

Food Security
Response during
COVID-19 and
PDS Best
Practices in
some States/UTs









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Comparative progress under PDS reforms during 2014 – 2021

Although, the Administrative Approval for the implementation of a plan scheme on End to End Computerization of TPDS Operations was conveyed to all States/UTs in December 2012, most of the actual progress under the intervention was seen during the last 4-5 years. A comparative snapshot of the actual progress made between 2014 and 2021 is shown below:





Digitisation of ration cards/ beneficiaries' data



Aadhaar seeding



Installation of ePoS devices at FPSs



Biometrically authenticated transactions at FPSs

Status 2014



¥







6%

Ration Cards

3%

Beneficiaries

4,350

FPSs, spread partially across 4-5 States/UTs

Not implemented in any State/UT

Status 2021



¥





100%

(Completed in all States/UTs in 2016)

92%

Ration Cards

89%Beneficiaries

92%

4.9 of total 5.4 lakh FPSs across 31 States/UTs

100%

in 28 States/UTs (near completion)

>70%

monthly biometrically/ Aadhaar authenticated transactions in States/UTs









One Nation One Ration Card – National Portability



Central Repository of all NFSA ration cards data



Deletion of ineligible / bogus ration cards (w.e.f. 2013)



Supply Chain Management of food grains



Central Dashboards











New Scheme

New Scheme

About

68 Lakh Implemented in

3 States/ UTs **Did Not Exist**











32 States/ UTs

covering about 69 Cr. beneficiaries (~86% of NFSA population) as on December 2020.

Established

Data of >90% NFSA ration cards/ beneficiaries in the country is available.

About

4.39 Cr.

(up to 2020)

31 States/ UTs

(N.A. in Chandigarh, Puducherry and Lakshadweep)

3 portals established

- National Food Security Portal (nfsa.gov.in)
- Annavitran

 (annavitran.nic.in)
- IMPDS (impds.nic.in)



ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN INDIA

SWIFT AND EFFICIENT RESPONSE THROUGH INDIA'S TARGETED PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (TPDS)

01 INTRODUCTION

As the COVID-19 outbreak started evolving into a global pandemic, it became apparent that its impact was going to be much greater than just a health crisis. The Government of India took decisive containment measures, such as limiting person-to-person contact. Though lifesaving, these inevitably disrupted livelihoods and food supply chains, putting production as well as distribution at risk, making the markets dysfunctional.

As the impact of the epidemic continued to unfold, possibilities of scarcity of staple food and price rise due to reduction in cultivation or production, disruption in supply chains, shortage of labour, loss of employment, etc. could threaten the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable sections in India.

The Government of India provides food security through one of the world's largest food-based safety nets, with nearly 67 percent of its population relying on the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for availing their monthly entitlement of food grains at highly subsidized prices. Under the ambit of the National Food Security Act 2013 (NFSA), the TPDS provides subsidized rice and wheat to nearly 80 crore beneficiaries each month. This gave India a massive advantage in its fight against hunger and food insecurity, especially in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic.

102 INDIA'S RESPONSE

At the very onset, the Government of India took proactive action to prevent new infections, provide treatment, economic relief, and delivery of basic services and essential commodities. Eleven inter-ministerial Empowered Groups were formed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister to oversee the response. A 22.5 billion INR relief package was announced, including insurance for the frontline health workers, increase in coverage and entitlement of subsidized food grains, and cash transfers for the poor, vulnerable women, and daily wage earners.



NFSA

Regular subsidized food grains through PDS under National Food Security Act, 2013

- For Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH)
- 35 Kg food grains to AAY household and 5 Kg per PHH person per month at issue prices of INR 3/2/1 for Rice/ Wheat/Coarse grains
- This is a regular entitlement under NFSA, 2013

PMGKAY

Additional free food grains to NFSA beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana

- For all NFSA beneficiaries
- Additional 5 Kg food grains per person per month, free-of-cost
- Initially for a period of three months of April, May and June then extended for five months till November 2020
- Over 321 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) of food grains allocated for eight months





ANBA

Free food grains for migrants/stranded migrants under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

- For 8 crore migrants/stranded migrants
- 5 Kg food grains per person per month who are neither covered under NFSA nor under any other State PDS scheme
- For a period of two months May and June 2020
- 8 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) of food grains allocated

OMSS

Assistance to State Governments through liberalised Open Market Sales Scheme

- For States/UTs, NGOs/CSOs to meet up additional requirement of citizens not covered under NFSA or State ration card schemes
- During the months of April and May
- Assistance of about 13 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT)



In March 2020, the Government of India announced the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) as part of the pro-poor package aimed at easing the hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. The immediate objective was to ensure that no poor/vulnerable beneficiary/household should suffers from the non-availability of food.

Under this scheme, nearly 80 crore NFSA beneficiaries covered under both Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH) categories were provided with an additional quota of free food grains (Rice\Wheat) at a scale of 5 Kg per person per month by Department of Food & Public Distribution. The additional free- food grains were provided to all AAY & PHH beneficiaries every month, in addition to their regular monthly entitlement under NFSA i.e. 35 Kg per month per family for AAY beneficiaries and 5 Kg per month per person for PHH beneficiaries. Initially, the Department of Food and Public Distribution made an allocation of about 120 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) of food grains under the Phase-I of PMGKAY to all States/UTs for 3 months i.e. April, May and June. However, with the crisis continuing, the scheme was extended till November 2020. Under the Phase-II, DFPD allocated another 201.3 Lakh Metric Ton (LMT) of food grains to all States/UT for the 5-month-period – July to November 2020.

In Phase-I of PMGKAY, i.e. April to June 2020, all States/UTs combined have lifted about 118 LMT (99%) of three-month food grain from the FCI/Central Pool. Further, all States/UTs combined have reported a distribution of over 111.6 LMT (93%) food grain. In Phase-II, starting from July 2020 to November 2020 186.8 LMT of food grains was lifted from the central pool and out of which 185.9 LMY (92%) LMT has been distributed.

For PMGKAY and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS), the Government of India incurred an additional total expenditure of INR 1.5 lakh crore.



The performance of PDS in overcoming the sudden disruptions in supply chain and handling additional relief, especially at the onset of COVID-19 crisis, was exemplary. During the months of April and May 2020, when lockdown was being followed in the country and markets and supply chains were challenged, the resilience of PDS supply network was evident. During this period of crisis, about 170 LMT of food grains were swiftly moved by the FCI across the country with due safety precautions

The experience of State Food & Civil Supplies Departments' in serving remote and inaccessible areas through airdrops, in-land water transportation, use of animals & headloads, etc. was fully leveraged to ensure timely and adequate supply of food grains to remote and inaccessible areas. On an average, the FCI and other procurement agencies transported about 3 LMT of food grains each day.

Timeline





India's Public Distribution System has reformed and evolved as a transparent and robust foodgrain delivery mechanism that played a vital role in the successful management of food security during Covid-19 in the country, and today, it stands out as potential technology platform for targeting migrant beneficiaries by multiple Departments of the Government of India.

Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary (DoFPD)

"



PDS food grains being delivered through boats to Andaman & Nicobar



PDS food grains delivered through mobile vans in Tripura



PDS food grain loaded for air dropping in Arunachal Pradesh



PDS food grains delivered through mobile vans in Kerala



PDS food grains are transported through goats and mules in Uttarakhand



Home delivery to elderly, infirm and disabled

During the nationwide lockdown, about 41 LMT (93%) food grains were distributed each month, covering nearly 74 crore beneficiaries. Precautionary measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, such as social distancing, use of face masks, use of hand sanitizers, availability of soap and water to maintain hand hygiene and staggered distribution timings etc. were strictly followed.



The resilience and capacity of India's Public Distribution System (PDS) was amply demonstrated during COVID 19 as nearly 900 LMT (50% more) of foodgrains were successfully supplied to over 800 million beneficiaries. This has stood out as a shining example of unparalleled food security to the whole world.

S. Jagannathan, Joint Secretary (DoFPD)



As the PMGKAY food grains were only allocated to NFSA beneficiaries, efforts were also made to enrol more beneficiaries under NFSA. This was done to cover households who faced economic shock due to the COVID crisis and to include families who were residing in other states and had returned to their home states during the crisis. Around 60.70 lakh additional citizens were covered under NFSA during this period.

Further, to help mitigate the plight of migrants/stranded migrants unable to access subsidized food grains under NFSA or any other State PDS scheme, 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package' (ANBP) was announced by the Central Government and States/UTs were given complete freedom to identify and distribute additional rations.

Under the scheme, DFPD issued around 8 LMT of food grains (7 LMT of Rice and 1 LMT of Wheat) for free distribution at a scale of 5 Kg food grain per person per month to 8 crore migrants/stranded migrants for a period of two months i.e. May and June 2020, during the COVID-19 crisis. The distribution period was extended by another two months up to 31st August 2020.

Implementation of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP) by **States**

To implement ANBP, States/UTs made rigorous efforts to identify maximum number of migrants/stranded migrants, such as persons in transit, quarantine centers, labour camps, construction sites, etc. For this they took support from Labour Departments, district administration, civil society and NGOs. Based on the identification surveys, the States/UTs estimated that that around 2.8 crore migrants/stranded migrants would benefit from distribution of free food grains under the scheme. They mobilised their team to distribute the free food grains not only through the Fair Price Shops but also through special distribution centers set up along major roads and highways, in quarantine centers, at shelter homes, in labour camps and through mobile vans.

Against an estimate of around 2.8 crore migrants/ stranded migrants made by State/UTs an average of nearly 2.74 migrants/ stranded migrants were identified and provided free Foodgrains showing 98% success.

Food Grains through Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP)



beneficiaries by

States/UTs





2.74 LMT distributed to identified migrant beneficiaries







2.74 crore beneficiaries i.e., 98% of the targeted migrant beneficiary

Besides the subsidized and free food grains provided through central scheme, the Government of India also assisted States/UTs to fulfil their State scheme requirements through FCI's liberalised Open Market Sales Scheme (OMSS). Under the scheme, States/UTs could lift additional quantity for distribution to non-NFSA State ration card holders, meet up the requirements of NGOs/Charitable Organisations for providing cooked food or dry rations to the needy. The required quantity of food grains were provided by FCI to States/UTs at the rate of INR 21 per Kg for Wheat and INR 22 per Kg for Rice. Food grain assistance of about 13 LMT catering to almost 26 crore persons has been provided to States/UTs till June 2020.





Food grains distributed through Fair Price Shops after following due precautions in Karnataka & Manipur





Distribution of food grains to migrants under ANBP in Jharkhand and Kerala



Distribution of food grains to migrants under ANBP in Nagaland

TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

In the past few years, Public Distribution System has undergone major technology-based transformations including a central beneficiary database of nearly 80 crore digitised NFSA beneficiaries. The network of nearly 4.94 lakh automated Fair Price Shops (FPSs) firmly supported by the supply chain management systems across the country came in handy during the time of crisis and played a vital role in ensuring swift, timely and transparent distribution of food grains to the beneficiaries. Despite challenges in biometric authentication of beneficiaries on ePoS devices, many States/UTs like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, etc. ensured biometric authentication of beneficiaries after following requisite safety protocols to ensure rightful targeting of beneficiaries.

Realising the immense potential of One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan during crisis period, its implementation was announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister during his address to the nation on 30th June 2020 and has since become an integral part of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (ANBA) thereby empowering migrants to seamlessly access PDS entitlements anywhere in the country. As a result, after May 2020, another 22 States/UTs have been added under ONORC plan covering nearly 69 crore (86%) NFSA beneficiaries in 32 States/UTs.



Migrant beneficiary from another State receiving their PDS food grains in Uttar Pradesh through One Nation One Ration Card



Aadhar based IRIS biometric authentication performed through ePoS at Fair Price Shop by beneficiary

04 KEY LESSONS

In a survey commissioned by Dalberg, covering 47,000 households, mostly below poverty line, across 15 states it was found that 91% of eligible families had received additional PDS rations by June 2020.

The experience of Government's food security response to COVID-19 shows that India's Targeted Public Distribution System has served as an important safety net for ensuring food security during crisis when the regular markets/ food grain supply chains become dysfunctional. It was evident of that PDS supply chain consisting of Food Corporation of India, State Food and Civil Supplies Corporation and India Railways is resilient and capable of responding to the crisis.

The extensive near-universal coverage under Public Distribution System, which presently covers about 80 crore persons in India, served as a food security safety net for majority of people during crisis. It also emerged as a vehicle for scaling up of food grain assistance for relief operations. The large network of Fair Price shops also served as a source for distribution of other essential relief materials by States/UTs. In States/areas where the banking infrastructure was inaccessible during crisis, FPSs were also used to distribute cash to the intended beneficiaries.

One of the main challenges faced during such crisis situation is to ensure that the assistance reached the intended deserving beneficiaries. The digitised PDS beneficiary database and other technological reforms in PDS including Aadhaar seeding of PDS beneficiaries, automation of Fair Price Shops and Aadhaar authentication, enabled the system to put effective checks on bogus beneficiaries and leakages during crisis times.

The experience also showed that the Strategic Reserves in the Central pool also provides the necessary flexibility to offset price fluctuations, mitigate food shortages during emergencies through open market operations and provision for food grains to agencies/NGOs for relief operations. The food reserves can be also extremely critical and useful at times when the crisis impacts national and global agriculture production and reduces food availability.



India's Targeted Public distribution System and the constant improvement in targeting, improved accountability with digitalization and use of innovative approaches such as the One Nation One Ration Card is an excellent example of the transformation of the World's largest national safety-net programme and the commitments of the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India to provide multiple benefits and support to the poor to access food. Going forward, DFPD and WFP are working closely to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the TPDS through diversification of food baskets with pulses and millets, rice fortification and to bring convergence between all three food based programmes such as the TPDS, MDM and the ICDS

Bishow Parajuli Country Director, WFP India





ONE NATION ONE RATION CARD

INTER AND INTRA STATE PORTABILITY OF RATION CARDS IN TARGETED PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

1 INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, the reforms in Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), steered collaboratively by Central and State Governments through the End-to-End Computerization and Fair Price Shop (FPS) automation has brought about a silent revolution in one of the world's largest food-based social safety net programmes. In almost all the states, manually operated paper-based systems that are prone to leakages and inefficiencies have been transformed into an automated, accountable, transparent and efficient system.

The successful implementation of the End-to-End Computerisation and creation of a robust, integrated PDS IT infrastructure system in many States/ UTs has provided a platform to steer the reforms to the next level through the implementation of inter- and intra-state portability, also known as National Portability or One Nation One Ration card.

The portability facility ensures access to subsidized PDS food grains for beneficiary households during migration. It takes advantage of free market dynamics to usher in bottom-up accountability and has altered the balance of power in the favour of PDS beneficiaries. Greater freedom to beneficiaries to exercise their choice through portability has allowed for a quantum leap in governance in these states.

ONE NATION ONE RATION CARD

One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) is part the of Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IMPDS) scheme that was launched in April 2018.

The main objective of this scheme is to introduce nation-wide portability of ration card holders under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) thereby allowing them to avail their entitled quota of highly subsidized food grains from any FPS in the country, without obtaining a new ration card. At the backend, this was made possible by integrating the existing PDS systems of the States/UTs with the Central government systems.

As of December, 2020, inter-State/National Portability through One Nation One Ration Card has been implemented in 32 States/UT. Under ONORC, freedom has been given to NFSA beneficiaries from States/UTs covered under national portability to lift their entitled food grains from any fully online Fair Price Shop belonging to States/UTs covered by national portability after Aadhaar based biometric authentication.

About 1.5 to 1.6 crore monthly portability transactions under One Nation One Ration Card (including intra-state transactions) are being recorded in these States/UTs, delivering an average 4%-5% of monthly foodgrains through portability.

02







Before and After Portability

Before Portability

After Portability

Impact on short term migrants

Families lose their entitlement during migration and have to purchase grains from open market at higher prices



Migrating households or members can avail their entitlement in full or in part at subsidized rates from the FPS at their destination

Impact on beneficiary convenience and satisfaction

attached to, leading to:Longer wait time at the FPS

Beneficiaries could only avail grains from FPS that their Ration Cards were

- Delays/denial due to irregular opening/closing hours of FPS
- Longer travel distances
- Incorrect weighment/ overcharging
- Difficulty in accessing food grains due to suspension/cancellation of FPS



Beneficiaries are empowered with choice of FPS and may now choose to purchase from most convenient FPSs providing high quality and reliable service

Impact on FPS operations

- No incentive to FPS dealer for better performance
- Income of FPS limited by number of tagged ration cards
- Improper and unprofessional conduct of FPS operators
- Scope for diversion of food grains not-lifted by migrant beneficiaries



- FPS forced to provide better services to attract more TPDS beneficiaries and thereby increase their incomes
- Increased competition amongst the FPS, reduces scope for misbehaviour
- The automated accounting system reduces the scope for diversion

Impact on Accountability

Dissatisfied beneficiaries have option to register their feedback/ grievance against FPS through PDS toll-free numbers maintained by State Governments



Feedback mechanism is also inbuilt in the design of the scheme. As freedom is provided to beneficiaries to avail service from any Fair Price Shop of choice, this serves as an automatic feedback on performance of FPS dealers.

Fear/risk of retaliation from FPS on complaint as beneficiary retuned to same FPS for service

Risk of retaliation from FPS dealer minimised

Impact on administrative convenience

Higher administrative burden as system performance highly dependent of top-down monitoring of shops that act as local monopolies in PDS grain



Enhanced administrative convenience due to operation of bottom-up monitoring led by choice/ free market dynamics

Portability infuses competition amongst Fair Price Shops and reduces the regulatory and monitoring role of government

Source: Interaction with stakeholders, evaluation findings and field visits

KEY FACTORS DETERMINING SUCCESSFUL UTILISATION OF PORTABILITY

Evaluations undertaken by the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) have identified challenges that are encountered by the states implementing portability, especially during the initial stages that may lead to sub-optimal results. States desirous of implementing portability should ensure that these challenges are effectively addressed.

3.1. WIDE PUBLICITY AND ROBUST AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Wide publicity and mass awareness campaigns by the State government is key to the successful adoption and utilisation of portability. Many beneficiaries, especially in districts/states where share of portability transaction is low, were found to be unaware about this mechanism.

An assessment conducted by MicroSave Consulting (MSC) in September 2019, also showed that awareness about national portability was very minimal in the study areas. The assessment also noted that beneficiaries who used the facility of portability conducted approximately nine portable transactions in the previous year and 92% of these beneficiaries had positive experiences.

3.2. SYSTEM TO REPLENISH FOOD GRAINS TO AVOID STOCK OUT AT FPS

Effective mechanism for allocation of food grains is required for replenishment of stocks at FPSs that may face excess demand due to portability. In the absence of a dynamic allocation and transportation mechanism, following challenges are encountered:

- Delay in stock replenishment leads to unpredictability and inconvenience to FPS dealers and beneficiaries, at times resulting in delay or denial of service.
- FPS dealers give preference to ration cards tagged to their shop and discourage card holders tagged to other shops
- In places, where FPS dealers are required to make their own arrangements for lifting of food grains from neighbouring shops and warehouses to meet excess demand, they do not willingly cater to portable cards.

3.3. LACK OF CO-OPERATION FROM FPS DEALERS

Capacity building of FPS dealers and strategic engagement with them on change management is required to ensure their cooperation and willingness, which is crucial for successful roll-out of portability. In absence of this, FPS dealers tend to engage in collusive behaviour to discourage exercise of choice by beneficiaries.

- FPS dealers mutually agree to not compete. They further coordinate their actions to discourage portability. For example, if an FPS dealer is unable to start distribution process, the neighbouring FPS dealer also holds the distribution till the other FPS is ready to distribute.
- FPS dealers make false excuses of stock outs, leaving the beneficiaries to roam around from one FPS to another in vain.

Collateral Developed by Department of Food and Public Distribution and World Food Programme to Spread Awareness about ONORC scheme













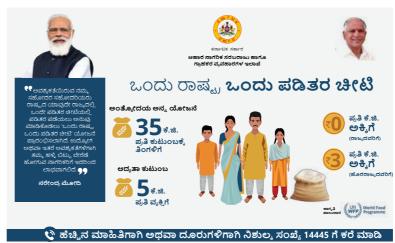
3.4. BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL SYSTEM

Lack of or low awareness amongst beneficiaries about the various mechanism available to them for redressing their grievances like the toll-free helpline number for PDS (1967) and One Nation One Ration Card (14445), online portals, District Grievance Redressal Officers (DGRO), State Food Commission (SFC) etc. restricts their ability to file complaints. State Governments' should ensure that mass awareness campaign for portability should also focus on building awareness of beneficiaries about all the available grievance redressal mechanisms.

3.5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Poor monitoring at State, district and block level is another reason for less than optimal portability transactions. Close monitoring of shops/areas with sub-optimal portability transactions could detect collusive behaviour of FPS dealers and enable administration to take corrective measures. This will also enable the administration to target and strengthen beneficiary awareness efforts in such shops/regions and plan other strategies to encourage portability. The periodic MIS reports of portability transactions, their trend analysis and advanced data analytics will allow State government to identify shops that have sub-optimal performance and evaluate the impact of various measures taken by them to encourage portability in these shops.











AADHAAR **VALIDATION**

THROUGH eKYC IN PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

1 INTRODUCTION

Availability of validated Aadhaar of the beneficiaries in ration card database by States/UTs is essential to ensure efficient, transparent and targeted delivery of subsidies to the eligible beneficiaries. States/UTs should ensure that validation of Aadhaar submitted by the beneficiary is undertaken before seeding and finalising it in the PDS database.



Stages of Aadhaar Seeding

Higher rate of valid Aadhaar seeded ration cards would result in higher Aadhaar authenticated transactions thereby ensuring transfer of subsidy to the rightful beneficiaries and reducing leakages. Proper Aadhaar validation, will also ensure detection of unauthorised beneficiaries who lift food grains after Aadhar authentication by linking their Aadhaar to a ghost ration card or other unused ration cards.

MECHANISMS FOR AADHAAR VALIDATION

Following mechanisms are available for States/UTs to ensure that all beneficiary records are seeded with a valid Aadhaar numbers:

- Biometric Authentication by beneficiary at FPS
- Bulk Demographic authentication/validation
- Electronic Know Your Client (eKYC)
- Physical verification by Government functionaries

02

A comparison of 4 mechanisms of Aadhaar validation

Mechanism	Utility	Details Sent to CIDR (UIDAI server)	Response Received from CIDR
Biometric Authentication by beneficiary at FPS	Repeated failure cases can be highlighted for further validation	UID number of the beneficiary His/her Biometric details	Yes/No against each attempt depending upon the matching of UID number and biometrics.
Bulk Authentication by Dept.	Useful for validation of existing Aadhaar seeded Ration cards Beneficiary presence not required	UID number of the beneficiary Demographic details (Beneficiary Name, Gender, Age/Date of Birth/Year of Birth and Father's Name/Mother's Name/Husband's Name)	Yes/No against each beneficiary (100% match only), depending upon the match of demographic details available in UIDAI server against the UID number details sent by the department.
eKYC by beneficiary	Useful for validation of new ration card seeding request and bulk authentication mismatch cases	UID number of the beneficiary His/her Biometric details	If UID number and biometrics match, then photo & demographic details as per UIDAI database pertaining to the UID number is sent to the Department. The State govt. matches the details sent by UIDAI with that available in PDS database to validate the beneficiary.
Physical verification by Government functionaries	Reasons for eKYC/bulk validation failure such as data entry corrections etc can be immediately recorded and flagged for correction Spot visit allow authorities to verify households/ beneficiaries that have not	Not applicable	Not applicable

come forward for eKYC or biometric authentication.

13 KEY ADVANTAGES OF eKYC

Key advantages of eKYC mechanism are given below:

- It allows State Food and Civil Supplies department to conveniently validate and ascertain the identity of the beneficiaries through a paper- less medium
- It could be undertaken conveniently at grassroots level either at Fair Price Shop, at the time of distribution, or through a door-to-door survey through ePoS device.
- It is highly useful at the time of creating a new ration card or adding a member.
- As the success ratio of bulk authentication is usually low (around 30%), the reliance on physical verification to validate the failure cases is high. eKYC is helpful to validate these failure cases and reduce the number of doubtful cases for physical verification.
- eKYC also allows to detect potential fraudulent cases that remain undetected after the bulk validation exercise. Likelihood of nondetection of fraudulent cases during bulk validation is high when States use only a few parameters such as only name and UIDAI for the matching exercise (example- Aadhaar number belonging to unauthorized person with same name and gender is seeded in other unused ration card and goes un-detected by bulk-validation exercise).

Guideline for improving validation of seeded Aadhaar with ration cards and eKYC procedure dated 11th January 2019 issued by the Department of Food and Public Distribution for validation of Aadhaar seeded in PDS beneficiary database with bulk authentication and eKYC is available in the NFSA portal under Advisories.

GOOD PRACTICES

4.1 Issue of new Ration Cards or addition of new members after eKYC

States/UTs can utilise the eKYC services for validating the beneficiaries that applied for new ration cards or have requested for addition of members in their existing Ration Cards. This will ensure that only eligible beneficiaries with valid Aadhaar numbers are included in the PDS beneficiary list.

Steps for Aadhaar Validation through eKYC

Step 1: Beneficiary give consent & undergoes biometric authentication to authorise State Food and Civil Supplies department to receive eKYC information from UIDAI



Step 2: Information received from UIDAI is matched with PDS data base

Time Pin (OTP)

(A) On successful biometric-authentication, UIDAI shares demographic information/photo with PDS server

(B) Beneficiary details shared by UIDAI are stored/matched with details in PDS database

UIDAI with State PDS server

















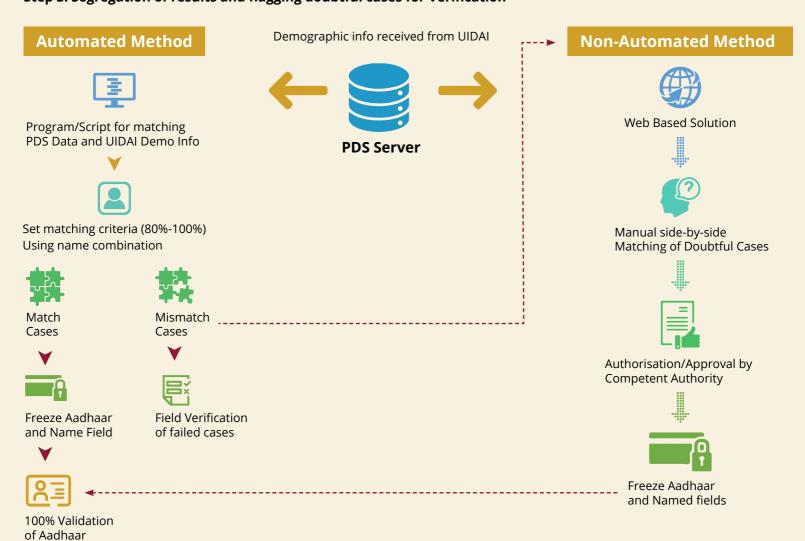


- DoB
- Gender
- **Address**
- **Photograph**



- **Name**
 - DoB
 - **Gender**
 - **Address**
 - **Photograph**

Step 3: Segregation of results and flagging doubtful cases for Verification



4.2 eKYC of doubtful cases

States/UTs can undertake eKYC at Fair Price shop to selectively validate doubtful cases. Following categories of RCs/beneficiaries can be covered during such an exercise:

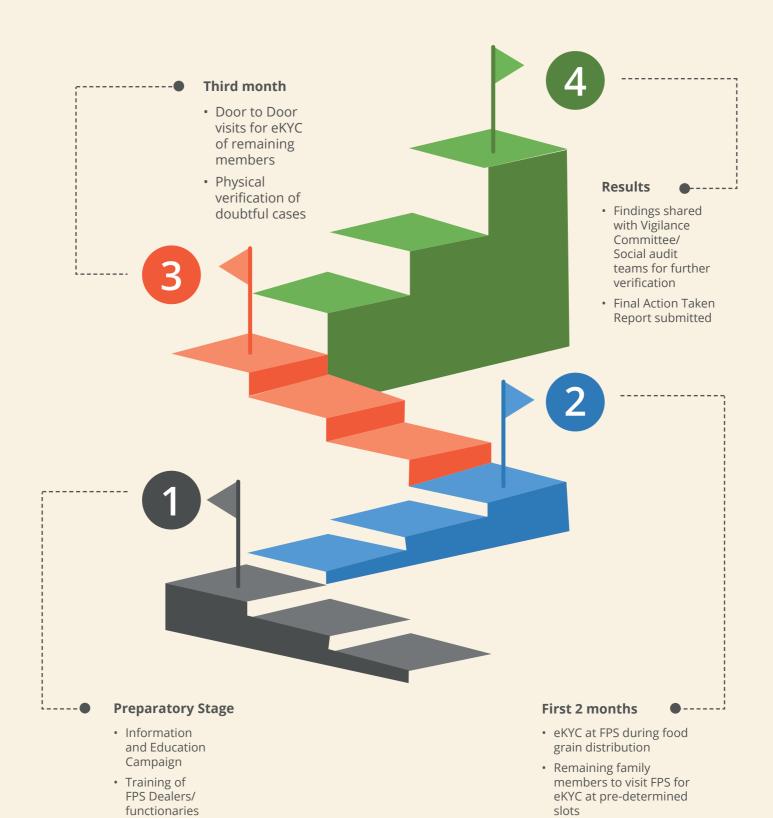
- Ration card holders or members who are not submitting Aadhaar details for seeding purpose despite repeated requests.
- Those households that repeatedly don't perform Aadhaar Authentication despite successful Aadhaar seeding.
- Those RC members who have never undertaken bio-metric authentication even once despite successful Aadhaar seeding.

4.3 eKYC drive to 100% beneficiaries

eKYC mechanism can be also periodically undertaken in a campaign mode by States/UTs to cover all the beneficiaries attached to an ePoS enabled Fair Price Shop.

Before starting the campaign, the States/UTs should undertake wide publicity and train the FPS operators. During the campaign, for first two months, eKYC facility at Fair price Shop could be utilised during the food grain distribution. The beneficiaries who do not turn-up at Fair Price Shops could be covered in the second month through the eKYC at the doorsteps of beneficiaries. The entire eKYC exercise should be completed in a period of three months.

Suggested steps for eKYC campaign



Physical verification of doubtful cases



REDUCING TRANSPORTATION COST THROUGH

SUPPLY CHAIN OPTIMISATION

APPLICATION OF OPERATIONAL RESEARCH IN PDS OPERATIONS IN DHENKENAL, ODISHA

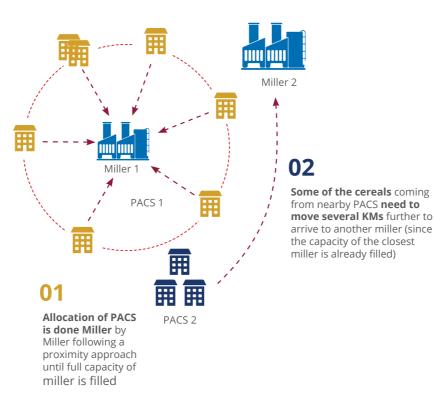
THE OBJECTIVE

The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in India is one of the world's largest food-based safety net that provides access to subsidized food grains to nearly 80 crore people in the country. The delivery of food under the TPDS is done through a vast network of procurement centers, mills, warehouses and last mile retail shops called Fair Price Shops (FPS). This network has been established over decades with limited use of advance analytics, resulting in inefficiencies and underutilization of resources in the TPDS supply chain.

In an endeavour to make these systems even more efficient, accountable and transparent and at the request of Government of Odisha, the World Food Programme (WFP) undertook an assessment of the entire procurement and distribution operations as well as the deployed software systems i.e. Paddy Procurement Automation System (P-PAS) and the Supply Chain Management System (SCMS), during April, 2017.

The core recommendations of WFP included a study to assess the overall supply chain including farmers, PACS, mills, warehouses and FPS's from an operational research perspective to optimise the entire network.

In line with these recommendations, a WFP mission comprising of supply chain and operational research experts completed field assessments and stakeholder consultations in December 2017. The mission observed that the existing network planning and tagging was based on proximity, administrative



boundaries, and other 'greedy algorithms²', which resulted in inefficiencies in the overall supply chain and underutilisation of resources.

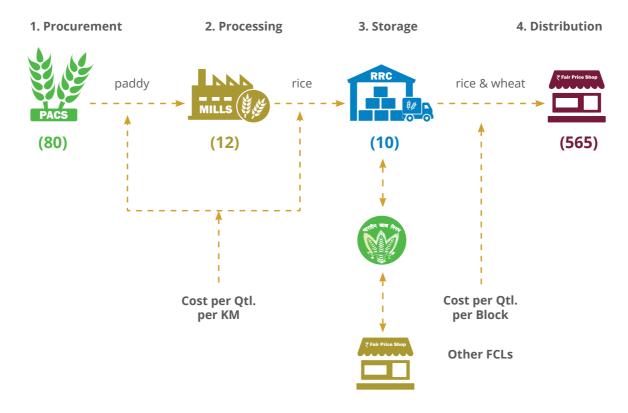
Undertaken in the Dhenkanal district of Odisha, to inform the nation-wide scaleup, the pilot had the following objectives:

- 1. Defining alternate optimised supply chain network setups- from procurement centers to Fair Price Shops
- 2. Clustering the final delivery nodes by "Supply Zones" for effective monitoring and management
- 3. Estimating the quantum of savings feasible under various supply chain setups.
- 4. Establishing the feasibility of results for on ground implementation.

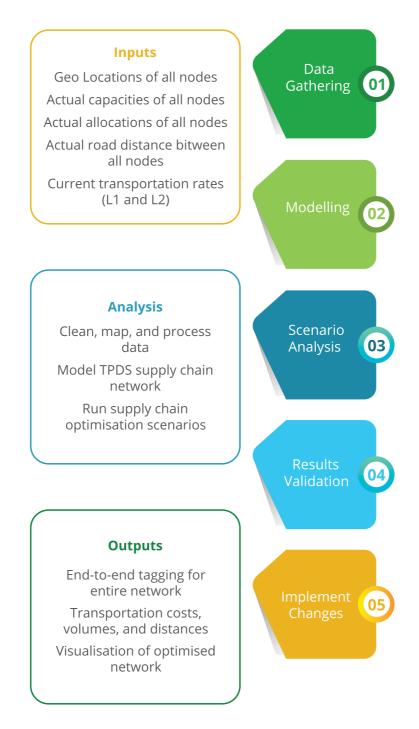
11 THE APPROACH

Dhenkenal District was chosen for the initial Proof of Concept (PoC) since Government of Odisha (GoO) had already completed data collection including geocodes for the entire TPDS supply chain of the district. Dhenkenal, located in central Odisha, has 9.28 lakh TPDS beneficiaries with a monthly requirement of 45,000 quintals of Rice and 8,000 quintals of Wheat. The beneficiaries are served by 565 FPS. The district also has 10 RRCs (warehouses), 1 Food Corporation of India (FCI) warehouse to store the food grains (rice and wheat) and 12 mills that mill the paddy procured from 80 PACS.

To complete the PoC, WFP prioritised, structured, analysed data, developed and applied an optimisation algorithm to execute various scenarios within the given constraints. The illustrations describe the PDS supply chain setup and the methodology used for arriving at the outputs.



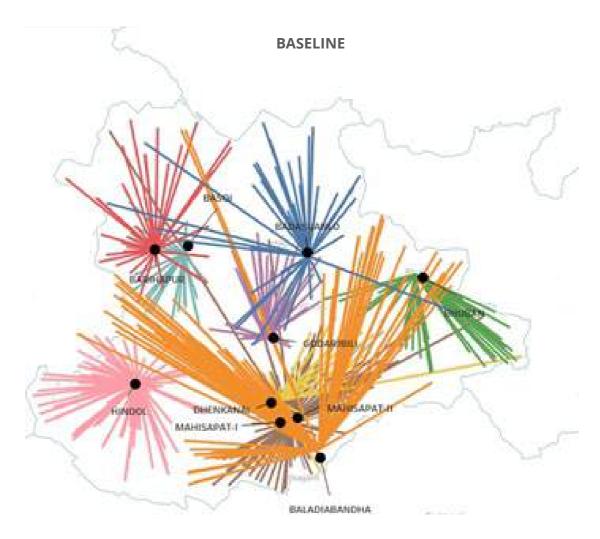
A greedy algorithm always makes the choice that seems to be the best at that moment. This means that it makes a locally optimal choice in the hope that this choice will lead to a globally optimal solution.

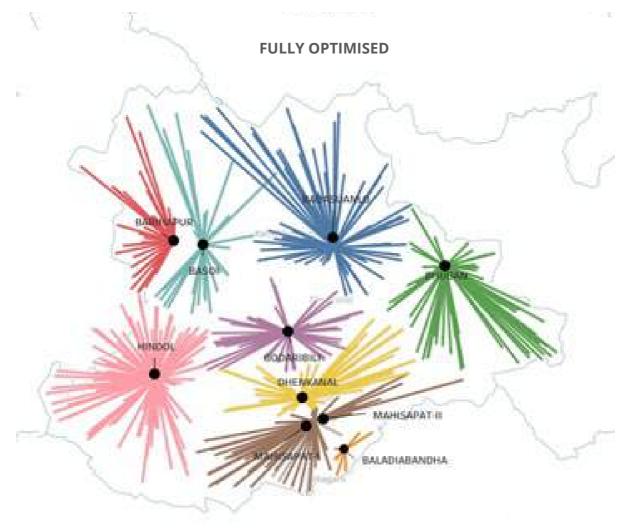


03 THE RESULT

The Proof of Concept (PoC) in Dhenkanal demonstrated that there is significant potential to improve the TPDS supply chain through optimization. At the current transportation rates, the alternative supply chain networks could save up to 29% of food grain transportation cost in this district, without impacting farmers or beneficiaries. With 3.2 crore TPDS beneficiaries in Odisha and assuming Dhenkanal district as a representative of all other districts in the state, the savings would be exponential.







TPDS supply chain network before and after optimisation



SOCIAL AUDIT AND AWARENESS GENERATION

PILOT IN KHANDWA, MADHYA PRADESH

01 BACKGROUND

National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013 was notified on 10th September 2013 with the objective to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to vulnerable people. The enactment of the NFSA marked a paradigm shift in the approach to food security from welfare to a rights-based approach and legally entitle up to 67 percent of India's population to receive subsidized food grains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). The Act also provides for nutritional support to pregnant, lactating women and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years through the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and the Mid- Day Meal (MDM) scheme. The erstwhile maternity benefit scheme was also brought under the ambit of NFSA whereby a woman is entitled for a cash benefit of INR 6,000 during her first pregnancy.

While NFSA is true in its intention of providing food and nutritional security, the TPDS faces several challenges like low level of awareness amongst the beneficiaries regarding their right and entitlements, leakages and diversion of food grains, improper identification of beneficiaries, lack of transparency, monitoring, control mechanism, and accountability.

Through the NFSA there is an opportunity to address all the above challenges by provisioning reform measures and social audit. Mandated by the Act, social audits can play a catalytic role in addressing the implementation challenges. Over the years, social audits have gained recognition in development programmes and it is evident that such audits improve effectiveness and efficiency in programme delivery by empowering the community and facilitating their ownership in these programmes. However, institutionalising and establishing social audits as an accepted practice can be challenging.

The inability of states to introduce and institutionalise social audits under NFSA can be attributed to the lack of trained human resources on social audit processes, absence of simplified national NFSA social audit process guidelines that may be adapted to their local context and the absence of financial provisions for social audit.

PILOT PREPARATION

To fulfil the knowledge gaps Department of Food & Public Distribution (DFPD), Ministry of Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, Government of India, Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection (DoFCS&CP), Government of Madhya Pradesh and GIZ

collaborated to implement a pilot on NFSA Social Audit and Awareness Generation in Khandwa district, with the following objectives:

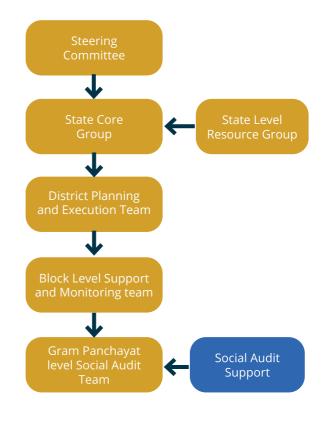
- To design and implement a replicable model of "Integrated NFSA Social Audit and Awareness Generation" aiming at improved awareness on entitlements under NFSA and effective and efficient implementation of TPDS.
- To develop tested knowledge products e.g. training modules, guidelines for Gram Panchayat (GP) level Social Audit Teams, and reading materials, in such a way that these can be shared at national level and adopted/used by other states and UTs with customization according to local situations.

After several discussions between DoFCS&CP, Government of Madhya Pradesh and GIZ, a state level consultation workshop of all key stakeholders including officials from relevant departments, subject matter specialist and representatives from Civil Society Organisations (CSO) was organised to discuss and finalise the various aspects of the pilot. This was followed by the formation of working groups to develop and finalize key aspects such as the institutional framework, the methodology and tools, training designs and awareness generation etc.

2.1 ESTABLISHING THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

NFSA involves four schemes i.e. TPDS, MDM, ICDS and PMMVY nested in different departments, for better convergence and coordination for the purpose of social audit a state level steering committee comprising of senior officials of the department and nominated members from CSOs, and subject matter experts was envisaged.

For day to day planning, implementation and monitoring of the activities, State Core Group, District Planning and Execution Team, Block Level Support and Monitoring team and Gram Panchayat level Social Audit Teams were constituted. A state level Resource Group involving subject matter experts and consultants



from line departments and CSOs was also formed to develop the NFSA social audit methodology, tools, training manuals/materials, awareness materials and other knowledge management products.

2.2 TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Social audit guidelines, training manuals, and reading materials in vernacular were developed on topics such as the Food Security Concepts and Genesis

of NFSA; Social Audit concept, methods, tools and its significance; Details of schemes-TPDS, MDM, ICDS and PMMVY; roles and responsibility of vigilance committee; community mobilisation; data collection methods, data analysis and report preparation etc. Two-day training sessions for state level master trainers, district level trainers and Social Audit Team were organized in cascade mode using training manuals developed under pilot.

2.3 SELECTION OF PILOT LOCATIONS

Using a mix of purposive and convenience sampling and to be representative of the socio-economic and geographic conditions of state of Madhya Pradesh, Khandwa district was selected as the pilot area. Similarly, out of the 6 Blocks in Khandwa district, 5 GPs were selected which represented a mix of large and small population villages; located close to the urban centers and remote villages; clustered habitations and scattered; representation of several caste groups in the village. The urban ward was selected to have a representation of heterogeneous socio-economic set up (different castes and tribes and slum population) and proximity to the market and other urban facilities.

ROLLOUT

03

Social Audit Teams (SAT) comprising of 6 members each was formed in each Gram Panchayat (GP) and Urban ward using a predefined criterion. In some GPs the SAT comprised only of residents of the GP villages, whereas in some GPs the SAT was a mix of GP village residents and members from neighbouring GPs and towns. To ensure active involvement and to receive assistance in social audit and awareness generation activities, the SAT formed a social audit support group which included frontline workers such as Anganwadi workers, teachers, vigilance committee members etc.

The day-wise action plan that evolved as part of SAT training was used to rollout the pilot. The plan was suggestive in nature, which the SAT adapted as per the local context and implemented. The SATs verified claims/issues, implemented awareness generation activities undertook household surveys, did Focus Group Discussions with ICDS, MDM and PMMVY beneficiaries, observed operations at Fair Price Shops, Schools and Anganwadi Centers, collected secondary data, undertook data analysis, prepared reports and finally disseminated their findings through joint Gram Sabha meetings at Gram Panchayat headquarters.

The awareness campaign was focused on sensitising target population on the Right to Food and to create a demand for better services, as their right. A wide variety of awareness generation products such as such as handbills, pamphlets, brochures, posters, banners, street plays and short films on social audit, NFSA, TPDS, MDM, and ICDS were developed and used. Rallies were also taken out in the villages for spreading information and creating a conducive environment for conducting social audit in the villages. Activities involving children and youth, such as rangoli making, school competitions on NFSA related themes, and decoration of meeting venues were also conducted to encourage local participation and create awareness. Apart from these activities, SAT members and the social audit support group discussed and explained various NFSA related aspects to the villagers during household survey and group meetings.

04 FOLLOW-UP

On the fifth day, the SAT members helped organise Gram Sabha meeting during which they explained the details of various schemes and then presented the findings of the social audit using charts. Then scheme-wise report was presented, followed by an interaction with the participants where they shared their issues and grievances related to the schemes.

These meetings were mostly well-attended as people had been mobilised and informed about the purpose of the meeting. The feedback and grievances shared by the participants during the meeting were noted by the SAT members and the Secretary of the Gram Panchayat. With common consent, the findings of the social audit were accepted and for Gram Panchayat and village level issues, service provider were instructed/ suggested by the Gram Sabha to take necessary corrective actions.

For the issues beyond the jurisdiction of the GP i.e. pertaining to Block and District, the Gram Sabha reports, and minutes of meetings were submitted to the District Food Officer for dissemination and necessary actions to the respective departments or officials at the block and district level.

05 LEARNINGS

Social Audit and awareness generation campaign are resource intensive activities which require both financial and trained human resources for its successful implementation. Cost for some aspects like data collection, analysis can be reduced substantially through the use of technology and through introduction of alternative mechanisms but in the absence of any substantial financial provisions for social audit and awareness generation for the NFSA schemes, the progress and adoption would be slow.

Ensuring an active involvement of participating departments/schemes at state, district and below is a big challenge. To mitigate this challenge officials at all levels, need to be sensitised towards the cause of food security and of their roles and responsibilities.



CENTRAL **DASHBOARD**

BRINGING TPDS OPERATIONS ON TO A SINGLE WINDOW

OII CENTRAL DASHBOARD FOR MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT

To view the complete picture of the implementation and operation of the NFSA and facilitate monitoring, two dashboards integrated within a single platform have been designed by the Department of Food and Public distribution, Government of India and developed through its technical partner, the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

The key function of this system is to provide real-time or close to real time information, by aggregating and extracting value from the PDS data of the states in the form of key performance indicators (KPIs). It simplifies data into more manageable chunks of visual information that allows easy performance monitoring. The Central dashboard is designed to cater to the needs of the Department of Food and Public distribution, Government of India and Food & Civil Supplies Departments of all States/UTs, specifically for the management and monitoring of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). They primarily aim to strengthen the ongoing central and state level monitoring of NFSA implementation and to ensure 100% transparency in these operations. The portal is accessible to all stakeholders including the general public without the need of any login ids or password.

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY PORTAL (WWW.NFSA.GOV.IN)

The national food security portal also referred to as the NFSA dashboard provides the detailed view of NFSA implementation covering the following parameters:

- Ration Card and beneficiary related information
- Supply Chain information including allocations, delivery and consumption
- Information related to operations at Fair Price Shops and use of electronic Point of Sale devices (ePoS).

02

OB ANNAVITRAN PORTAL (WWW.ANNAVITRAN.NIC.IN)

Annavitran (which means 'distribution of food') portal provides complete information on the distribution of food grains at the Fair Price Shops under NFSA scheme. Major components of the portal are:

- I. State and District wise Food grains allocation and Beneficiary distribution data
 - Food grains distribution through ePoS devices
 - Food grains distribution without using ePoS device (manual distribution)
- II. Authenticated and unauthenticated ePoS transactions
 - Aadhaar Authenticated transactions
 - Authentication through other mode
 - Unauthenticated transaction
- III. Aadhaar authenticated Food grains distribution
- IV. Report on Intra-state portatbility
- V. Inter-state portability transactions (impds.nic.in)

SALIENT FEATURES

1. Automated Real time data

The Central dashboards are designed such that the available information is generated through automated capturing of data through API and web-services and no manual entry of data is allowed. These dashboards capture data from concerned State PDS portal on a pre-defined frequency and display the information in the form of graph, charts, tables and other reports.

2. Decision Support System for stakeholders

NFSA dashboard is created to serve as decision support system for the senior officials of the department that would enable them to make timely strategic decisions for programme improvement. These Dashboards also have the facility of role-based login that contain various reports relevant to the particular group of officials.

3. Drill down reports

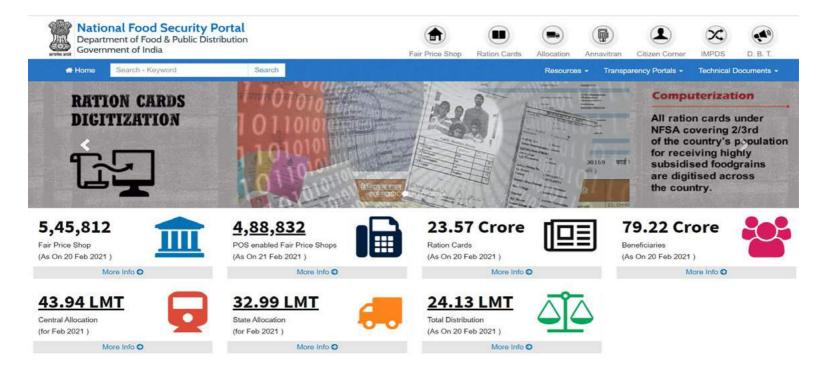
Detailed reports on ePoS transactions, Aadhaar based transactions, allocation, distribution, portability etc. can be accessed for every state. Further, details related to as on date ration cards, number of beneficiaries, allocation of food grains, number of FPSs etc. are systematically available in a drill down format up to the district level on the NFSA portal.

05 THE IMPACT

The national dashboards have played a pivotal role in streamlining the flow of data from States/UTs across India to the central portal. This system of aggerating and analysing data on a central dashboard has supported the DFPD and States/UTs to identify gaps and anomalies and rectify them.

These efforts by States/UTs along with the central team has made the PDS operations across India transparent, accountable and easier to monitor at all levels by all stakeholders and public.

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY PORTAL (WWW.NFSA.GOV.IN)



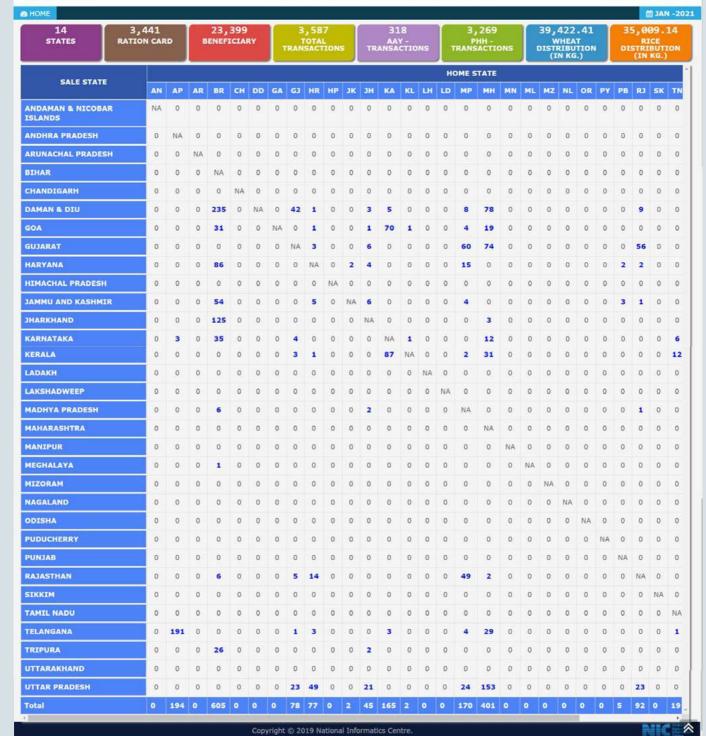
ANNAVITRAN PORTAL (WWW.ANNAVITRAN.NIC.IN)

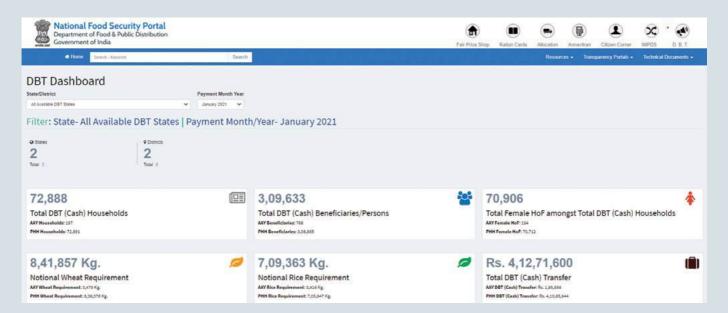




One Nation One Ration Card









RICE FORTIFICATION

FORTIFICATION OF RICE UNDER THE TARGETED PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

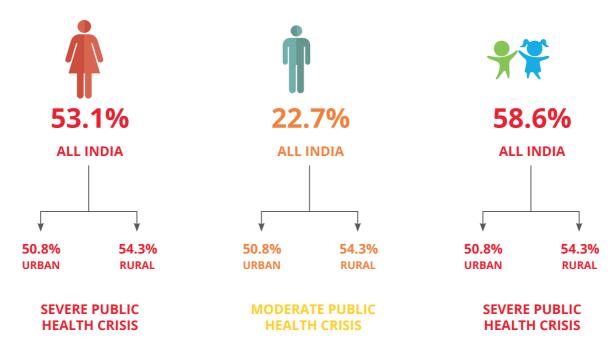
01 INTRODUCTION

Fortification of rice is an evidence based, scientifically proven cost-effective strategy to increase vitamin and mineral content of diets and is expected to bridge the gap in nutritional intake and address anaemia and micronutrient malnutrition in India in a sustainable manner.

As per the National Family Health Survey, 2015-16, 58.5% of young children aged 6-59 months, 53% of women within the reproductive age group and 22.7% of all men aged 15-49 years of age suffer from anaemia.

Anaemia and Micronutrient Deficiencies:

Source: National Family Health Survey 4 (2015-16)



National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB), 2012 reflects a gap of 50% - 70% in daily intake of micronutrients as against the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for all age-groups and both sexes. Malnutrition, anemia and micronutrient deficiencies are associated with a range of long- and short-term consequences including maternal mortality, increased illness, mortality among children, and poor cognitive and physical development.

As per the World Health Organization (WHO), known strategies to address anaemia and micronutrient malnutrition include dietary diversification, food fortification, nutrition and health education, supplementation and public health measures.











As per the 68th round of National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), 2011-12 survey, 65% of the Indian population consumes rice as staple food across all population groups and rice is also the most widely distributed cereal in the food safety based net schemes in India.

Annual Allocation of Rice, 2020-21



TPDS **313.7 Lakh MT**

02



MDM **10 20 Lakh MT**



ICDS **10.60 Lakh MT**

The milled and polished rice (Custom Milled Rice) distributed through the food-based safety nets helps in fulfilling food security however, milling of rice removes the fat and micronutrient rich bran layers to produce the commonly consumed starch white rice. Polishing further removes 75-90% of Vitamin B-1, Vitamin B-6, Vitamin-E and Niacin. Fortification of rice provides an opportunity to add the micronutrients lost during milling and polishing. It also provides an opportunity to add other micronutrients such as Iron, Zinc, Folic acid, Vitamin B-12 and Vitamin A.

Fortification of rice is a two-step process; which involves the production of fortified rice kernels and their further blending with regular rice in a ratio varying between 0.5%-2%. Fortified Rice Kernels (FRKs) are manufactured by combining rice powder and micronutrients, using appropriate extrusion technology. The micronutrient fortified rice kernels closely resemble the sheen, transparency, consistency and flavour of rice. In India, to fortify rice, these fortified rice kernels will be blended with the rice in a ratio of 1:100, i.e. 1MT of FRK is mechanically blended with every 100 MTs of rice to get 100 MTs of appropriately fortified rice.

Fortified rice is nutritionally better than regular rice, but taste, smell, flavour, cooking characteristics are same as regular rice.

PILOT SCHEME ON FORTIFICATION DISTRIBUTION OF RICE UNDER TPDS

The Department of Food & Public Distribution, Government of India is primarily responsible for ensuring food security at the household level, however with the launch of Poshan Abhiyan and aligned to the vision of the Government of India on malnutrition, DFPD has launched a new Centrally Sponsored Pilot

Scheme for "Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System". The Pilot Scheme has been approved for a period of 3 years beginning 2019-20.

Under the scheme, rice will be fortified with iron, folic acid and vitamin B12 as per standards laid down by the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

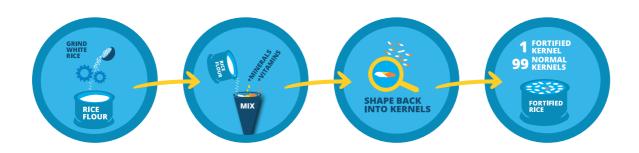
The objective of this scheme is to start Pilot projects in rice consuming districts of States and Union Territories with high prevalence of micronutrient deficiency. Based on the experience and learnings gained from these pilot projects, the distribution of fortified rice will be scaled up. The key objectives of the scheme are:

- Distribution of fortified rice through Public Distribution System to 15 Districts in the country preferably one District per State
- Coverage of all NFSA beneficiaries under the PDS with fortified rice in the selected Districts.
- Facilitate cross-learning and sharing of best practices among States/ UTs and DFPD.
- Evaluate the provision, coverage, and utilization of fortified rice by the target population as well as the efficacy/effectiveness of the consumption of fortified rice in reducing the targeted micronutrient deficiencies in different age and gender groups.

The overall budgetary allocation of the scheme is INR 174 crore. The incremental cost of fortifying at the rate of INR 0.73 per kg would be reimbursed to the rice millers through States/UTs for the total volume of fortified rice produced. The incremental charges will be shared between the Centre and the States/UTs in the ratio of 90:10 in case of North-East, Hilly and Island States and 75:25 in case of rest of the States.

HOW WFP HELPS MAKE RICE MORE NUTRITIOUS

RICE FORTIFICATION

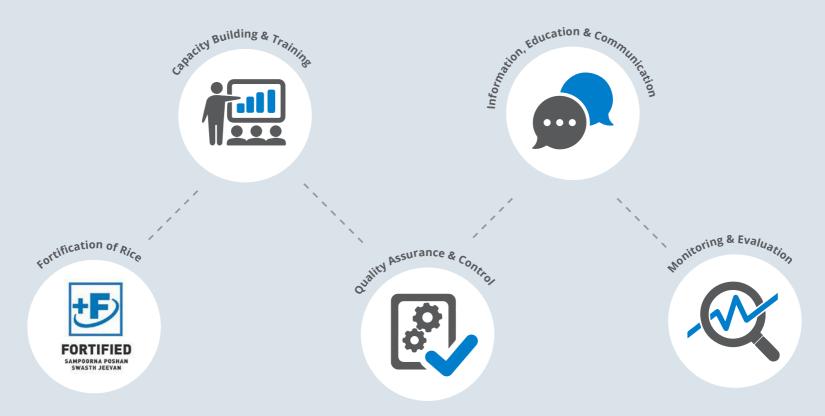








Key components of the scheme:



States participating in the pilot scheme:



WAY FORWARD

Going forward DFPD plans to support the roll out of fortified rice in the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme and the Mid-day meal scheme throughout the country in 2021, followed by distribution of fortified rice in all the food based safety nets in all aspirational districts.







This publication is brought out by United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) in collaboration with the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution (MoCAF&PD), Government of India (GoI).

World Food Programme

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