

A Brief Review about the Implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme in the State of Manipur

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Mid-Day Meal Implementation

In Manipur, the centrally sponsored Mid-Day Meal Scheme was implemented with effect from November, 1995. Further in compliance with the Honourable Supreme Court orders passed on 20-4-2004 in W.P(C) No. 196 of 2001 the State Government took up steps to provide cooked food to all the schools of primary stage (Government /Government Aided) with effect from 14-11-2004. Initially the scheme was extended to 548 Upper Primary attached with Primary classes of Manipur with effect from 1st August, 2008 onwards and later 166 Upper Primary schools without primary classes were also covered from April 2009 onwards. During 1995-2004, the State Government however, implemented the scheme by distributing raw rice to eligible children entitled to avail the MDM in primary schools owing to absence of the provision in the State Government's annual budget The State Government started implementing MDM scheme in the EGS and AIE Centres from the financial year 2010-2011¹Mid-Day Meal scheme implemented in the State of Manipur aims to boost the Universalisation of Elementary Education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and to simultaneously impact on nutritional status of the students at elementary education stage. The Directorate of School Education is the Nodal Department for the implementation of MDMS in the State. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme is implemented in both the valley and hill districts of the State. The scheme covers children studying in primary and upper primary classes in the Government, Local Body, Government-Aided schools and AIE and EGS Centres of the State.

The Right to Education is recognized as a Human Right by the United Nations and is understood to establish an entitlement to free, compulsory primary education for all children. In addition to the access to educational provisions, the Right to Education encompasses the

obligation to eliminate discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve quality. In the Eighty-Sixth Amendment of the Constitution, 2002 a new article was inserted in the chapter of Fundamental Rights that is Article 21A which runs – “Right to Education – The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine.”

Article 45 was also amended, it now runs – “Provision for early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years – The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”.

“The Right of the children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009” the Act came in force on 01.04.2010. Under the Act (Section 3) runs – Right of child to free and compulsory education – (1) every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbouring school till completion of elementary education.

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 38 of The Right of the Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009” (35 of 2009), The Government of Manipur for the implementation of the Act, made rules of Manipur called “The Right of the Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2010.” The rules of Manipur were published in the Manipur Gazette dated 22nd October 2010; these rules were extended to the whole of State of Manipur.

In the Manipur Gazette 2010, the expression, “Free Education” has been defined in rule 2(3) as- “Free Education means no child shall be liable to pay admission, tuition, examination and any other fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education and includes providing free textbooks, notebooks @ 1 notebook per subject, other writing materials, uniform and midday meals in the neighbourhood schools”.

In these rules the “Implementing Authority of the Act” is State Project Office, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) Manipur and it includes the Secretary (Education-S) Department, Government of Manipur and the Director of Education (S), Manipur.

In “The Right of the Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2010”, the specific rules relevant with the implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme are – Rule 5 sub-rule (4) – “No child belonging to a weaker section and/or disadvantaged group shall be segregated or discriminated against in the classroom, during Mid-Day meals, in the play grounds, in the use of common drinking water and toilet facilities, and in the cleaning of toilets or classrooms”.

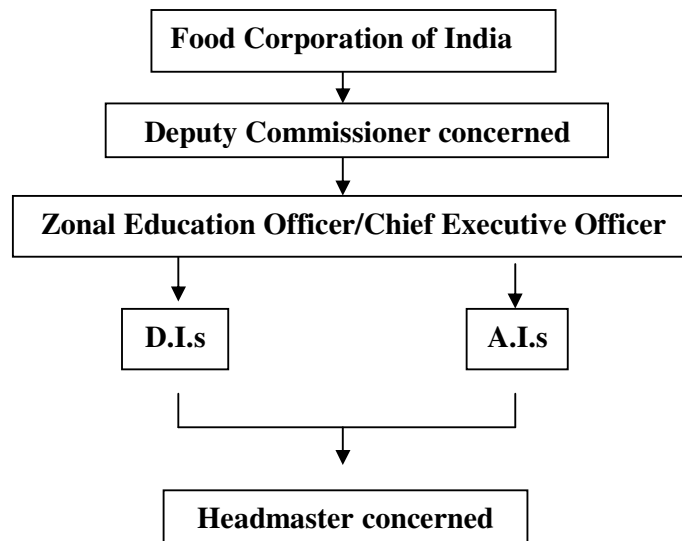
The School Management and Development Committee shall as given in Rule 13 sub-rule (4) clause (i) to “monitor the implementation of the mid-day meal scheme.”

Mid-Day Meal Scheme during the Year 2006-2007

During the period the total number of Primary level Government, Local Body and Government Aided Educational Institutions in Manipur were 2965 with total enrolment of 248371. The students in these institutions were covered under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, at this time children studying in the EGS and AIE Centres were not covered under the MDM scheme as the state had not worked out a definite modality for the implementation of the scheme at these Centres.

Figure No.:1

The Food Grain Flow Chart managed in Manipur during 2006-2007



Food grains was allocated from the FCI to the Deputy Commissioner concerned, from there it was further handed over to the ZEOs of the concerned districts. The Deputy Inspector (D.I.) s and Assistant Inspector (A.I.) s further took the responsibility of distributing it to the concerned schools.

During 2006-2007, each school had a School Management and Development Committee Comprising of –

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| (a) Local Pradhan/Member/Municipal
Commissioner/Councillor/Village Head | - President |
| (b) Head Master | - Member Secretary |
| (c) Two representatives from local clubs | - Member |

(d) One local educationist - Member

During the 2006-2007, the Zonal Education Officers and the Deputy Inspectors of schools constituted the School Management and Development Committee and extended co-operation in the implementation of providing cooked food under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. The School Management and Development Committee ensured and had the overall responsibility of implementing the scheme successfully, at the local level. The Parents-Teachers Association and Mothers Associations (PTA) were also involved in monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the programme at school level. However, such associations were not involved in all schools and steps were taken up to involve community in the everyday implementation of the scheme.

Table No.:1
The Menu prescribed till August, 2006

Sl. No.	Days	Food Item	Calorific Value	Protein Content (in Grams)
1.	Monday to Saturday	rice, vegetable, fruits, dal, etc.	above 350 calories	8~10 grams

Table No.:2
The Menu prescribed from September, 2006

Sl. No.	Days	Food Item	Calorific Value	Protein Content (in Grams)
1.	Monday to Saturday	rice, vegetable, fruits, dal, etc.	above 450 calories	more than 12 grams

The MDM scheme was implemented continuously but at times the release of food grains and conversion cost did not take place simultaneously. The scheme suffered at times due to the reason that the DC concerned controls the release of food grains while money was released from the Administrative Department with concurrence of the Finance Department and availability of funds.

The cooking ingredients were procured at the local level by the School Management and Development Committee. A cook was appointed in the school and the teachers and the SMDC supervised the process at the school. For the purpose of procuring kitchen devices funds were released under the MDM Programme and other sources were used. The School

Management and Development Committee had the responsibility of ensuring the successful implementation of the scheme at the local level.

During the period 2006-07 the State Share for (a) wages of cooks was fixed at the rate Rs. 1500/- per cook per month and (b) cost of fuel at the rate of Rs. 1000/- per school per month. The scheme was not yet implemented in the EGS/AIE centres in the State. It was reported that the students' health cards had not been developed, but convergence with activities of the NRHM had begun. No micronutrients and de-worming tablets were supplied.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme during the Year 2007-2008

During the period 2007-2008, the programme was implemented in the same manner as was implemented in the previous year, there were no changes in the modalities of implementation.

Table No.: 3
Number of Beneficiaries and School working days in 2007-08:

Number of Beneficiaries in 2007-08 (likely to avail MDM in classes I-V)	
Primary Schools	2,02,476
EGS	31,553
AIE	36,606

Number of school working days in full academic year 2007-08 was 220.

Table No.:4
The School data during 2007-08, providing (i) number of schools (Government, EGS and AIE Centres), (ii) enrolment (by category and gender (as on March 2007)

Sl. No.	Type of Institutions (Primary level)	Total		Eligible but not covered under MDM		% of (4) in (2)
		No. of Institutions	Enrolment	No. of Institutions	No. of Children	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	Govt.	2471	202699	NIL	NIL	0
2.	Local Body	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	0
3.	Govt.-aided	494	45672	NIL	NIL	0
4.	Sub-Total	2965	248371	NIL	NIL	0
5.	EGS Centres	971	25212	971	25212	100%
6.	AIE Centres*	1048	29898	1048	29898	100%
7.	Sub-Total	2019	55110	2019	55110	100%
	Grand Total	4984	303481	2019	55110	

Out of these 1048 AIE Centres 40 are residential and rest non-residential. The EGS/AIE Centres were not covered as State Govt. had not decided on the modalities of implementation for these Centres. Cooking ingredients like fuel, condiments, oil, etc. were procured at the local level by the School Management and Development Committee. A cook was appointed and paid honorarium to cook the meal at each school. The teachers and the SMDC supervised the actual process. The School grants of Rs 2000/- was used to procure kitchen devices in 2004-05. The 20 days in-service training was being updated and the module developed containing lectures of the Mid-Day Meal scheme for sensitization of teachers and their capacity building for effective supervision.

The data collected for Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) was also used for the MDM Plan preparation. The data was collected from the schools as well as households. The SMDC had the overall responsibility of ensuring the successful implementation of the scheme at the local level. But for involvement of community, Parents-teachers association and mothers association were also being involved. These were however, not uniformly done, during the period all over the State but steps were taken to create more awareness and involve the community into everyday implementation of the scheme.

The Government had constituted a MME Committee with Commissioner/Secretary of the Education Department as the Chairman. State wide health assessment survey and impact studies were being planned from the MME funds.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme during the Year 2008-2009

There was no change in the modalities of implementation of the scheme during this period.

Table No.:5
School data, including (i) Number of schools (government, EGS and AIE Centres), (ii) Enrolment (by category and gender) (as on March 2008)

Sl. No.	Type of Institutions (Primary)	Total		Eligible but not covered under MDM		% of (4) in (2)
		No. of	Enrolment	No. of	No. of	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	Govt.	2452	168083	NIL	NIL	0
2.	Local Body	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	0
3.	Govt.-aided	493	34393	NIL	NIL	0

4.	Sub-Total	2945	202476	NIL	NIL	0
5.	EGS Centers	971	31553	971	31553	100%
6.	AIE Centers*	1048	36606	1048	36606	100%
7.	Sub-Total	2019	68159	2019	68159	100%
	Grand Total	4964	270635	2019	68159	

Regarding impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme such as increase in enrolment, attendance, retention, learning level, reduction in drop out, increase in nutritional status etc. as reported there seemed to be a contradiction on the outcome. The State share towards implementation of the scheme is much more than the prescribed norm and the cooks are primarily from the SC/ST and OBC category. There were no such instances of unhygienic food served, children falling ill, sub-standard supplies, diversion/misuse of resources, social discrimination and safety measures have been adopted to avoid recurrence of such incidents. There is also an extent of involvement of NGO's and Civic Body Organisation (CBOs)/PRIs. They were included in the SMDC. Regarding the Status of School Health Programme with special focus on provision of micro-nutrients, Vitamin-A. De-worming medicine, Iron and Folic acid, Zinc and recording of height, weight etc. The Health Dept. was persuaded to effectively implement the programme. Departmental inspections to MDM Centres were carried out from time to time, during the period.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme during the Year 2009-2010

Provision of Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Terms of Coverage: During 2009, altogether 5555 institutions were approved to serve MDM for the entire state of Manipur. Out of which 3876 are primary schools and 1679 are upper primary schools. The institutions approved and covered during 2009 in the state is shown in the following tables 1.1

Table No.:6
Showing no. of institutions approved and covered for (2009)

Sl.No.	INDICATORS	STATUS		
		Primary	Upper primary	Total
1.	No. of institutions approved	3876	1679	5555
2.	No. of institution existing	3453	1637	5070
3.	No. of institutions	2459	583	3042

	served MDMS			
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Source data: MDMS- AWP &B 2010-11, Govt. of Manipur

During the period, formalities for the construction of kitchen shed in the schools in collaboration with National Mission on Bamboo Application were completed. Altogether, 1174 kitchen sheds was to be constructed. Kitchen devices (water filter, utensils, etc.) were provided in 1457 schools. Food grains had been lifted on quarterly basis, during the period a new revised rate on transportation charges had been issued considering the tough terrain of far hilly districts in the state. Since 2009-2010, all related funds have been sent directly to SMDCs (School Management and Development Committees) account. The funds were earlier transferred to the schools through district administration, which is now transferred electronically to the accounts of SMDCs. For the purpose of monitoring the programme block level vigilance committee have been constituted. In order to deliver the food grain supply in time, and to stop any kind of leakage, wastage, pilferage, etc. the transportation of the food grains has been carried out under the supervision of the District Deputy Commissioner. Awareness campaigns have been carried out using both print and electronic media, along with this helpline numbers have been opened in order to facilitate any sort of complaints for redressed regarding the implementation of the scheme.

During the period the State Education Department with State Health Department, NRHM, Manipur and SSA, SMA, Manipur have been working together to work out a plan for improving the health of the school going children. The state education department had already initiated a health campaign during 2009-2010, through NGO covering 1484 students of 22 schools in remote hilly areas like Tippaimuk, Somtal, Inem, etc.

The number of working days during the academic year was 251 days both for primary and upper primary stage. The table below shows the district-wise coverage of the four valley district of Manipur at primary stage.

Table No.:7

Coverage of primary schools during 2009-2010, at the four valley districts:

SI No.	Districts	No. of institutions serving MDM scheme
1.	Imphal West	328
2.	Imphal East	395
3.	Thoubal	343
4.	Bishnupur	239

Table No.:8
Coverage of Upper Primary schools (not attached) with Primary Schools
during 2009-2010, at the four valley districts of Manipur

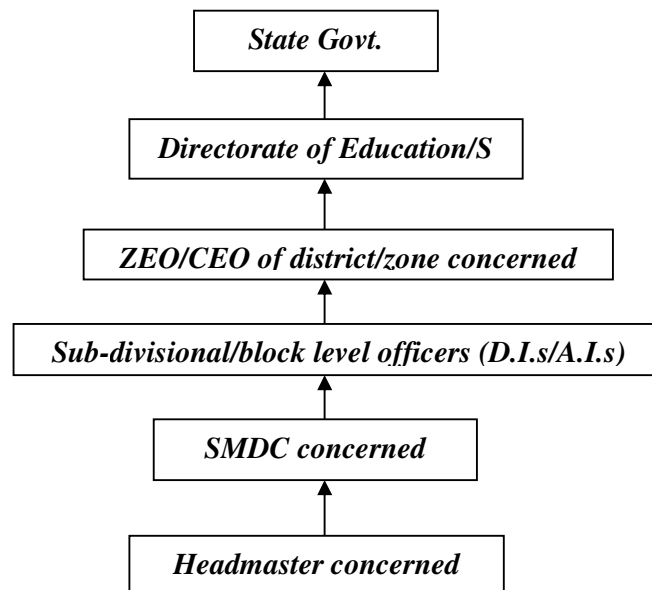
SI No.	Districts	No. of institutions serving MDM scheme
1.	Imphal West	55
2.	Imphal East	50
3.	Thoubal	35
4.	Bishnupur	13

Table No.:9
The table below indicates the number of children in Primary and Upper Primary stage
covered during 2009-2010

SI No.	Districts	Primary	Upper Primary	Total
1.	Imphal West	16556	6052	22608
2.	Imphal East	28889	7540	36429
3.	Thoubal	18313	6301	24614
4.	Bishnupur	14322	4744	19066

Mid-Day Meal Scheme during the Year 2010-2011

Figure No.: 2
Process of Plan Formulation

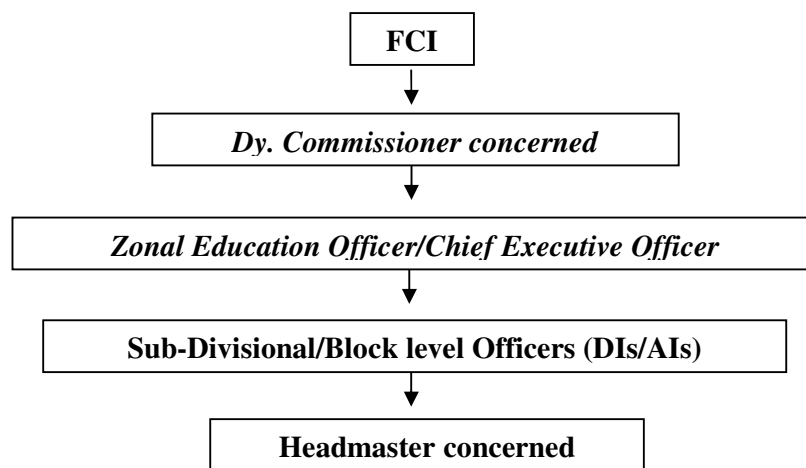


The Mid-Day Meal Programme is implemented continuously but sometimes due to certain unavoidable conditions the release of food grains and conversion cost is not simultaneous and as a result, the utilization of food grains is not coterminous with the utilization of conversion cost. Sometimes mismatch in utilization of food grain and

conversion cost occurs as the release of food grains is controlled by DC concerned while money is released from Administrative Department with concurrence of Finance Department, subjected to the availability of funds. One major interruption during the period under review (2009-10) especially in the valley area of the State was due to an agitation launched by some students' organization along with some Civil Society Organizations which lasted for about 4(four) months.

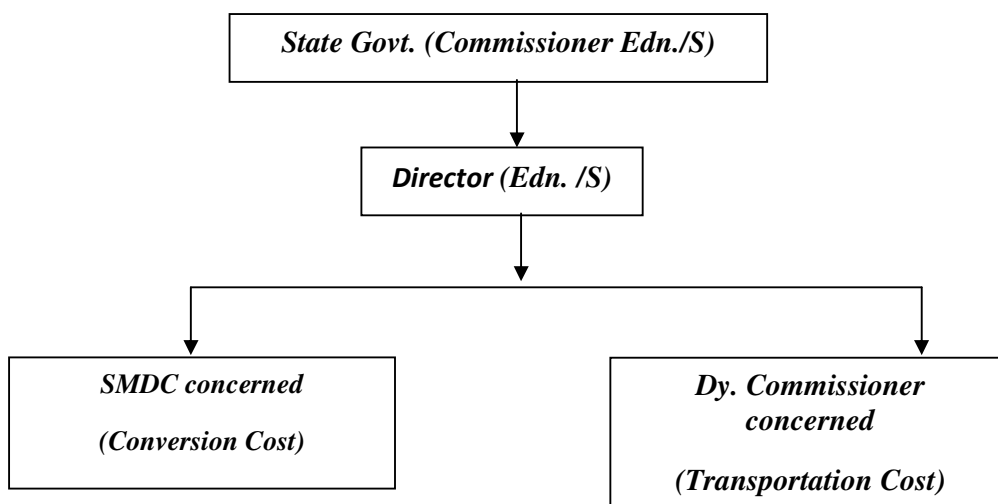
During the period the system of allocation and release of food grains to the Schools implementing MDM Scheme in this State, is as follows –

Figure No.: 3
Food Grain Flow Chart



Following is the system under which fund had been released to the appropriate authorities, during the period –

Figure No.: 4
Fund Flow-Chart



During the period there were no such commodities which were centrally purchased and supplied to schools. All the cooking ingredients were procured at the local level by the SMDC concerned. Cooks appointed on payment of honorarium (Rs.1500/-) were entrusted with cooking of meals and the same were served to the students under the supervision of the available teachers of the school concerned. The Construction of Kitchen Shed was taken up by the National Mission on Bamboo Application under the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India.

Kitchen devices which include water container, water filter and meal plate were centrally procured and distributed directly to the schools concerned through district establishment. As reported Media Campaign, Sensitization programs involving implementing agencies, establishment of Helpline distribution of information booklets etc., were taken up. Efforts were being made to develop an MIS Cell in the Directorate level and district level for collection of data and to facilitate active monitoring of the implementation of MDM Scheme throughout the State. At this period, the school level MDM programme was implemented by a special committee consisting of representative from NGOs/Gram Panchayat/Municipalities with the concerned Headmaster as the member secretary of the committee. Constructions of Kitchen sheds were being carried out through an NGO. Health check-ups of the school children were conducted with the assistance of NGOs, also with assistance of NGOs and in co-ordination with the related Departments school health programme were implemented.

Honorarium for the cook's is released to the concerned School Management and Development Committees (SMDCs). In the state all the cooking ingredients are procured at the local level by the SMDC concerned. Cooks-cum-helpers are engaged for cooking and serving meals in the schools. In the schools the supervision is done on a continuous basis by the SMDCs. The Deputy Inspector (D.I.) s and Assistant Inspector (A.I.) s at District and Zonal level also supervise the school meal programme on regular basis.

The procedure for construction of kitchen shed is assigned to NMBA, Ministry of Science & Technology, GOI and the Education Department has been monitoring the progress. During the period workshop at State level for Capacity Building of MDM State and District level functionaries had been conducted. Management Information System (MIS) was yet to be introduced. For the purpose of grievances or queries, help lines had already been opened. To spread awareness among the general public about the scheme, campaigns have also been carried out. Some of the measures taken up to rectify – (a) inter-district low and uneven

utilization of food grains and cooking cost can be rectified by timely releasing of allocation and continuous monitoring of the lifting of the food grains and constant checking in the schools. (b) intra-district mismatch in utilization of food grains and cooking cost – it has been attempted to make release of food grains and cooking cost simultaneously. (c) Delay in delivering cooking cost at school level- efforts have been made to ensure timely release by the Government.

Some of the best practices followed in the State are construction of kitchen sheds are planned keeping in view the environmental cost and the funds are released to the school concerned directly. NRHM, Manipur has confirmed coverage of school children in their programme. Awareness campaign through hoardings and audio-visual campaign in the electronic and print media were held while continuous efforts are made to encourage large scale involvement of local organizations. Tables below show the number of primary, upper primary attached with primary schools and upper primary schools not attached to primary school, covered by the scheme during 2010-2011.

Table No.:10

Coverage of Primary Schools, during 2010-11

Sl. No.	Districts	No. of Institutions Serving MDM
1.	Imphal west	258
2.	Imphal east	306
3.	Thoubal	249
4.	Bishnupur	186

Table No.:11

Coverage of Upper Primary attached with Primary Schools, during 2010-11

Sl. No.	Districts	No. of Institutions Serving MDM
1.	Imphal west	58
2.	Imphal east	62
3.	Thoubal	54
4.	Bishnupur	52

Table No.:12**Coverage of Upper Primary not attached with Primary Schools, during 2010-11**

Sl. No.	Districts	No. of Institutions Serving MDM
1.	Imphal west	55
2.	Imphal east	42
3.	Thoubal	35
4.	Bishnupur	13

Table No.:13**Average No. of children in Primary and Upper Primary covered during 2010-11:**

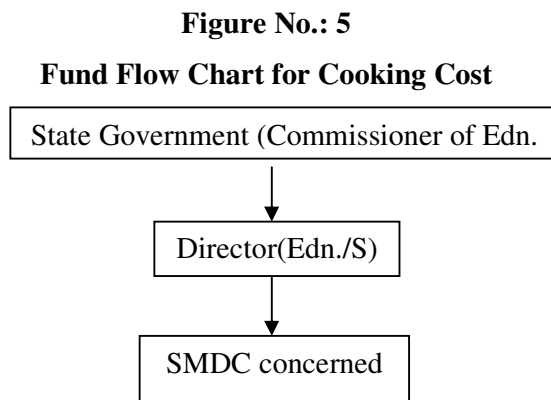
Sl. No.	Districts	Primary	Upper Primary	Total
1.	Imphal west	14679	5745	20424
2.	Imphal east	28228	7744	35972
3.	Thoubal	18790	6400	25190
4.	Bishnupur	14207	4528	18735

Table No.:14**Coverage of Working Days during 2010-2011 as on 31.12.2010:**

Sl. No.	Stage	PAB Approval	Coverage
1.	Primary	163	160
2.	Upper Primary	163	160

The working day for the whole year was 220 days. During the period the process of plan formation followed in the State is the same as followed during 2010-2011. It has been reported that interruption in programme implementation has been due to transportation bottleneck and frequent disturbances on the 2(two) National Highways. Even during time of disturbances, the State has provided enough buffer stock of food grains in the districts in order to ensure regular supply of food grains to the schools, as reported in the AWP&B 2011-12. However, strict monitoring of the attendance of the school going children has remained difficult and ineffective because most of the land is covered with deep hilly regions thereby resulting in communication gap, which may however, could be removed if the proposed implementation of IVRS have been made to cover maximum numbers of schools in the State. Another issue obstructing smooth implementation of the programme has been non-release of fund for the same as has been experienced in the past. It has been expected that if the fund is

released in advance, the scheme could be implemented fully. In the report it has been indicated that the issue would be addressed only when the scheme is implemented through society mode as done in case of SSA, RMSA etc. wherein fund will be made available to the department without reference to Finance department. Regarding food grains management, including adequacy of allocation, timeliness of lifting, transportation and distribution, and suitability of storage at different levels, lots of challenges are being faced and plan taken up to rectify them. Allocations of food grain from the State are made before the start of a quarter. Then indents are placed by Deputy Commissioner concerned and after verifying the quantity it is submitted to FCI. Then it is lifted by agencies engaged by the DC concerned for further distribution to schools by the district officials. Temporary godowns are arranged by district officials as per requirement. The system of allocation and release of food grains to the schools implementing MDM scheme in the state is the same as followed in the previous year. It was also highlighted in the AWP&B 2011-12 that till date food grains are allocated as per prescribed scale and no inadequacy has occurred till then. Most of the time difficulties in speedy distribution of food grains have been attributed to prevailing law and order situation and difficult terrain. The system of fund flow released under cooking costs (Central and State), is shown in the chart given below-



During 2011-12, honorarium to Cook was made to the School Management and Development Committee directly. Procurement of cooking ingredients (pulses, vegetables including leafy ones, salt, condiments, oil and fuel etc.), commodities, which are centrally purchased and supplied to schools or locally purchased at school level. These are locally purchased.

Cooking, serving and supervising Mid-Day meals in the school and measures to prevent any untoward happening are done by the SMDC. AWP&B 2011-12 highlights that

District and Zonal functionaries also supervise the programme regularly. Construction of Kitchen Shed was assigned to National Mission on Bamboo Application under Ministry of Science and Technology, GOI. Earlier it was not satisfactory in the progress now the issue is addressed in consultation with NMBA for early completion.

Procedure of procurement of kitchen devices from (i) funds released under the Mid-Day Meal Programme (ii) other sources, under this the items of Kitchen devices which include water container, water filter and meal plates are centrally procured and distributed directly to the school concerned through district offices. Capacity building and training were conducted for different categories of persons involved in the Mid-Day Meal Programme.

Till 2011-12 Management Information System at School, Village / Gram Panchayat, Block, District and State level was not developed. It has been reported that to ensure transparency, accountability and openness in all aspects of programme implementation, including inter alia, food grains management, ingredients procurement, cooking and serving, appointment of cooking staff, construction of kitchen-cum-store, and procurement of cooking devices. It has been made mandatory that all notifications/instructions/directions issued to the concerned authorities from the state government as well as directorate are notified through the Departmental website for information of all concerned to ensure transparency. All records are to be maintained in registrars in schools and opened to all for inspection. There has not been any report of instances of unhygienic food served, children falling ill, sub-standard supplies, diversion/misuse of resources, social discrimination and safety measures adopted to avoid recurrence of such incidents. Vigilance Committees at block levels have already been constituted and feedback formats have also been provided. Steps are being taken up to make it fully functional. Grievances and issues are addressed at both schools and district levels appropriately. It is made mandatory to inspect at least 10(ten) schools in a month by district officials. Regarding Media campaign, Kiosk and roadside hoardings are installed.

It has been reported that the Programme has considerably decreased the dropped out rates and large number of BPL students have started attending regular classes. The general health of these children has improved as regular food/meal is given to them in the schools. The family economy of the poor/needy women has been improved through employment as Cooks-cum-helper.

The Steps taken to strengthen the monitoring mechanism in the Block, District and State level and status of constitution of SMCs at these levels. Status of formation on School Management Committee at village / school / cooking agency level in the light of Right to Education Act, 2009 are also found.

During 2012-2013, the Programme has been implemented in more or less that same manner as in the previous year, the planning procedure; system of food grain allocation and fund flow has remained the same. All the aspects of the Programme have been followed in the same manner as earlier. The provision for the coverage of children of NCLP (NCLP schools are primary schools but eligible for benefit as per upper primary norm) schools as per upper primary norms is not implemented in the state as there are no NCLP schools in Manipur.

In the AWP&B 2012-13, it has been highlighted that the programme has been able to considerably reduce dropout rates, especially with regard to children from BPL(below poverty line) families. The general health of these children has improved with the implementation of the scheme. The scheme has proved to be instrumental in providing employment to the poor and needy women as cooks. It has been stressed that the programme has already started to pay the dividends in all fronts.

Mid-Day Meal Implementation Process

A Mid-Day Meal cooked with free food grain involves two other major inputs, viz., and (a) provision of essential infrastructure and (b) cost of cooking.

Infrastructure for the Mid-Day Meal

The essential infrastructure for the Mid-Day Meal like kitchen-cum-store, adequate water supply for drinking, cooking and washing purpose, cooking device (stove, chullah, etc.), container for storage of food grains and other ingredients, utensils for cooking and serving, etc. are expected to be borne by the State Government or Local Bodies with their own funds or available under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

The Cost of Cooking Mid-Day Meal

The cost of cooking Mid-Day Meal includes (1) cost of ingredients, e.g. pulses, vegetables, cooking oil and condiments, (2) cost of fuel and (3) wages/remuneration payable to personnel, or amount payable to any agency (Self Help Group, Village Education Committee, School Management Committee) responsible for cooking. Scheme's guidelines issued in August, 1995, had mentioned that cook's remuneration would be met from the poverty alleviation scheme (Jawahar Rozgar Yozna) of the Ministry of Rural Development .However, with the re-vamping of JRY w.e.f. 1.4.99 this became impermissible and responsibility of meeting entire cost of cooking devolved on State Governments/Local Bodies. But due to inability of the State Government and UTs to provide adequate funding for meeting the cooking cost, accordingly there is distributed only food grains @ 3kg. per students per month, as was envisaged in the guidelines, as an interim measure. To ameliorate

the situation, Planning Commission requested State Government in December, 2003 to earmark a minimum of 15% of Additional Central Assistance (ACA) under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) for the financial year 2004-05 for meeting cooking cost under the scheme.

The overall responsibility for providing nutritious, cooked Mid-Day Meal to every child in all Government, Government-Aided, Local Body schools, EGS and AIE Centres is vested on the State Government which includes: (a) Ensuring adequate budgetary provisions towards assistance for cooking cost and establishing systems for timely flow of funds towards all components of the programme, (b) Formulating State Norms of expenditure under different component of the scheme, (c) formulating safety specifications for construction of kitchen-cum-store, (d) establishing system for continuous and uninterrupted flow of food grains from the FCI to all eligible schools and Centres, (e) ensuring all logistic and administrative arrangements for regular mid-day meal programme, construction of infrastructure and procurement of kitchen devices, etc. (f) formulating guidelines to promote and facilitate peoples' participation in the programme including criteria for identifying and associating genuine voluntary agencies and civil society organizations.

Mid -Day Meal Scheme implementation is undertaken by the State Education Department in convergence with various other programme under different departments such as the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, under which necessary health interventions are taken up under the National Health Mission through school health programme. The school health programme has provision for regular health check -up of the children studying at the elementary education stage. The school health programme not only conducts regular health check -up of the children but also provide supplementary micro-nutrients, iron and folic acid tablets and de- worming tablets. The kitchen devices are procured from the annual school grant fund available under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Ministry of Human Resource Development and other. Let us discuss some of the area of implementation process.

Coverage of the Mid-Day Meal Programme

The mode of coverage of the programme is done according to the existing number of institutions(Primary and Upper Primary) , where number of students to avail the MDM is approved by the , Programme Approval Board - Mid-Day Meal (PAB-MDM) for each financial year based on the enrolment data Unified District Information System for education (UDISE) of the students as on the 30th of September each academic year. Therefore, it is evident that the enrolment data is the basis on which the number of student qualifies for availing the MDMS facilities.

As reflected in the PAB-MDM meeting to consider and approve AWP&B 2015-2016, dated 27.02.2015, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme appraisal note for the state of Manipur, it has been highlighted that the number of existing school and institutions at the primary stage are 2763 and upper primary stage are 876. The total numbers institutions existing in all nine districts of Manipur State are 3639. But the number of institution covered during the year 2015 was 2410 primary schools and 876 upper primary schools, covering a total of 3286 institutions all together for the year 2014-15. The total number of institutions covered for the MDMS is decided by the MDM-PAB for each financial year based on the number of students enrolled in an academic year, which continues till the 30th September, each academic year.

In the MDM-PAB appraisal note for 2015-16, it has been reflected that, number of children enrolled as on the 30. 09.2014 was 185922 in the primary stage and 45419 in the upper primary stage giving a total enrolment of 231341 students out of which number of students approved by the MDM-PAB are 152891 in the primary education stage and 34781 in the upper primary stage, approving to cover a total of 187672 student for the entire state.

Table No.:15

The table below gives the no. of students covered institution-wise (2014-15)

Sl.No.	No.of Institutions	Primary	Upper Primary	Total
1.	Existing Institutions	2763	876	3639
2.	Institutions Covered during the Year	2410	876	3286

Source: AWP&B 2015-16, Govt. of Manipur

As against the number of children enrolled and approved by the MDM-PAB, average number of children availing MDM during the period 01.04.2014 to 31.12. 2014 are 150795 (81%) at the primary stage and 37446 (86%) covered at the upper primary stage giving a total of 188241 (81%) students at both the stages of elementary education.

The number of children (along with the percentage of children) covered by the MDMS as per the Quarterly Progress Report (QPR) as reflected in the MDMS APPRAISAL NOTE MANIPUR STATE, 2015-16 is shown in the table below:

Table No.:16

Coverage of Children as per Quarterly Progress Report (QPR)

Sl. No.	Coverage of Children as per Quarterly Progress Report (QPR)			
	Quarters	Primary	Upper	Total

			Primary	
1.	Average no. of children covered as per 1 st QPR	152515(82%)	36739(81%)	189254(82%)
2.	Average no. of children covered as per 2 nd QPR	152114(82%)	36986(81%)	189100(82%)
3.	Average no. of children covered as per 3 rd QPR	147100(79%)	38679(85%)	185779(80%)

Source: AWP&B 2015-16, Govt. of Manipur

The coverage of the student for the MDMS at the elementary education stage is based on the number of enrolment at the government school each financial and as approved by the Programme Approval Board (PAB).

(Explanation of the term 'Programme Approval Board': The Department of School Education and Literacy has set up a Programme Approval Board under the chairmanship of Secretary, School Education and Literacy with membership of nutrition experts and representatives of the Departments of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Panchayat, Planning Commission, Food Corporation of India, etc. The Programme Approval Board meets at the beginning of each financial year to consider and sanction the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) submitted by the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.)

Logistics for supply chain, quality and quantity of food grain

Supply of food grains (wheat/rice) @ 100 grams per child per school day (classes 1-5) and food grains (wheat/rice) @ 150 grams per child per school day, from the nearest FCI godown; reimburse the actual cost incurred in transportation of food grains from the nearest FCI godown. Food grain is allocated from the FCI to the Deputy Commissioner concerned; from there it is further transported to the concerned ZEO of the districts. The A.I.s and D.I.s further take the responsibility of distributing the food grain to the concerned schools.

The food grain for (primary+ upper primary), the level of opening balance as on 01.04.2014, the state had 1025.0 MTs (23%) of food grains as opening balance. The total allocated food grain for 2014-15 was 4552.39 MTs. The cost of food grain supplied by the food corporation of India is reimbursed by the state government. It has been reflected in the in the MDM, AWP& B 2015-16 that the utilization of food grain range between 67%- 79% during 2014-2015, for the districts of Manipur. The number of meals served (achievement) during the period (01.04.2014- 31.12.2014) was 2.98 crores (97%) as against

The quality of the food grain supplied for the MDMS should be of Fair Average Quality (FAQ). Regarding quality of the food served at the schools care has to be taken and ensured that food that is culturally appropriate and palatable must be provided and with different variety of food. Use of coarse grain “nutritious grain” should be encouraged. As provided by the guideline to serve khichdi in the menu, Manipur children prefer rice and curry with local chatni over other food, as the staple food of Manipur is rice.

The quantity as prescribed by the MDMS norm as per the guideline of the MDMS by the Government of India. 100 gram of food grain per child per school day for the classes I-V and 150 grams of food grain per child per school day for the classes VI-VIII.

Mid-Day Meal Infrastructure

The essential infrastructure for the Mid-Day Meal like kitchen-cum-store, adequate water supply for drinking, cooking and washing purpose, cooking device (stove, chullah, etc.), container for storage of food grains and other ingredients, utensils for cooking and serving, etc. are expected to be borne by the State Government or Local Bodies with their own funds or available under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

Under the MDMS infrastructure the kitchen-cum store, kitchen devices and utensils, fuel and drinking water facilities are the main components for the proper functioning of the scheme. Without infrastructure the scheme will be functioning in vacuum without any positive results. In order to maximize the positive outcome of the MDMS infrastructural requirement are to be provided at the government schools where the scheme is being implemented.

Kitchen –Cum-Store

The Construction of Kitchen–Cum-Store is assigned to the National Mission for Bamboo Application, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. The revised cost of construction of construction of kitchen-cum-store under MDMS, the central assistance towards the cost of constructing MDMS kitchen-cum-store in schools, the Government of India had decided that the cost of constructing the kitchen would be determined by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, depending on the number of children studying in the school. The cost of construction of kitchen-cum-store is shared between the Centre and the NER states on the 90:10 basis and with other States and Union Territories on 75:25 basis. The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, had decided that the plinth area for construction of kitchen-cum-store in schools having up to 100children would be 20. Sq. m. The specification for the Kitchen-Cum-Store has been

laid down by the, the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India so that, the food is cooked in a safe, hygienic and healthy condition. The responsibility of developing and estimating various categories of kitchen-cum-store have been handed to the States and Union Territories accordingly. The government of India is committed to release the fund for the construction of kitchen-cum-store in the remaining schools in the states and union territories provided that state government is committed to contribute its share and to make adequate budget provision to both the Central and State/Union territory share.

According to the MDMS guidelines, there is a need for preparing the Mid-Day Meal in a safe and hygienic condition. The kitchen shed should be located somewhere far from the classroom and should be kept clean. The platform should be raised and have adequate light. It should be well ventilated and arrangements for drainage and waste disposal should be made. The revised guidelines of the MDMS, 2004 reflects that Central Government would provide assistance under the revise scheme to the State Government/ Union Territories administration to the following extent to construct kitchen-cum-store, in a phased manner upto a maximum of rupees of 60,000 per unit. The states are expected to pursue convergence with other development programme. The Kitchen-cum-store had to be constructed through convergence with Sampurna Grameen Rozgar Yojana in rural areas under the Ministry of Rural Development; Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP), Integrated Housing Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) for urban areas, Urban Wage Employment Programme, a component of Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) for urban areas outside slums under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation; Backward Region Grant Fund(BRGF) available as untied funds for 250 districts for gap filling and augmentation under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj; Sarva Siksha Abhiyan for new school construction under Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The Department of School Education And Literacy, Ministry Of Human Resource Development conveys the district-wise allocation for the construction of kitchen-cum-store as approved by the Mid-Day Meal programme approval board (MDM-PAB) to the State Nodal Department.

For the State of Manipur out of the 2966 kitchen-cum-stores sanctioned till 2014-15, 661(22%) kitchen-cum- store have been constructed, so far (Appraisal Note: Manipur, 2015). Out of the sanctioned kitchen-cum-store 150(15%) kitchen-cum-store construction work is in progress. The state government has not started construction work of kitchen-cum-store in 2155(73%) schools.

Construction for the remaining school shall be assigned to the SMC (AWP&B 2015-16, Manipur).

Kitchen Devices, Utensils and Containers

Even though the Mid-Day Meal Scheme was revised in September 2004, many states had been facing difficulty in providing good quality meal with the gap in the infrastructural requirements, the assistance for cooking /kitchen devices (gas stove with connection, stainless steel, water storage tank, cooking and serving utensils like plates, glasses etc.) in phased manner, @ RS. 5000/-, had been augmented under the programme.

The kitchen devices and the utensils are to be procured from the annual school grant of Rs. 2000/-per annum per school, fund available under SSA, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Some of the safety and hygiene concerns related with MDMS kitchen devices are, smokeless chulhas to be used as far as possible, the cook-cum-helper should be well trained in handling the kitchen devices like gas stove and cylinder. All the ingredients for cooking must be stored in storage –bin or containers, so that the ingredients are free from adulteration and pest infestation. The devices should be cleaned and washed before usage in cooking and serving. The task for cleaning the vessels must be assigned to the cook-cum-helper.

The States makes budgetary allocation for Mid-Day Meal towards the improvement of infrastructure (e.g. kitchen-cum-store, drinking water facility, smokeless chulhas, pressure cooker, gas based cooking, etc.)

Regarding the Central Assistance sanctioned towards procurement of 4754 units [3297 units (new) and 1457 (replacements)] of kitchen devices during the period 2006-07 till 2014-15 has been sanctioned. The State has reported that procurement of 1457 units has been completed and procurement of 1650 units is in progress. Total allocation includes sanction of replacement of 1375 units during 2013-14 and 190 new units & 82 replacements during 2014-15(AWP&B 2015-16, Manipur).

Water Facility for Cooking, Washing and Drinking

Under the MDMS adequate water for drinking, cooking and washing has been provided through convergence with the scheme/programme. Some scheme/ programme under which drinking water has been provided are through the funds available for Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme 'Swajaldhara', the Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Drinking Water Supply, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan for new school construction, Ministry of Human Resource Development, devolution of block grants to Panchayats on the recommendations of the 12th Finance Commission and Backward Region

Grant Fund (BRGF) available as united funds for 250 districts for gap filling and augmentation, Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Water is essential for water and cleaning the vegetables and food grains before cooking and washing the dishes and utensil after the meal. It is essential that the cook-cum-helper wash their hand and feet before cooking process begins and before the commencement of serving. While after the meal children need to wash their hands and rinse their mouth daily. For the purpose of drinking it is a must that the school premises have/provide clean drinking water to children in the school.

Cost of Cooking

The cost of cooking Mid-Day Meal includes (1) cost of ingredients, e.g. pulses, vegetables, cooking oil and condiments, (2) cost of fuel and (3) wages/remuneration payable to personnel.

Cost of Ingredients

The cost of ingredients for the MDM scheme include the recurring cost for the purchase of cooking oil, vegetables, condiments (spices), pulses, salts and others. The costs of cooking are shared between the State and the Central Government. As per the revised norm the cooking cost is now 7.5% w.e.f. 1.04.2015 for the state of Manipur. The unit cooking cost is Rs. 5.78 per day per child for upper primary classes. The Central share @ Rs. 5.20 per day per child and State share @ Rs. 0.58 per child per day (mandatory). The unit cooking cost for the primary class is Rs. 3.86 per day per child in which the Central share @ Rs. 3.47 and State share @ Rs. 0.39 per day per child (mandatory) [AWP&B 2015-16, MANIPUR].

The States and Union Territories have to initiate an activity of mapping exercise in order to ensure that there are no overlapping of functions and responsibilities. This is based on the principle of subsidiary which reflects that *'what best can be done at a particular level should be done at that level alone, and not at higher levels'*. This is to say that the cooking items or ingredients like the vegetables and condiments should be procured at the lowest level, at the school or village level; its procurement should not be centralized at the higher level of administration.

Fuel

Fuel is a major component of the MDMS, which is included in the cost of cooking along with cost of ingredients, cooking, condiments and wages /remuneration payable to personnel.

In the revised guidelines for MDMS, the of cooking has been provisioned at Rs. 1.80 per child per school day, provided the State Government contributes a minimum of 20 paise.

The guideline lays out direction for safety and hygiene specification regarding the usage of type of fuel for cooking. According to this, smokeless chulhas should be used to the extent possible. Fuel such as kerosene, firewood, charcoal, LPG) should be stored safely in order to avoid fire hazards. It further states that firewood should not be used in the interest of environmental protection. In the revised guidelines for MDMS 2009, it has been reflected that the cooking cost (excluding the labour and administrative charges) for primary to Rs. 2.50 and for upper primary to Rs. 3.75. The cooking cost including the cost of pulses, vegetables oil and fats, salt and condiments and fuel. The cooking cost to be shared between the Central and the State Government/ Union Territories on 90:10 and 75:25 basis respectively. This cost to be revised again in 1.04.2010 by 7.5% and again on 1.04.2011.

In December 2012, the subsidy on LPG cylinders to the schools covered under MDM scheme was withdrawn by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MP&NG) as the Ministry informed that the subsidized Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinder for MDM Scheme comes under Non-Domestic Exempted Category (NDEC). The Ministry of Human Resource Development worked out the additional financial burden on the fuel cost so that the programme does not suffer on account of the withdrawal of subsidy on LPG. The additional financial budget of the fuel cost to be shared between the Centre and the State as per the existing funding pattern.

Wages and Remuneration for the Cook-Cum-Helper

A separate provision for the payment of cook-cum-helper is fixed, that is honorarium to the cook-cum-helper@ Rs.1000 per month. For every one cook-cum-helper has been engaged in a school having up to 25 students, two cooks for schools having 26-100 students, and one additional cook-cum-helper for every addition of up to 100 students. The expenditure for the payment of honorarium to the cook-cum-helper is shared between the Central and State government 90:10 ratio. Honorarium for the cook-cum-helper (primary+ upper primary) is Rs. 1000 shared between Central share (Rs. 900) and State share (Rs. 100) which is minimum mandatory State share (AWP&B 2015-16, Manipur).

As far as the responsibility for cooking is concerned local women, mothers', Self Help Group, personal engaged directly by the VEC/SMC.PTA/Gram Panchayat/ Municipality has been engaged. Preference has been given to women from poor house-hold, widow and women in vulnerable state.

Cooking and Serving of Meal

The process of cooking and serving the Mid-Day Meal has been carried out by the cook-cum-helpers, there is a widely held perception that the provision for cooked Mid-Day

Meal disrupts classroom teaching and learning process, that the teacher invest too much time in monitoring and supervising the process of cooking. For the given reason, cook-cum-helper has been appointed to facilitate the smooth implementation of the MDMS. The Central Assistance provided for the payment towards of the honorarium has been made from the cooking cost. The cook-cum-helper prepare the food in hygienic condition, they wash their hands and feet before starting the process of cooking. They wash the vegetables and clean the ingredient before cooking. They maintain hygiene and wash the utensils and containers and dry it before using it for cooking and serving. The children are trained to form queue and wait for their turn patiently. Disabled children are given precedence in queue. After the meal the cook- cum –helper clean the utensils and vessel and store it for next day. Children eat the meal and after the meal is over they wash their hand with soap and water. The food must be tasted by teacher or cooks before serving the meal to the children.

Health Intervention

The health intervention in the Mid-Day Meal scheme is made through the School Health Programme (National Health Mission) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Necessary interventions, like regular health check-up, supplementation of micro-nutrients, de-worming medicines, etc., has been made. Appropriate intervention relating to micro-nutrients supplements and de-worming has been made through the administration of (i) six- monthly dose for de-worming and vitamin A supplement, (ii) weekly iron and folic acid tablet, zinc and (iii) other supplements depending on common deficiencies found in the local area. Under the MDMS guidelines 2006, there is provision for using only double fortified (iron and iodine) iodized salt for cooking.

Safety, Hygiene and Best Practices

The Kitchen-cum store is a vital part of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, it should be separate from classroom but at accessible distance, it must always be kept clean and should be well ventilated. The kitchen should be well ventilated and designed in order to provide separate storage facility with locks to check pilferage. Proper drainage and disposal of the waste should be arranged.

Smokeless chulhas are to be used; fuel should be stored safely, so that there is no fire hazard. The fuel (kerosene, firewood, LPG, charcoal) must be stored safely, so that there is no fire hazard. Firewood should not be used in the interest of environment protection. The cooking staff must be specifically trained in safe handling of stoves, gas cylinders, etc.

All staffs must be trained in hygienic habits. For example regular cutting of nail, wearing apron, washing hand and feet with soap before commencement of cooking/serving.

Cooking and serving utensils must be cleaned and dried daily after use. Cooking must be done with lids covered, over cooking and reheating of oil must be avoided. Ingredients must be stored in proper containers; it should be free from adulteration and pest infestation, and should be cleaned and washed before using, whole wheat or broken wheat should be used for preparing the meal, rice should be preferably parboiled, 'single dish meal' should be prepared by incorporating various ingredients in a single dish meal, to save time and fuel and conserve the nutritive value of the meal. Rice, dal, grams, etc. must be soaked to reduce cooking time, rice water should not be thrown away and must be mixed with dal, and fermented food is encouraged as it improves nutritive value of food.

Schools have started developing kitchen garden as a part of best practices of in Manipur as reflected in the (AWP&B 2015-16, Manipur) for growing food articles which are used in preparation of Mid-Day Meal. Mid-Day Meal should be utilized for providing work experience to children. Older children should also be involved in orderly distribution and consumption of the Mid-Day Meal.

Monitoring

The programme of Mid-Day Meal is to be monitored using two sets of parameters that is, in terms of "programme parameters" and "impact parameters".

1. The programme parameter required to be monitored and assessed in terms of all children regularly getting a meal of satisfactory quality and
2. The impact parameters in terms of improvement in children's nutritional status, regularity of attendance, and retention in and completion of Elementary Education.

The teachers and community members should ensure that children sit together while eating the meal. School Management Committee should encourage in drawing community support, Gram Panchayats and Village Education Committee should arrange community members to regularly, on a rotation basis monitor and supervise the programme implementation at the community/local level. Mothers groups should be involved 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 mouths after eating. The scheme offers wide opportunity of self-employment to poor women.

The implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme requires all the infrastructural and essential cost (recurring and non- recurring) for the effectiveness of the scheme. The Central and the State Government are committed to provide the MDM to school attending children in all the Governments schools and has made necessary budgetary allocation towards meeting the cost of cooking and the infrastructure for the MDMS.

