 foodgrains supplied.

3.8 Nodal Agency/Agencies for transportation of food grains:

Transportation of food grains from nearest FCI depot to each Primary School/EGS-AIE Centre is a major logistical responsibility. State Government will be expected to make arrangements in this regard in the following manner: -

- (i) 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 foolproof arrangements to ensure that the food grains are carried from the taluk/block level to each school, etc., in a timely manner.
- (ii) Alternatively, District/ Taluks Panchayats may be assigned the responsibility for different districts/ taluks or groups of districts/ taluks in the State.

3.9 Association of Voluntary Organizations in the Programme:

The major groups of activities for which Voluntary Organizations may be associated with the programme are –

- o Supply of cooked mid day meal, and
- o Provision of resource support to the programme, e.g.
 - Training and capacity building,
 - Monitoring and evaluation, and
 - Research.

3.9.1 Assignment of supply responsibilities to Voluntary Organizations:

Identification of voluntary organizations, which are suitable for being assigned supply responsibility under the NP-NSPE, 2006 for a school or group of schools may be done by

the City level SMC for Municipal towns and District level SMC for all other areas. Once a voluntary organization is so identified, the decision to actually award supply work to it for a school or a group of schools may be taken by a body empowered in this behalf by the State Government, e.g. the Gram Panchayat, VEC/ SMC/ PTA, Municipal Committee/ Corporation, etc. The City or District SMC should keep the following aspects in mind while determining suitability of a voluntary organization for supply of cooked mid day meal:

(i) The voluntary agencies 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.

(ii) The voluntary agency should be a body that is registered under the Societies Registration Act or the Public Trust Act, and should have been in existence for a minimum period of two years.

(iii) Commitment to undertake supply responsibility on a no-profit basis.

(iv) Financial and logistic capacity to supply the mid day meal on the requisite scale.

(v) Commitment to abide by the parameters of NP-NSPE, 2006 particularly with regard to the prescription of eligible children, nutrition content etc

(vi) Willingness to work with PRIs/ Municipal bodies in accordance with relevant guidelines of the State Government.

(vii) It will furnish to the body assigning the work to it an Annual Report along with audited statement of accounts in terms of all grants received from the State Government, both in cash and kind, duly certified by an approved Chartered Accountant.

(viii) The voluntary organisation shall not entrust/ sub-contract the programme or divert any part of the assistance (food grains/money) to any other organization/agency.

(ix) Commitment to return to the State Government any permanent/ semi permanent assets acquired by the Voluntary Organisation from the grants received under the programme, once the voluntary organisation ceases to undertake the supply work.

(x) All accounts, stock and registers maintained by the voluntary organisation should be open to inspection by officers appointed by the State Government.

(xi) State Governments may prescribe such other conditions, as they may deem appropriate in addition to the conditions stated above.

3.9.2 Engaging Voluntary Organizations for Resource Support:

The State/ UT level SMC may identify voluntary organizations for providing resource support to NP-NSPE, 2006, in the form of training and capacity building programmes, monitoring and evaluation and research studies. Guidelines for this purpose will follow after consideration in the NSMC.

3.10 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities connected with the programme:

Though NP-NSPE, 2006 does not envisage central assistance for IEC activities in connection with the programme, it is 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 Mid-Day 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, or were so providing prior to introduction of cooked Mid-Day Meal programme.

ii) Importance of balanced and nutritious meals, and how to provide them economically,

iii) Safety, health and hygiene aspects,

iv) Community participation/contribution in, and supervision of the MDM programme, and

v) Good storage, cooking, serving and eating practices. 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.

3.11 Activity Mapping:

It is recommended that States / UT Administration initiate an activity mapping exercise in order to ensure that there is no overlapping of functions and responsibilities. The activity mapping exercise is based on the 'Principle of Subsidiarity', which means '*what can best be done at a particular level should be done at that level alone, and not at higher levels*'. For example, if condiments can be procured at the lowest level, namely the school or the village, its procurement should not be centralized at higher levels of administration. An activity mapping exercise has been attempted below to guide State Governments and UT Administrations to initiate similar exercises. Activity Mapping, while identifying the levels at which different functions are required to be transacted, will have to be accompanied with delegation appropriate administrative and financial powers to the concerned level.

Union Budgetary Allocation

Year Wise Outlay under Mid Day Meal Scheme (Rs. in Crores)			
Year	BE	RE	Releases
2007-08	7324	6678	5835.44
2008-09	8000	8000	6539.52
2009-10	8000	7359.15	6937.79
2010-11	9440	9440	9128.44
2011-12	10380	10380	9901.92
2012-13	11937		4343.14 as on 27-7-2012