



Title : Identifying Training Needs of Community Based Organisations for Social Responsibility to Strengthen Mid Day Meal Programme in Akshyapatra Fed Government Primary Schools Of Urban Vadodara

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Introduction:

In Gujarat, The National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NPNSPE) commonly known as the Mid Day Meal Scheme has been implemented by providing hot cooked Mid Day Meal to encourage children to come to schools and participate in the learning process without worrying for their meal, especially that of day time.. In Vadodara Urban Municipal Schools, mid day meal is provided under PPP mode through Akshyapatra - an NGO intervention. The objectives of the study were to monitor the mid day meal programme to strengthen the programme.

Methodology:

The data were collected from both the primary and secondary sources. The field study was based on the 2 observations per school for randomly selected eleven urban municipal government primary schools in Vadodara and interviews with key informants in February 2014.

Results:

It was found that provision of quality meals regularly was satisfactory. The special attention by Akshyapatra for cleanliness and hygiene of cooked food was a noteworthy example of social responsibility under PPP model. The food was liked by majority of the students.

It was observed that programme was focusing on the developing good food habits among children. Children were not discriminated in the schools on the ground of caste, gender, religion, creed or disability, while serving cooked food to children in schools. All children were treated equally irrespective of their difference Teachers were found to be supervise the actual serving and eating in a spirit of togetherness, under hygienic conditions, and in an orderly manner so that the entire process got completed in 30-40 minutes.

However it was noticed that there was no separate drinking water facility in any of the government schools. There was no soap for washing hands or utensils in any of the schools. Community's Participation in MDM was found to be poor.

Conclusion:

There is a need to strengthen the programme through social responsibility which can be taken up by various village level committees. School management committee can be encouraged to draw on the support of the community. Gram Panchayats and Village Education Committees may be approached for arranging community members to regularly, on a rotation basis, help the school management in ensuring efficient, serving and cleaning operations. Support of the community members, including mothers groups, could also be solicited to ensure that children wash their hands with soap before eating, use clean plates and glasses, avoid littering and wastage of food, and clean their plates, rinse their hands and mouth after eating. Community members should be encouraged to their observations on the implementation of the scheme and the School Management should make available a register for regular recording of such observations.