

Implementation of National Food Security Act in Rajasthan



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List of contents

- I Introduction
- II Status of Food Security in India and Rajasthan
- III Policies towards the Food Security and the National Food Security Act 2013
- IV Financing the NFSA: Budget for NFSA in Rajasthan
- V Performance of NFSA 2013 in the State
- VI Summary and Conclusions

List of Tables

List of Charts

Boxes

I

Introduction

Food security is a broad and comprehensive concept. Fulfillment of people's need to food will certainly depend on level of the food production in any country, which determines the availability of food. The food availability measured in kg per capita per annum is not increasing as fast in the recent years¹. However, the availability of the food though is a necessary but not the sufficient condition for people's access to food i.e. food security. As we know, millions of people across the countries, especially in the developing and least developed countries, face hunger and mal nutrition². Various economic and socio-political factors affect the situation of food security in a society. According to the Agriculture Organisation (FAO), "Food Security exists when all people, all the times, physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO 2008)³.

Obviously the food security as a concept has many dimensions. FAO identifies four major dimensions of food security –physical availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization i.e. "body makes the most of the nutrients in the food" and stability of these three dimensions over the time⁴. In short it's not sufficient to just grow and make available enough food it's also necessary to make sure that people have access to the food i.e. food is available in the market and people have purchasing capacity and are able to utilize the food properly.

Food Security and SDGs: Achieving food security for all has been one of the international development goals and its concept and definition has evolved over the time (FAO 2004)⁵. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger was the very first goal of the Millennium Development Goals which should have been achieved by end of 2015⁶. Again, 'Zero Hunger' is the second goal, after 'No Poverty', of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to be achieved by the year 2030. India, as member of UNO, has adopted the SDGs and has committed itself to achieve these goals. The NitiAyog, acting as nodal agency, provides "the overall coordination and leadership⁷" to the country for achieving the SDGs.

As we know, the Right to Life is fundamental right granted by the Constitution of India (Article 21). The Article 47 of the Constitution, under the "Directive Principles" makes it a "Duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and standard living and to improve public health".

To make food security a legal right of all its citizens, the India government passed the National Food Security Act 2013 to give people right to food as a legal right. The National Food Security Act, passed by the Parliament in 2013 is an act providing legal entitlements to the food security and gives legal status to some of the existing food security schemes run by the Indian government through the state governments. The schemes which are covered under the Act are Public Distribution System (PDS), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal Scheme

¹<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/food/india-claims-to-be-self-sufficient-in-food-production-but-facts-say-otherwise-62091>

²According to the Global Hunger Index website "Approximately 124 million people suffer acute hunger, a striking increase from 80 million two years ago" (Global Hunger Index, Intro page), available on: <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/>

³FAO, 2008, 'An Introduction to Basic Concepts of Food Security' available on: <http://www.fao.org/3/al936e/al936e00.pdf>

⁴Ibid

⁵FAO 2004, 'The Concept of Food and Nutrition Security' Available on:

⁶<https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

⁷NitiAyog, 2017, 'On the Implementation of SDGs' available at: https://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/India%20VNR_Final.pdf

(MDM). The Act also provided for maternity entitlement to the women who are not covered under any other maternity benefit scheme/programme, for which the government later converted the Indira Gandhi Matritva Labh Yojna to Pradhan Mantri Matrutva Vandana Yojan (PMMVY) and spread it across all the districts of the country.

The NFSA is being implemented in Rajasthan since October 2, 2013. In these six years of implementation of NFSA in the state there has been lot of developments mainly in implementation of PDS. Here we present a report of a study on the current status of NFSA in the state of Rajasthan.

Objective of the study is to understand the status of implementation of the NFSA 2013 in the state of Rajasthan.

Research questions: The study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the implementation mechanisms of the four components of NFSA in the state.
2. What is the budget going towards these schemes
3. What is the process of beneficiary identification specially in PDS and PMMVY
4. How are the inclusion and exclusion and re-inclusion in these schemes happening.
5. What have been major issues in implementation and how the government has tried to address the issues.
6. What are grievance redressal mechanisms and how effective these are?

Methodology:

This is mainly a desk based study, based mostly on secondary sources. The government orders related to all four components of the act has been reviewed; the annual reports of the concerned departments, the websites and MIS pages of the concerned schemes will be consulted. Other studies on NFSA will also be consulted.

To supplement the information gathered from secondary sources some case studies about the implementation or grievance redressal of the PDS, ICDS, MDM and PMMVY have also been included in the study.

This report is organized in following manner. The second chapter, followed by this introductory chapter, looks at the status of food security in India and Rajasthan. It is followed by an overview of the policies towards the food security and the entitlements provided under the NFSA, 2013. The fourth chapter looks at the finances for implementation of NFSA in the state. And finally chapter five presents the status of the implementation of all four components of the NFSA in the state. The last chapter summarizes the findings and concludes the study.

II

Status of Food Security in India and Rajasthan

In India the status Food security can be understood by look at poverty and nutrition data. According to NSSO data, 21.92% of total population of India was living in poverty in 2010-11, latest year for which we have data. Poverty in the state of Rajasthan was 14.71% in the same year⁸. Then we have data on nutrition by National Family Health Survey IV (NFHS IV). According to NFHS IV, the malnutrition among children⁹, though lower than NFHS III, is still very high.

Table 1: Child Malnutrition in India and Rajasthan

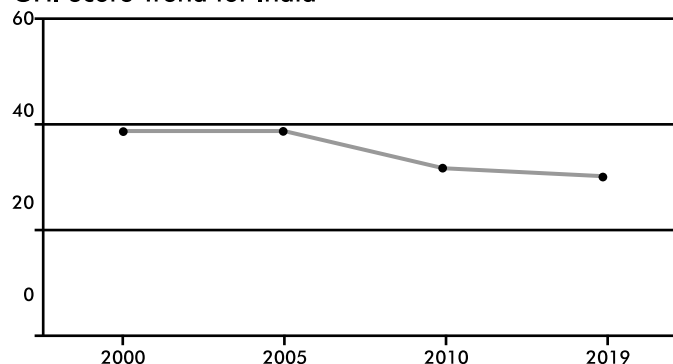
	Wasting Under 5 year		Severely wasted Under 5 year		Stunting Under 5 year		Underweight under 5 year (Below-2 SD)	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
India	19.8	21	6.4	7.5	48	38.4	42.5	35.7
Rajasthan	20.4	23	7.3	8.6	43.7	39.1	39.9	36.7

Source: NFHS IV 2015-16

As per the latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) report, India's ranking is 102nd out of 117 countries. India's GHI Score, which is an index based on four indicators - Undernourishment, Under 5 Mortality Rate, and Wasting and Stunting among children, has declined over the period, showing a very slow improvement. The GHI score for India has slowly improved from 38.8 in the year 2000 to 31.3 in 2019 (higher score showing worse hunger situation), with which India is placed among the countries with "Serious" hunger situation¹⁰. The decline in India's GHI score has been sharper after the year 2005, which was stable during 2000-2005 (See the chart below).

Chart 1: India's GHI score

GHI Score Trend for India



Source: GHI Report 2019

⁸<https://web.archive.org/web/20140407102043/http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=15283>

⁹<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/india.html>

¹⁰<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/india.html>

However, what is worrying is that India's GHI score has gone up in recent years from 29 in 2015 to 31.4 in 2017, showing deterioration in the food security situation, and though it has declined again after 2017, but it is still higher at 30.3 in 2019 than 29 in 2015.

India's GHI Score in recent years

Year	GHI Score of India
2015	29.0
2016	28.5
2017	31.4
2018	31.1
2019	30.3

Source: Global Hunger Index Report various years

Looking at the situation in Rajasthan, as we can see in the Table 1 above, the state has higher percentage of malnourished children compared the country's average on all four parameters. According to the SDG India Index Baseline Report (NitiAyog, 2018)¹¹, Rajasthan is a performer on the Goal 1 (No Poverty) and an Aspirant on Goal 2 (Zero Hunger). The table below provides the data for India and Rajasthan on the indicators under Zero Hunger (Goal 2).

Table 2: SDG Goal 2: Performance of India and Rajasthan in 2018

	Ratio of Rural HH covered under PDS to Rural HH where monthly income of highest earning member is less than Rs. 5000	Children under 5 years who are stunted (%)	Pregnant women age 15-49 who are anemic (11.0 g/dl) (%)	Rice, wheat and coarse cereals produced per unit area (Kg/Ha)
Target	1.29	21.03	23.57	5018.44
India	1.01	38.40	50.30	2509.22
Rajasthan	0.94	39.10	46.60	2119.85

Source: SDG India Index Baseline Report 2018, data available on:

<https://sdgindiaindex.socialcops.com/Yu|bcq9d44/state-ut-ranking/basic#3/23.00/81.26>

The table above suggests that India as a country and state of Rajasthan are well below the targets set by the NITI Ayog under the SDG 2 i.e. 'Zero Hunger'. The target is to take the ratio of the rural households covered under PDS to the rural households where monthly income of the highest earning member is Rs. 5,000, to 1.29 by the year 2030. However, at the India level this average is 1.01 and in Rajasthan it is just 0.94 in the year 2018. Again the gap between the targets to bring the percentage of malnourished children and of the pregnant women who are anemic down and the current level of achievement is too wide. There is also a concern for increasing food production. The NitiAyog's target under SDG 2 is to double the per unit production of rice, wheat and coarse cereals by the year 2030. As mentioned in the previous chapter, India's per capita food availability has also stagnated the last few years. Obviously India as a country and Rajasthan state as well has to work harder to achieve these goals.

III

Policies towards the Food Security and the National Food Security Act 2013

Food security has always been an important component of the overall policy making in India. There have also been successful efforts like Green Revolution to increase the food production in the country. Currently, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare runs various programmes like Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and Rashtriya Khadya Suraksha Yojana to enhance the food production in the country. The increased agricultural production has ensured the availability of food.

The Indian government runs schemes for ensuring food security like Public Distribution System (PDS), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Mid-day Meal in schools. PDS was initiated during the World War II as a war time rationing measure. It was expanded in 1960 and by 1970s PDS evolved as a universal scheme for (subsidized) food distribution (Balani 2013)¹². The ICDS also started long back in 1975 to provide early childhood care and development, including nutritional measures¹³. MDM was initiated by various state governments in 1980s and it was launched by the India government as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1995¹⁴.

However, there has been a demand to make the food security a right for the people of India. People's Union for Civil Liberties, Rajasthan went to the Supreme Court in 2001 seeking legal enforcement of the Right to Food. The case went on in the court for 17 years and the Supreme Court gave various orders during the hearings of the case. There have also been grassroots movements across the country demanding right to food and a right to food campaign was formed in 2001 at the national level as a loose network of these movements from across the country¹⁵.

The India government, after long deliberations, passed the National Food Security Act 2013 to give people right to food as a legal right. The National Food Security Act, passed by the Parliament in 2013 is an act providing legal entitlements to the food security and gives legal status to some of the existing food security schemes run by the Indian government through the state governments. The schemes which are covered under the Act are Public Distribution System (PDS), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM). The Act also provided for maternity entitlement to the women who are not covered under any other maternity benefit scheme/programme, for which the government later converted the Indira Gandhi Matritva Labh Yojna to Pradhan Mantri Matrutva Vandana Yojan (PMMVY) and spread it across all the districts of the country.

Entitlements under NFSA¹⁶:

¹²Available on: http://www.prsindia.org/sites/default/files/parliament_or_policy_pdfs/1388728622--TPDS%20Thematic%20Note.pdf

¹³<https://icds-wcd.nic.in/icds.aspx>

¹⁴http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/

¹⁵<http://www.righttofoodcampaign.in/home>

¹⁶This section is based on 'Summary of National Food Security Act' available on:

http://www.righttofoodindia.org/data/right_to_food_act_data/official_documents/NFSA_2013_Summary_English.pdf

Under the PDS, the Act makes provisions for 5kg per month per person of food grain and 35 kg per month to Alntyodaya families, covering population “up to the 75% of rural areas and 50% in the urban areas.” The prices of subsidized food are fixed at Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice/wheat/millet. Identification of beneficiaries for PDS is to be done by the state governments based on the state wise coverage specified by the central government.

Children in the age group of 6 months to 6 years are entitled to an age-appropriate meal¹⁷, free of charge, through the local anganwadi. While children aged 6-14 years are entitled to one free mid-day meal every day (except on school holidays) in all government and government-aided schools, up to Class VIII. For children below six months, “exclusive breastfeeding shall be promoted”. For children who suffer from malnutrition, meals will be provided to them free of charge “through the local anganwadi” as per the Act. Every pregnant and lactating mother is entitled to a free meal at the local anganwadi (during pregnancy and six months after child birth) as well as maternity benefits of Rs 6,000, in installments.

State Food Commission: The Act provides for the creation of State Food Commissions. The main function of the State Commission is to monitor the implementation of the Act, give advice to the states governments and their agencies, and inquire into violations of entitlements. State Commissions also have to hear appeals against orders of the District Grievance Redressal Officer and prepare annual reports.

Transparency and Grievance Redressal: The Act provides for a two-tier grievance redressal structure, involving the District Grievance Redressal Officer (DGRO) and State Food Commission. State governments must also put in place an internal grievance redressal mechanism which may include call centres, help lines, etc. District Grievance Redressal Officers DGROs shall be appointed by state governments for each district to hear complaints and take necessary action according to norms to be prescribed by state governments. If a complainant is not satisfied, he or she may file an appeal before the State Food Commission. The Food Commissions have powers to impose penalties. If an order of the DGRO is not complied with, the concerned authority or officer can be fined up to Rs. 5,000. The Commission can authorise “any of its members” to act as an adjudicating officer for this purpose. In case of “non-supply of the entitled quantities of foodgrains or meals to entitled persons”, such persons will be entitled to a food security allowance from the state government, as prescribed by the central government

Mandatory transparency provisions include: (1) placing all PDS-related records in the public domain; (2) conducting periodic social audits of the PDS and other welfare schemes; (3) using information and communication technology “to ensure transparent recording of transactions at all levels”; (4) setting up vigilance committees at all levels to supervise all schemes under the Act.

¹⁷ “Meal” is defined as “hot cooked or pre-cooked and heated before its service meal or take home ration, as may be prescribed by the Central Government”. All “meals” have to meet nutritional norms specified in Schedule II of the Act.

IV

Financing the NFSA: Budget for NFSA in Rajasthan

The four components of the act are being implemented through the above mentioned four government schemes. The NFSA is being implemented in Rajasthan since October 2, 2013. Here an effort has been made to assess the budget of all four schemes covered under the NFSA in the state of Rajasthan.

It is difficult to calculate the budget going towards the implementation of NFSA as the four schemes covered under NFSA have different financing pattern. Here we try to calculate the finances going towards the NFSA implementation in the state of Rajasthan.

Public Distribution System:

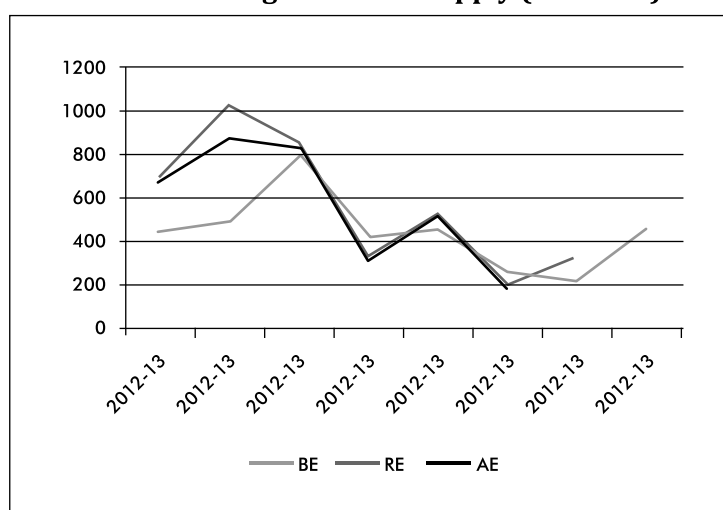
For the PDS the state governments get the food grain from the Food Corporation of India and the cost of subsidy is born by the union government. However, the state governments do spend money on transportation of food grains and also improving the distribution system like computerization etc. The state governments can also provide additional subsidy over and above the subsidy being provided by the Central government. Rajasthan government has started providing wheat at cost of Rs. 1 per kg to the beneficiaries under the NFSA, against the subsidized price of Rs. 2 per kg fixed by the central government. This additional cost of Rs. 1 per kg, in this case, is to be borne by the State government. The state government budget for the Major Head Civil Supply (3456) is shown in the table below:

Table 3: Budget for Civil Supply (Rs. crore)

Year	Budget Estimate	Revised Estimate	Actual Expenditure
2012-13	451.68	697.99	675.73
2013-14	495.70	1030.01	880.55
2014-15	796.69	858.43	833.14
2015-16	424.13	325.03	309.90
2016-17	458.78	527.11	517.23
2017-18	263.65	199.09	186.53
2018-19	212.90	328.69	
2019-20	460.45		

Source: Budget Books, Rajasthan Govt, various years

Chart 2: Budget for Civil Supply (Rs. crore)



As the table and the chart above shows, there has been a decline in the budget for the Civil Supply (Major Head 3456) after the implementation of the NFSA in the state. It happened because the central government started taking up full cost of the subsidy of the food grain, which is wheat in the case of Rajasthan. This year onwards, it is again increasing as the state government has announced that it would provide the wheat to the NFSA beneficiaries at Rs. 1 per kg instead of Rs. 2 per kg.

As mentioned above, this budget is used for providing food taken from the FCI to the NFSA beneficiaries, the

transportation, computerization of the distribution system, and providing the additional subsidy of Rs. 1 per kg etc. The main component of the scheme however, remains the food grain (wheat) distributed, now, at the Rs. 1 per kg. The data on wheat allocated and lifted by the state government is given in the table below.

Table 4: Allotment and allocation of wheat under NFSA by the Rajasthan government

Year	Allotment (metric ton)	Lifting(metric ton)	Percentage (lifting to allot.)
2013-14 (Oct13-Mar14)	1,347,905	1,323,859	98.21
2014-15	2,789,423	2,767,955	99.23
2015-16	2,734,287	2,701,887	98.81
2016-17	2,730,753	2,572,768	94.21
2017-18	2,311,837	2,210,741	95.62
2018-19	2,610,851	2,552,092	97.74

Source: Economic Review, 2018-19, GoR

As the table above shows both the allotment and lifting have been showing a gradual decline between 2014-15 and 2017-18. Not only this, the lifting of wheat is also showing a decline from almost 100% in 2014-15 to 95% in 2017-18, which increased slightly to about 98% in 2018-19. It is surprising that the allotment and off-take of wheat declined in the state after the implementation of NFSA which actually should have gone up as the scope of coverage increased.

Mid Day Meal Scheme:

The MDM is a centrally sponsored scheme the cost of which is shared between the central and state government as per following table.

Table 5: Cost sharing in MDM

S. No.	Head	Central share (%)	State Share (%)
1	Cost of foodgrain	100	
2	Transportation cost of food	100	
3	Administrative cost (MME)	100	
4	Utensils	100	
5	Cook cum helper	45	55
6	Cooking conversion cost	60	40
7	Kitchen cum store	60	40
8	LPG Connection	0	100

Source: Annual Report 2018-19, Primary Education Dept.

The table below shows the budget going towards the MDM in Rajasthan. The state government also receives the food grain from the FCI, in addition to be used in MDM.

Table 6: Budget Allocation for the MDM (in Rs. Crore)

Year	MDM Budget (Total)	Centre share
2015-16 (BE)	659.45	
2015-16 (RE)	683.46	
2015-16 (AE)	649.04	
2016-17 (BE)	709.27	
2016-17 (RE)	707.27	
2016-17 (AE)	705.74	
2017-18 (BE)	709.26	463.17
2017-18 (RE)	709.26	427.57
2017-18 (AE)	685.87	413.28
2018-19 (BE)	1015.00	463
2018-19 (RE)	1169.91	437.91
2019-20 (BE)	1430.14	493.14

Source: State Budget Books, various years

As the table above shows the budget for the MDM almost stagnated since 2015-16 and is showing some substantial increase only 2018-19 afterwards. Beside this budget the central government also provides food grain through the FCI to the state governments. The data on allotment and off take of wheat under MDM for Rajasthan is given in the table below.

Table 7: Allotment and off take of wheat under MDM

Year	Allotment	Off take	Percentage
2015-16	97.87	104.6	106.75
2016-17	77.87	76.23	97.89
2017-18	81.36	78.78	96.82
2018-19	87.31	86.7	99.30

Source: Allotment and Off-take under all schemes, Food Corporation of India, available on: <http://fci.gov.in/sales.php?view=36>

The table above is showing declining trend of wheat allocation and off take by the Rajasthan government for the MDM. Additionally the off take has been always lower than the allocation except for the year 2015-16. Though allocation is now showing an increase in the year 2018-19 over the previous year it is still lower than the year 2015-16.

Integrated Child Development Scheme

The ICDS is one of the oldest schemes and perhaps the largest scheme in the world to provide early childhood care and nutritional food to children, pregnant and lactating women and also the adolescent girls. The cost of the scheme is shared between in the central and state government as per the following:

Table 8: Cost sharing in ICDS

Component	Centre (%)	State (%)
SNP	50	50
Salary	25	75
ICDS (General)	60	40
AWC Building Construction	60	40
AWC Repairs and upgradation	60	40
CMBS	60	40
Training Schemes	60	40
ISSNIP	80	20
Nutrition Mission	80	20

Source: DWCD, GoR, Annual Report 2018-19

The budget provided allocation and expenditure under the scheme is shown in the table below:

Table 9: Budget for Integrated Child Development Scheme in Rajasthan (Rs. crores)

Head /Year	2015-16 (BE)	2015-16 (AE)	2016-17 (BE)	2016-17 (AE)	2017-18 (BE)	2017-18 (AE)	2018-19 (BE)	2018-19 (AE)	2019-20 (BE)
SNP	629.58	563.91	629.61	593.43	600	613.37	650	687.55	830.28
Honorarium for Associate	93.6	87.06	92.88	97.27	116.87	101.35	175.42	146.89	167.45
Administrative expenditure	700.72	622.38	699.37	695.97	741.9	712.44	948.23	1116.56	1140.60
Anganwadi Welfare Fund/Women Welfare Fund	1.55	1.2	1.55	1.17	1.42	1.14	1.35	7	7.00
ICDS fourth/ National Nutrition MISSION	10.12	3.74	17.65	8.07	15.54	43.11	117.34	145.12	192.30
Rajiv Gandhi Girls Welfare and Nutrition Scheme (SABLA)	10	0.17	10.13	0.37	0.0002	0	51.13	2	25
PMMVY	27	26.78	30	24.2	25	5.94	44.96	132.0	144.96
Office building Construction	4.36	0.42	5	1.77	5	1.24	5	3	3
Anganwadi Building Construction (ICDS MISION MODE)	195.91	57.52	75	34.99	59.8	5.59	21.21	0	21.21
AWC Repairs	14.5	0	14.5	1.92	40	13.04	26.15	17.94	11.09
Others*	8.34	0	91.57	0.08a	2.8	0.48	0.32	0.74	0.28
Total ICDS	1695.68	1363.17	1667.26	1459.24	1608.33	1497.73	2041.11	2258.81	2543.18
Utilisation (%)		80.39		87.52		93.12			

Source: Budget Book, Finance Dept. Rajasthan

* AWC building Construction Nabard, Utensil for AWC Centre, Uniform for AWC'S Children, Establishment of handpump, Multi Sectoral Nutrition Pr., AWC Centre building

As the above table shows, the budget for ICDS (which includes administrative cost of PMMVY) has been almost stagnant between years 2015-16 and 2017-18 and started increasing only 2018-19 onwards. Another worrying trend is gap between the budget allocation and total actual expenditure. The underutilization of budget is continuous trend during 2015-16 and 2017-18 for which the data for actual expenditure is available. In 2018-19 the revised estimate for total ICDS budget is higher than the budget estimate which is a good sign. However, the figure for actual expenditure will be known only by next year. Also, this year's budget for the ICDS has been increased almost by 25% compared to the budget estimate for the previous year.

Pradhan Mantri Matrutva Vandana Yojana:

PMMVY is also a centrally sponsored scheme, cost of which is shared between centre and state governments in ratio of 60:40 i.e. centre providing 60% of the cost and state governments providing rest of the 40%. Budget for the administrative costs of PMMVY is shown in the table above showing the budget for ICDS. As we can see this budget has been increasing. However, budget for the amount going towards the beneficiaries is not shown in the state budget books as the amount goes to an escrow account and then it's credited directly to the beneficiaries' accounts.

Table 10: Budget for PMMVY (Rs.Crores)

	BE 2018-19			RE 2018-19			BE 2019-20		
	Centre	State	Total	Centre	State	Total	Centre	State	Total
PMMVY (Payment to beneficiaries)	145.56	66.00	211.56	145.56	97.04	242.61	150.00	100.00	250.00

Source: Provided by Directorate of ICDS, DWCD, GoR (as provided in January 2019)

As the above table shows, the budget for payment to beneficiaries under PMMVY increased only from Rs. 211. 56 crores in 2018-19 to Rs. 250 crores in 2019-20. This increase is even less if we compare the 2019-20 budget estimate with the last year's revised estimates. It increased only by Rs. 7.39 crores compared to last year's revised budget.

Overall there seem to be a decline in the budget for PDS, while MDM budget increased only after 2018-19. What is worrying is the allocations as well as off-take of wheat under both PDS and MDM declined in the recent years. As for ICDS, though there is a slow increase in the budget over the years, the utilization of the budget has always been lower than budget allocated. The budget for PMMVY has increased only marginally from the last year.

V

Performance of NFSA 2013 in the State

In these six years of implementation of NFSA in the state, there has been lot of developments mainly in implementation of PDS. The previous government while implementing the PDS has made Aadhar seeding mandatory for the NFSA beneficiaries and a point of sale (POS) machine was introduced at every fair price shop (FPS) through which the PDS food grain is distributed (sold). This chapter presents the status of implementation of all the four schemes in the state.

Public Distribution System

The NFSA mandates that 67% of the state population should be covered under the NFSA for distribution of subsidies food grain through its network of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) across the state. As per a 2015 order, 69% of the rural and 53% of the urban families are to be covered under NFSA which makes it a total population of 4.46 crores (including antyodaya beneficiaries) to be covered under the NFSA¹⁸.

Table 11: Coverage of population under NFSA in Rajasthan

	Population (Census2011)	Coverage					Antyodaya Yojana (Number of families)*
		As Percentage of Population		Number of persons to be covered			
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Total	
Rajasthan	68,621,012	69.09	53.00	35,609,149	9,052,811	44,661,960	932,100

*Included in the total population covered under NFSA.

Source: Targeted Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2015¹⁹, Min of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

The government came out with the 'Complaint Redressal Mechanism and Constitution of Rajasthan State Food Commission Rules, 2017', using the powers given to it under NFSA 2013 and also issued various government orders in order to implement the act properly in the state. The criteria to exclusion and inclusion for availing food grain under NFSA have also been specified by the state government with the government orders. With a recent order the government has added 8 more categories in the list of automatic inclusion under NFSA making it total of 32 categories in the state. Some of the automatic inclusive categories included in the list are: HIV and silicosis affected persons and their families, transgender people, people with multiple disability and mentally retarded people, saharia and kathadi tribe people etc.

The total number of ration cards and individuals entitled to take benefits under TPDS under NFSA are currently are 1.09 crores and 4.87 crores respectively (October 22, 2019)²⁰. The numbers of beneficiaries actually taking benefits are given in the table below:

¹⁸[https://food.raj.nic.in/Docs/PDS\(Control\)%20Order,%202015.pdf](https://food.raj.nic.in/Docs/PDS(Control)%20Order,%202015.pdf)

¹⁹[https://food.raj.nic.in/Docs/PDS\(Control\)%20Order,%202015.pdf](https://food.raj.nic.in/Docs/PDS(Control)%20Order,%202015.pdf)

²⁰https://food.raj.nic.in/PMO_District_Category_Wise.aspx

Table 12: Performance of PDS under NFSA in Rajasthan

Quarter	Total NFSA Ration Card	No. of Ration Card Who Received Wheat	No. of Ration Card Wheat Who did not Received	Percent of RC who received
Mar-18	10,008,628	7,569,575	2,439,053	75.63
Jun-18	10,187,134	7,347,674	2,839,460	72.13
Sep-18	10,400,589	7,580,683	2,819,906	72.89
Dec-18	10,468,842	7,859,817	2,609,025	75.08
Mar-19	10,571,902	8,081,536	2,490,366	76.44
Jun-19	10,611,750	8,290,293	2,321,457	78.12
Sep-19	10833608	8439186	2394422	77.90

Source: Department of Food and Civil Supply, MIS:
https://food.raj.nic.in/Ration_Distribution_District.aspx

Food security for Sahariya, Khairwa and Kathaudi people

Rajasthan government has a scheme for Sahariya, Khairwa and Kathaudi people under which families of these three tribes are provided 35kgs of wheat every month free of cost. Sahariyas come under the Particularly Vulnerable Tribes, the only tribe from Rajasthan to come under this list. As per recent Economic Review published by the state government, total 30,651 Sahariya families, 2,303 Khairwa families from Baran and 754 Kathodi families from Udaipur are taking benefit of this scheme.

As the table above suggests, about 25% of the NFSA eligible ration card holder families are not getting the benefits of TPDS. The reasons for these are partially also related to process related issues. The mandatory linking of the PDS with Aadhar and introduction of Point of Sell (PoS) machines on the FPSs has created its own problems. Sometimes there is no internet in the remote areas, sometimes the thumb impression does not match or the PoS machine does not read someone's thumb impression etc. People might also be traveling for work as migration is high in the state. Though the government has tried to address these issues by introducing systems like taking ration of previous two months, introducing bypass system of providing OTP on the registered mobile number in case the thumb impression does not match, introducing 'state level portability' system in which beneficiaries are allowed to take ration from any FPS in the state²¹.

The computerization and linking with Aadhar is being promoted to check the corruption and mal practices in the PDS. But these are also creating problems in some cases as people are not well versed with smart phones and computer systems and PoS machines in rural areas. The government has also made a provision of providing receipts from the PoS machines to the beneficiaries for the food grain provided. In Udaipur, as the District Supply Officer (DSO), told the department administration is encouraging people to get these receipts from the FPS dealer by rewarding those with a receipt every month in select areas. The Food and Civil Supply office in Udaipur is also rewarding the best performing ration dealers in select cases.

However, such innovations and initiatives remain exceptions, as the state struggles to implement the NFSA in its true spirit. The high level vacancies in the department also pose challenges for the department to ensure the smooth functioning of the PDS in the state as per the NFSA. As per the department's annual report 2018-19, number of vacant posts is too high especially at the district level. 20 out of 55 DSOs, 31 out of 105 Enforcement Officers (PravartanAdhikari) and 227 out of 315 Enforcement Inspectors (PravartanNirikshik) posts are vacant in the state.

²¹GoR, Economic Review 2018-19

Midday Meal (MDM):

MDM started in the entire country as a centrally sponsored scheme on 15th August 1995. Earlier was being run by some state governments. MDM programme provides hot cooked meal to children from class 1 to class 8 in all the government, government aided schools, special training centres and madarsas. In Rajasthan, it is currently being run in 66,506 such schools in which total 62.22 lakhs children are enrolled.

Currently the weekly menu based meals are provided in the schools and on one of the days a local food with same nutritional value can be provided. The Food grain provided by the Indian government is currently 100gms per child for classes I to V and 150gms per child for classes VI to VIII. The meal given to the children should be able to provide 450 calories and 12gms protein to the children of classes I to V and 700 calories and 20gms of protein to the children of classes VI to VIII. The unit cost for cooking the food is Rs. 4.48 per child and Rs. 6.71 per child respectively for the classes I to V and classes VI to VIII, which included cost for edible oil, spices, pulses, fuel etc.

To cook the food the government provides cook cum helper in the schools based on the number of children in the school. The remuneration paid to the cook cum helper is currently Rs. 1320 pm. In the year 2018-19, there were in total 109,922 cook cum helpers in the schools in which about 90% are females (see the table below).

Table 13: Cook cum helpers in Rajasthan

Group	SC	ST	OBC	Minorities	Other	Total
Male	1123	3604	4891	306	1611	11535
Female	1096	15006	53715	3600	14206	98387
Total	12083	19510	58606	3906	15817	109922

Source: Dept. of Primary Education, GoR, Annual Report 2018-19

However, still not all the children enrolled in the government schools in classes I-VIII are getting MDM in Rajasthan and the situation is same all over the country²². The table below shows the number of enrolled children and number of children getting meal under MDM.

Table 14: Coverage against the enrolment under MDM in Rajasthan

Level	Year	Total Enrollment	Average number of children availing MDM	Percentage of children availing MDM
Primary	2017-18	4057905	2808392	69.21
	2018-19	4000312	2906446	72.66
	2019-20	4103422	2972008	72.43
Upper Primary	2017-18	2220511	1551085	69.85
	2018-19	2222301	1618139	72.81
	2019-20	2161924	1651896	76.41

Source: Official Website Of MDM (http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/)

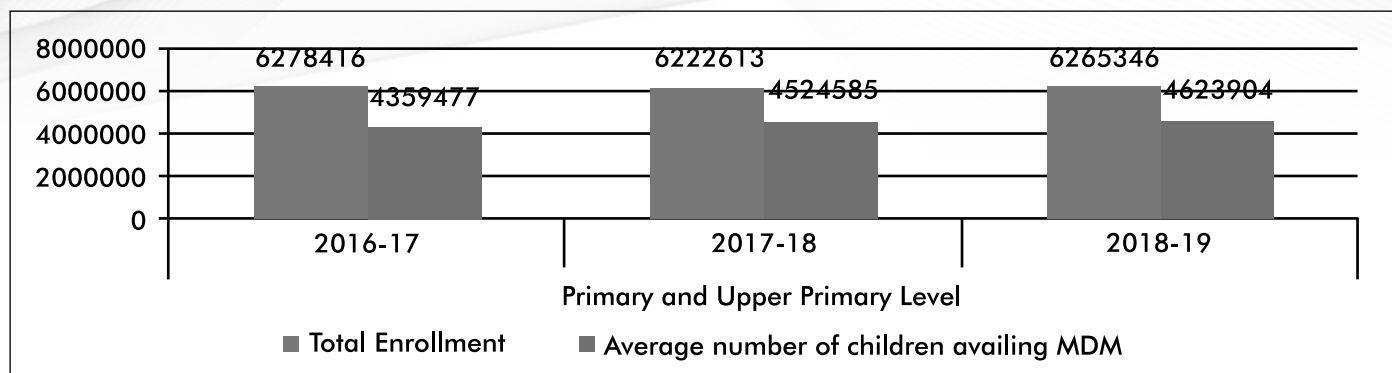
As the data above suggests only about 70% of the children enrolled in the schools are availing MDM. However, we must note that this happening because the Programme Approval Board (PAB) which approves the state proposals on MDM provides approval based on the average attendance in the schools. The performance of Rajasthan vs. a vs. the approval given by the PAB has been about 101% during the year 2018-19 as per the PAB minutes 2019-20²³. Even the PAB, however, raised concerns for low coverage against enrolment of the children under the MDM in the

²²<https://hindi.newsclick.in/adhayayana-maida-dae-maila-yaojanaa-maen-sakauulaon-kae-295-karaoda-bacacae-gaayaba>

²³http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/Files/PAB/PAB-2019-20/PAB_2019-20_minutes/Rajasthan_Minutes.pdf

state, which at 73% was less than country average of 76%, and has requested it to raise the coverage level, as per the PAB minutes 2018-19²⁴. It is a cause of concern that the average of the children availing the MDM in the state is less than the country average. It also shows that the attendance in the schools is also lower.

Chart 3: Coverage against the enrolment under MDM in Rajasthan



Annapurna Milk Scheme

The Rajasthan government has also started providing milk to the school children since July 2018. A budget of Rs. 471 crores was spent on the scheme in the year 2018-19, as per the Economic Review published by the state government.

Centralised kitchens: The state has 11 centralised kitchens which are providing MDM in 4,108 schools of the state. The NFSA allows MDM provided by the centralized kitchen only in the urban areas. The state government was requested by the PAB to comply with the NFSA in this regard²⁵.

MDM during the drought: The State government proposed to provide MDM in nine drought affected districts (Barmer, Bikaner, Churu, Jaisalmer, Jalore, Jodhpur, Hanumangarh, Pali, Nagore) for 43 days during the summer vacation by serving mid-day meal to 4,18,869 primary class children and 4,23,563 upper primary children in 2019-20. This proposal has been approved by the PAB and fund of Rs. 25 crores has been allocated for the same²⁶. This is certainly a positive step taken by the state government under MDM.

Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)

The ICDS started in 1975 in compliance with the National Child Policy 1974 to provide nutrition and other supports to children below 6, pregnant and lactating women and also adolescent girls. It has following six components:

Table 15: Services provided under ICDS

Sl.No.	Service	Beneficiaries
1	Supplementary Nutrition	Children 6 months to 6 years, pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls
2	Pre-school education	Children 3 to 6 years
3	Nutrition and Health Education	Women and adolescent girls of ages 15 to 45 years
4	Immunisation	Children aged 0-6 years and pregnant women
5	Health check up	Children 0 to 6 years, pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls
6	Referral services	Children 0 to 6 years, pregnant and lactating women

Source: DWCD-GoR, 2019, Annual Report 2018-19

²⁴http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/Files/PAB/PAB-2018-19/States/Raj/7_Rajasthan%20minutes.pdf

²⁵http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/Files/PAB/PAB-2019-20/PAB_2019-20_minutes/Rajasthan_Minutes.pdf

²⁶Ibid

The above services are provided at the AnganwadiCentres (AWCs) run by the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) of the state government. Last three services however, are provided by the Department of Health and Family Welfare at the AWCs. Each AWC is staffed with an Anaganbadi Worker and an Anganbadi helper. There are also Mini AWCs where only the Anganbadi Helper is appointed.

Besides, now, there is an Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA), known as Ashasahyogini in Rajasthan, is also appointed at every AWC. ASHA is a community level worker whose role is to function as a health care facilitator, a service provider and to generate awareness on health issues. Besides delivering key services to maternal child health and family planning, she also renders important services under National Disease Control Programme. The Ashas are appointed by Health Department under National Health Mission (NHM).

Table 16: Number of AWCs and Mini AWCs in Rajasthan

	Total	Functional
AWCs	55,816	55,225
Mini AWCs	6,204	5,817
Total AWCs	62,020	61,342

Source: Source: DWCD-GoR 2009, Annual Report 2018-19

As we can see 99% of the sanctioned AWCs are functional in the state. These AWCs are run in the departmental buildings (42%), in schools (30%) and in rented buildings (17%). The physical infrastructure available at the AWCs is shown in the table below.

Table 17: Status of Anganwadi buildings and physical facilities

S.No.	Description	Total	Percentage to functional
1	Total Projects	304	
2	Total Sanctioned AWC	62,020	
3	Total Functional AWC	61,342	
4	In departmental building	25,671	41.85
5	In a rented building	10,685	17.42
6	In School	18,406	30.01
7	In government buildings	3,534	5.76
8	In other community buildings	3,046	4.97
9	AWC with toilet availability (2017-18)	29,367	47.87
10	AWC with availability of drinking water (2017-18)	47,313	77.13

Source: Annual Reports 2017-18 and 2018-19, Dept. of WCD, Rajasthan

Some of the AWCs, however, are running in the rented buildings (17%), in other govt buildings and in the community buildings. Less than half of the AWCs have toilet facilities and only 77% of the AWCs in the state have drinking water facility.

Table 18: Availability of the functionaries at the AWCs

Components / Year		2017-18	2018-19
Functional AWC	AWC	55260	55525
	Mini AWC	5769	5817
	Total	61029	61342
AWW	Sanctioned post	55260	55525
	Vacant Post	53357	53767
	Percentage	96.56	96.83
AWH	Sanctioned post	55816	55816
	Vacant Post	52547	53243
	Percentage	94.14	95.39
AshaSahyogini	Sanctioned post	55816	55816
	Vacant Post	48639	50866
	Percentage	87.14	91.30

Source: Annual Reports 2017-18 and 2018-19, Dept. of WCD, Rajasthan

Data in the table above shows that availability of anagnawadiwaorkers (AWW), anganwadi helpers (AWH) and AshaSahyoginis has improved in 2018-19 compared to previous year is still lower that the functional AWCs in the state. Though more than 95% of the functional AWCs have AWWs and AWHs, only 91% of the AWCs have Ashasahyoginis. These percentages will further go down if we compare the availability of these functionaries with the number of sanctioned AWCs and mini AWCs.

Functioning of the AWCs: One way of looking at the functioning of the ICDS is the average number of days on which the services at the AWCs are provided. The table below shows the percentage of AWCs providing the pre-school education and supplementary nutrition for more than 21 days on average.

Table 19: Performance of AWCs in the state

S.No.	District	No. of Total Functional AWC	AWCs providing PSE for more than 21 days (average)			AWCs providing Supplementary Nutrition for more than 21 days (average)		
			2016-17	2017-18*	2018-19**	2016-17	2017-18*	2018-19**
Total		61342	60537	59190	59190	58128	58701	43381
Percent to Functional AWCs			98.69	96.49	96.49	94.76	95.69	70.72

Source: Annual Report 2018-19, Dept. of WCD, Rajasthan * Till Dec 2017 ** Till Dec 2018

NandGhar: PPP or Privatization of ICDS services!

The government has stared, under public-private-partnership mode, and with CSR support the Nandghars in the state. NandGhars are AWCs adopted by some corporate, which runs it providing all the mandatory facilities in the AWC which would be built by the corporate on the land provided by the department.

Though more than 96% of the AWCs have reported to be providing pre-school education for more than 21 days during 2016-17 to 2018-19 it is showing a slightly declining trend over the period. The percentage of the AWCs providing the supplementary nutrition for more than 21 days was less than 95% in 2016-17 which increased above 95% in 2017-18. But shows a drastic decline in 2018-18 and it has come down to just 71%.

The coverage of the beneficiaries under the ICDS is given in the table below. If we look the total beneficiaries of the ICDS in comparison with the total estimated beneficiaries in the last three years the percentage of the beneficiaries was 67% in the 2016-17 which is has gone down in the subsequent years (table below).

Table 20: Progress of Supplementary Nutritional Program for last three years

Year	Estimated Beneficiary	Category wise beneficiary						Total	Percent to estimated beneficiaries
		6months to 3 years children		3 to 6 years children		Pregnant and lactating mothers	Adolescent girls		
		Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl				
2016	5,560,866	897,387	863,547	484,723	495,852	871,058	95,800	3,708,367	66.69
2017#	5,780,866	891,216	868,116	476,185	484,203	869,145	98,078	3,686,943	63.78
2018@	5,780,866	869,953	839,535	472,218	485,451	875,613	3,505	3,546,275	61.35

Source: Annual Report 2018-19 and 2017-18, Dept. of WCD, Rajasthan

#Till December 2017, @Till December 2018

The estimation of total beneficiaries by the department is based on the enrolment of the beneficiaries with the AWCs in the state, which suggests that more than or close to 40% of the enrolled beneficiaries are not able to take the benefits of supplementary nutrition under the ICDS. Another point to notice is the sudden decline of the number adolescent girls taking benefit from ICDS. This perhaps has happened because the two schemes for adolescent girls Kishori Shakti Yojna and SABLA are now replaced with another scheme called Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) under which the age is now limited to only 10-14 years of girls who are not in school. The earlier schemes covered out pf school girls up 18 years of age.

PradhanMantriMatriVandana Yojana (PMMVY)

PMMVY is being implemented in the state since 01.01.2017. The Act makes provision to provide one free meal and Rs. 6,000 to every pregnant and lactating mother. The free meal should be provided through the AWCs but currently the pregnant women and lactating mothers are getting take home ration from the AWCs. Also, instead Rs. 6,000, the central government provides only Rs. 5,000 to a pregnant woman on birth of her first child. It means a woman can get this benefit only once and those women who were already mother on the day of beginning of the scheme (i.e. 01.01.2017) are excluded from the scheme as the scheme benefits a woman only on birth of her first child. The amount is provided to women in three installments. First installment of Rs. 1,000 is provided on the registration of pregnancy, second installment of Rs. 2,000 is provided on at least one pre-delivery check-up, while the third installment of remaining Rs. 2,000 is provided after the registration of the newborn baby and immunization from BCG, DPT, OPV and Hepatitis B of baby is completed. Application for this has to be made at the AWC and AWW will submit the applications to the Lady Supervisor who will verify it. Total number of estimated and enrolled women for Rajasthan and India under PMMVY is shown in the table below.

Table 21: Estimated vs. actual number of beneficiaries registered under PMMVY

States/UTs	Estimated Target as on 31st December 2017	Actual enrollment as on 31st December 2017	%age completed	Estimated Target as on 31st August 2018 #	Actual enrollment as on 31st August 2018	%age completed
Rajasthan	292681	2,763	0.90%	487802	467475	95.83%
India	5,169,987	208663	4%	8,616,644	4,487,999	52.09%

Source: PMMVY Progress Report, September 2017 – August 2018, Ministry of Women and Child Development GOI

According to the PMMVY Progress Report (September 2017 – August 2018) (MWCD, 2017)²⁷, Rajasthan is among the top three states in terms of enrolment of beneficiaries of the PMMVY. The percentage of enrollment during the year 2018 has been 95% of the estimated target in the state. If we look at month wise enrolments as shown in the table below, we again see an increasing pattern in month after month.

Table 22: Month wise registration under PMMVY in the state

Month	No. of registration of beneficiaries
September 2017	
October 2017	
November 2017	9
December 2017	2,765
January 2018	3,474
February 2018	21,728
March 2018	37,289
April 2018	49,021
May 2018	1,22,767
June 2018	1,09,637
July 2018	75,666
August 2018	47,670

Source: PMMVY Progress Report, September 2017 – August 2018, Ministry of Women and Child Development, GOI

The process of payment under the scheme is also comparatively faster in Rajasthan. About 40% of the payments were processed during 1 to 10 days and another 30% of the applications were processed in 11 to 20 days for their first payment. Rest of the applications took 21 to 60 days in being processed.

Grievance Redressal:

As mentioned above, the state government has created the State Food Commission and has also framed rules for the grievance redressal. The food commissioner however is yet to be appointed. The Act also makes provision for District Grievance Redressal Officers (DGROs). The state government has given charge of DGROs to the existing Additional District Magistrates or Additional District Magistrate-Administration (ADM/ADM-Admin) in each

²⁷MWCD, 2017, PMMVY Progress Report (September 2017 – August 2018), available on: <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/PMMVY%20Scheme%20Implementation%20Guidelines%20.0.pdf>

district. This is an additional responsibility for the ADMs, who might already have other works and responsibilities. The vigilant committees at district, tehsil and shop levels, which were in place earlier, continue to exist. A helpline number is also provided by the government to make the complaints in regards of functioning of PDS.

Transparency and Accountability: The NSFA gives lot of emphasis on transparency in the public distribution system (PDS). The mandatory provisions include placing all the PDS related records in public domain, conducting periodic social audits of PDS and other schemes, using information and communication technology “to ensure transparent recording of transactions at all levels”; and setting up vigilance committees at all levels to supervise all schemes under the Act.

In the state, the FPSs have been asked by the government to provide all the relevant information like names of beneficiaries and phone number for the making the complaints on the wall. In some districts the information has also been provided in local dialect (like in Mewari in Udaipur).

The department's website is also providing lots of information about the beneficiary card holders, the data on food distribution, the data on cards on which no transaction happened etc.

The state government has recently also launched a Jan Soochna Portal²⁸, where all the relevant information about various government schemes are available at one place in Hindi. Though the Jan Soochna Portal provides lots of information about the PDS both collectively and for an individual cardholder, but the information on other three schemes under the NFSFA, is yet to be provided on this website.

Social Audit: The government has made provisions for the social audit through the government order²⁹. The panchayats are responsible for conducting the social audit of NFSFA at least once in 6 months. There are provisions for the social audit committees at state and district levels for ensuring the completion of the social audits. The steps to conduct the social audits are also mentioned in the order. This order was issued in 2017. However, there is no further detail available in the public domain about the social audits and their outcomes.

²⁸<http://jansoochna.rajasthan.gov.in/index.php/home-hindi/>

²⁹<http://food.raj.nic.in/Docs/Social%20Audit%20Rules%20as%20date%20on%2022.11.2017.pdf>

VI

Summary and Conclusions

The NFSA is being implemented in the state for last six years. The state government has framed rules for the implementation of NFSA and has passed various orders. The state government's budget for PDS has declined, the budget for MDM increased only after 2018-19. What is worrying is the allocations as well as off-take of wheat under both PDS and MDM declined in the recent years. As for ICDS, though there is a slow increase in the budget over the years, the utilization of the budget has always been lower than budget allocated. The budget for PMMVY has increased only marginally from the last year.

If we look at the performance of PDS, the government has relied on use of technology like linking the cards with Aadhar and introduction of POS machines, yet less than 80% of the NFAS ration card holders are able to take the wheat from FPS. The coverage under the MDM is below national average in terms of percentage of the children getting MDM to the total enrolled children. There are also issues like centralized kitchens which are allowed only in the urban areas but in Rajasthan there are 11 centralized kitchens providing MDM in the schools. As far as ICDS is concerned, about 5 presents of functional AWCs are without AWW and AWH while 9 percent are without an Asha. As for functioning of AWCs, a big majority of the AWCs are reporting to provide pre-school education and supplementary nutrition for more than 21 days in a month yet only about 61% if the estimated beneficiaries are actually getting benefits of supplementary nutrition under the ICDS. As for the PMMVY, its showing increase in number of enrolment women and processing of payment under PMMVY is also faster in Rajasthan compared to other states. However, what we are not aware of is the status of payment of second and third installments to the women.

Also, the state government is yet to put in place a proper grievance redressal mechanism as required by the Act. Though the government has created a State Food Commission the Food Commissioner is yet to be appointed while the ADMs have been given charge of DGROs. However, what the government has taken a lot of measures for transparency, especially in functioning of PDS. Information related to PDS is available on recently launched Jan Soochna Portal as well. But there is a lack of information in public domain about the other three schemes under NFSA. The government has made provisions for the social audit through the government order but there is no further detail available in the public domain about the social audits and their outcomes.

This report is based on mostly the desk study and study of the government reports and websites. A field based study would be more apt for understanding the implementation issues on the ground. Yet the study suggests that implementation of the PDS, MDM, ICDS and PMMVY is facing many challenges in the state. The study highlights the need to increase coverage under PDS as many NFSA beneficiaries are not able to get wheat; under MDM as less than two third of total enrolled children are getting the MDM, and under ICDS are again less than two third of the estimated beneficiaries are actually getting the supplementary nutrition in the state. There is also a serious issue of shortage of staff specially in the department of food and civil supply where high percentage of the sanctioned posts are vacant.