

CHAPTER-II

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Department of Education

2.1 Mid-Day Meal Scheme

Mid-Day Meal Scheme is implemented independently by six implementing agencies in Delhi. The Directorate of Education is the Nodal Agency for implementation of the Scheme and coordinates with the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), GoI and all other agencies. The significant audit findings are given below:

Highlights

- *Out of 18000 children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education centres supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, only 1154 children were covered during the period 2013-14.*

(Paragraph 2.1.2.1)

- *The enrolment, attendance and retention of children in schools could not be enhanced. In selected primary schools, the average attendance decreased from 74 per cent in 2009-10 to 66 per cent in 2013-14.*

(Paragraphs 2.1.4.1 & 2.1.4.3)

- *Mid day meals were not served on the prescribed number of days in both Primary and Upper Primary Schools. Out of 2102 samples of cooked meals, a total of 1876 samples (89 per cent) failed tests for nutritive value during 2010-14.*

(Paragraph 2.1.5.2 (ii) & (iii))

- *Service providers did not obtain mandatory license from the Food Safety Department and were running their kitchens without 'NOCs' from civic agencies and Fire Department.*

(Paragraph 2.1.5.2 (iv))

2.1.1 Introduction

The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in August 1995, to boost the universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously impact the nutrition of primary students. In Delhi, the scheme is implemented by the Directorate of Education (the Directorate), and by five local bodies¹ independently. The Directorate is the nodal agency and coordinates with other implementing agencies in matters of

¹ North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC), South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC), New Delhi Municipal Council and Delhi Cantonment Board (DCB)

allocation and release of budget and liaisons with the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), GoI. Supply of cooked Mid Day Meal (MDM) to schools in Delhi has been outsourced to various NGOs for which they are supplied with food grains by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

2.1.1.1 Organisational Structure

The MHRD acts as the nodal ministry for overall implementation of the scheme in the country and a Programme Approval Board (PAB) of MHRD reviews the status and progress of the scheme in all States. The Principal Secretary (Education) GNCTD, oversees the implementation of the scheme in Delhi and Director, Additional Director, DDE (MDM), ADE (MDM), DDEs (Districts), Education Officers (Zones) of the Directorate, assist him. Head of the School (HoS) and in-charge MDM in the school looks after the implementation of the scheme at the school level.

2.1.1.2 Audit scope and methodology

The Performance audit, covering the period 2009-14, was conducted between August 2014 and January 2015 by examining the records of two out of 13 districts (East and South) selected through PPSWOR 2² method (with size measure as number of schools in the district) and 60 schools (40 primary schools of EDMC and SDMC and 20 upper primary schools of the Directorate) selected through SRSWOR3³ method. Audit test checked the records of the MDM Branch in the Directorate, Education Departments of EDMC and SDMC. A performance audit of 'Implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Delhi' was included in Volume II of the Audit Report of C&AG for the year ended March 2006 (Previous Report).

An entry conference was held (October 2014) with the Director of Education to discuss the audit scope and methodology. Exit Conference was held (March 2015) and the reply of the Government received subsequently have been incorporated in the report suitably.

2.1.1.3 Audit objectives

The broad objectives of the performance audit were to assess whether:

- the scheme was being implemented in a planned manner as to cover all the eligible primary and upper primary level school children,
- funds allocated were being utilized in an economic and efficient manner,

²Probability Proportionate to Size Without Replacement

³Simple Random Sampling Without Replacement

- the scheme achieved its objective of enhancing enrolment, retention and attendance in primary education, and improving the nutritional status of children in the primary and upper primary classes, and
- implementation of the scheme was being effectively monitored.

Audit findings

2.1.2 Planning

2.1.2.1 Coverage of EGS/AIE centres and *Madarsas*

Audit observed that there were deficiencies in coverage of EGS⁴/AIE⁵ centres and *Madarsas* as Programme Approval Board (PAB), in its meeting (May 2009), directed GNCTD to cover all 18000 children studying in EGS and AIE centres supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), during the year 2013-14, however, only 1154 children of three AIE centres and five Deaf and Dumb schools, were covered under the scheme. This was also mentioned in the Previous Report, however, no substantial improvement was noticed.

Government stated (April 2015) that only 2047 children are studying in 19 centres being run by NGOs/*Madrasas* and they will be covered under the scheme from April 2015. The reply indicates flawed planning of the Directorate for identifying and covering all children of EGS and AIE centres. The reply was silent regarding coverage of children under SSA.

2.1.2.2 Non-formulation of plan to create awareness of MDM scheme

The MHRD circular (22 July 2013) provides for creating awareness of MDM scheme among the stakeholders, particularly children and community members, through TV, Radio, Print Media etc. Audit noticed that the Directorate had not formulated any plan for creating awareness of the scheme among the stakeholders. Government stated (April 2015) that efforts would be made to create awareness about the scheme.

2.1.2.3 Delay in implementation of scheme in upper primary schools

The MHRD directed GNCTD in September 2007 to extend the scheme to upper primary schools from the year 2008-09. But, the Directorate extended the scheme to upper primary schools with effect from 29 September 2009 i.e. with a delay of 18 months.

The Government stated (April 2015) that the process for empanelling the Service Providers took a long time which delayed implementation of the scheme in Upper Primary schools.

2.1.3 Scheme finances

2.1.3.1 Persistent savings under the scheme funds

The details of funds approved and released by MHRD and GNCTD, and actual

⁴Education Guarantee Scheme

⁵Alternative and Innovative Education

expenditure incurred during 2009-14, were as enumerated in **Table 2.1.1**.

Table 2.1.1: Funds allocated, released and actual expenditure (2009-14)

(₹ in crore)

Year	Unspent balance of MHRD funds	Funds released by MHRD	Funds released by GNCTD	Total funds available	Expenditure	Savings (percentage)
2009-10	33.27	19.80	20.32	73.39	61.60	11.79 (16)
2010-11	11.79	85.53	20.69	118.01	94.96	23.05 (20)
2011-12	23.05	65.62	22.21	110.88	107.83	3.05 (3)
2012-13	3.05	85.24	20.67	108.96	99.35	9.61 (9)
2013-14	9.61	99.48	37.72	146.81	117.09	29.72 (20)
Total	80.77	355.67	121.61	558.06	480.83	77.23 (14)

Source: Information furnished by Directorate

Thus, there were persistent savings during last five years, ranging up to 20 per cent.

Government stated (April 2015) that delay in grant of instalment of funds on the part of MHRD resulted in under-utilisation of funds.

2.1.3.2 Late receipt and utilisation of funds

As per MDM guidelines, second instalment of funds should be released by MHRD during September/October of each year, based on the progress of expenditure incurred out of first instalment and the State Finance Department should release scheme funds expeditiously. In Delhi, the Directorate proposes agency-wise allocation to the Finance Department for approval and after getting the approval, releases funds to all the implementing agencies. Audit scrutiny showed late receipt of funds from MHRD and non-release/delayed release of funds to the implementing agencies by the State Government, as discussed below:

- (i) The Finance Department, GNCTD received funds of ₹ 30.49 crore for the year 2010-11 in the month of April 2011 from MHRD, which could not be utilized during 2010-11. Similarly, ₹ 5.83 crore for the year 2011-12 and ₹ 27.32 crore for 2012-13, received in February 2012 and March 2013 respectively, could not be utilised during the respective financial years.
- (ii) Funds of ₹ 10.45 crore for the year 2013-14, received by the Finance Department in January 2014, were not released to implementing agency as of 31 March 2014.
- (iii) The Directorate released ₹ 10.11 crore, ₹ 78.80 lakh and ₹ 4.98 lakh to MCD, NDMC and DCB on 29 March, 31 March and 30 March 2011 respectively, but these were received by the agencies after closing of the financial year (April 2011).

Government stated (April 2015) that there are several steps involved in release of funds after receipt of funds from MHRD which causes unavoidable delays. It further stated that efforts would be made to obtain timely funds from MHRD as well as Finance Department, GNCTD.

2.1.3.3 Under-utilization of the Management, Monitoring and Evaluation Fund

As per MHRD circular (June 2010), 50 *per cent* grant of central assistance for Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (MME) should be utilized by schools on purchase of stationery and soaps etc. and 50 *per cent* by the implementing agencies on hiring of manpower, external monitoring and evaluation and publicity etc. Audit observed that the implementing agencies utilised only ₹ 4.69 crore against ₹ 12.01 crore released by MRHD under MME. The underutilisation was between 35 and 84 *per cent* of the funds during 2009-14.

Government stated (April 2015) that instruction would again be issued to the implementing agencies for utilisation of MME funds and Directorate would also take more care in the matter. However, the fact remains that the Department did not address this issue despite being pointed out in the Previous Report.

2.1.4 Impact on enrolment of children in schools

2.1.4.1 Children enrolled and covered

The details of children enrolled and who availed the benefit of MDM during the period 2009-14, are shown in **Table 2.1.2**.

Table 2.1.2: Details of children enrolled and who availed the benefit of MDM

(Nos. in lakh)

Year	Enrolment of children			Number of children availed MDM			Percentage covered
	Primary	Upper Primary	Total	Primary	Upper Primary	Total	Total
2009-10	11.75	6.98	18.73	8.23	4.89	13.12	70
2010-11	11.31	4.90	16.21	8.14	3.53	11.67	72
2011-12	11.53	6.68	18.21	7.84	4.54	12.38	68
2012-13	11.61	7.13	18.74	7.55	4.64	12.19	65
2013-14	11.34	7.12	18.46	7.37	4.63	12.00	65

As is evident from the table, total enrolment decreased from 18.73 lakh in 2009-10 to 16.21 lakh in 2010-11, then it increased to 18.74 lakh in 2012-13 and again decreased to 18.46 lakh in 2013-14. The percentage of children who availed the benefits of MDM declined from 70 *per cent* in 2009-10 to 65 *per cent* in 2013-14 except in 2010-11 when it was 72 *per cent*. This issue was pointed out in the Previous Report also.

Further, Audit noticed that the Directorate neither fixed any target for increasing the enrolment of children in schools nor initiated concrete steps to create awareness for increasing the enrolment. Twenty one out of 40 primary schools organised *Pravesh Mela*⁶ and *Prabhat Pheri*⁷ etc. in the month of July, for increasing the enrolment.

Government stated (April 2015) that only those students who are present in the school are served the MDM. Further, continuous efforts are being made for increasing enrolment by issuing advertisement in the month of April for “*Dakhila Abhiyaan*”⁸ in MCD/Directorate schools and members of School Management Committee are sensitized to increase enrolment.

2.1.4.2 Drop out of children from schools

In case of selected primary schools, 5749 children dropped out, while 1235 children dropped out from selected upper primary schools, during 2009-14. Yearly drop out of children ranged from 1306 to 1007 in selected primary schools and 97 to 362 in upper primary schools. The issue was also pointed out in the Previous Report.

Out of the total 60 selected schools, Heads of 29 primary and one upper primary schools attributed the reasons for drop out, to poverty, liability of caring siblings, change of residence, etc. Government stated (April 2015) that maximum reported drop outs were most probably due to migrant issues.

2.1.4.3 Impact on attendance of children in schools

The data provided by the Directorate showed that the scheme had a mixed impact on attendance of children in schools. In selected primary schools, average attendance decreased from 74 *per cent* in 2009-10 to 66 *per cent* in 2013-14 whereas it increased from 74 *per cent* in 2009-10 to 78 *per cent* in 2013-14, in upper primary schools. Since the main objective of the scheme was to increase enrolment, retention and attendance of children in primary education, the decreasing trend in attendance in primary schools indicated that the scheme could not achieve the desired impact on attendance. The issue of decrease in attendance was pointed out in the Previous Report also.

Government stated (April 2015) that there is no minimum attendance criteria as per Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009. The reply is silent with regard to action taken to arrest decreasing trend.

2.1.5 Appraisal of activities relating to improving the nutritional status of children

2.1.5.1 Allocation, lifting and utilisation of food grains

(i) **Utilization of food grains:** Scheme provides for supply of food grains

⁶ Admission camp

⁷ Morning procession of teachers with students

⁸ Enrolment drive

free of cost by GoI at a rate of 100 grams per child per school day for primary students and 150 grams for upper primary students. The food grains are allotted by the MHRD on the basis of plan approved by the PAB. The overall position of food grains allocated, lifted and utilized by all the six agencies in Delhi during 2009-14, is given in **Table 2.1.3.**

Table 2.1.3: Food grains allocated, lifted and utilized

(Quantity in Metric Tonnes)

Year	No of children (as on 30 th Sep. of previous year)		Opening Balance		Food grains allocated		Food grains lifted		Food grains utilised	
	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary
2009-10	1175365	698118	-2021.57	0	20290.86	21162.84	17929.22	7666.43	16124.67	7452.37
2010-11	1131264	489944	-217.02	214.06	18899.98	17935.94	15051.95	13330.67	15312.96	12831.84
2011-12	1152596	668204	-478.025	712.89	18900	15787.1	16388.6	14148.24	16094.25	13724.69
2012-13	1161129	713378	-183.67	1136.45	17262	14722.22	15696.4	11805.32	14692.55	13479.11
2013-14	1133901	711763	818.18	-535.48	14390.58	14748.52	13621.57	14703.1	14330.58	13369.17
Total	5754255	3281407	-2082.105	1527.92	89743.42	84356.62	78687.74	61653.76	76555.01	60857.18

Source: Directorate of Education.

It can be seen from the above table that during the period 2009-14, only 140341.50 MTs of food grain (81 *per cent*) was lifted by the six implementing agencies against an allocation of 174100.04 MTs. Government stated (April 2015) that the observation is a matter of record. It was also stated that food grains are lifted as per the actual requirement based on the attendance of children. The contention of the Government is not correct as negative figures in opening balance indicate that service provider had to utilise his own food grains.

(ii) Non-availability of buffer stock of food grains: As per MDM guidelines, district administration should ensure that every consuming unit maintains a buffer stock of food grains required for a month to avoid disruption due to unforeseen exigencies. Audit noticed that service providers did not maintain prescribed buffer stock for one month as they received food grains after 30 to 50 days of serving the meals. The Directorate attributed (January 2015) delay in lifting of food grains to administrative reasons. The reply is not acceptable as the availability of buffer stock for one month is a codal requirement under MDM norms. Besides, use of own food grains by the service providers raises questions on quality of food grains used.

Government stated (April 2015) that now food grains are lifted and distributed among the service providers in advance every month and directions will be issued to Service Providers to maintain buffer stock.

(iii) Sub-standard food grains in Kitchens: The PAB in its meeting (April 2012) took note of the outcome of field visit by the CSDS⁹, which found that the food grains at the time of lifting were being received as grade 'A' but the same

⁹Centre for Study of Development Societies

quality of food grains did not reach the MDM kitchen. The available stock of food grains at Central Kitchen of a service provider (M/s Maitri Research and Development Foundation) in South West Delhi was not of Fair Average Quality (FAQ). The rice was found substandard, infested with worms and contained non-grains elements requiring extensive cleaning. Special Secretary (Education), GNCTD informed in a meeting (3 April 2012) that matter was under examination and appropriate action would be taken. Audit, however, observed that the Directorate took no action against the defaulter.

Government stated (April 2015) that empanelment of the testing lab through e-tender is under process. The reply is, however, silent on action taken on the findings of CSDS.

2.1.5.2 Cooking and supply of meals in schools

(i) Interruption/stoppage in supply of cooked meals: Scrutiny of records in selected schools showed following cases of interruption in supply of cooked meals:

- Due to supply of contaminated meal by a service provider (M/s Rao Raghubeer Singh Sewa Samiti) on 25 November 2009 in SKV School, Trilok Puri, 126 children were hospitalized and the supply of meals remained suspended for 10 days.
- Cooked meal was not supplied on four days in the GBSS School, Village Dera. The Principal attributed the non-supply of meals to damage of vehicle of service provider who made no alternative arrangement.
- In selected schools, the cooked meal was returned on eight occasions in 2009-10 and on one day in 2010-11, due to sub-standard quality of cooked meal.
- During the period from May 2012 to May 2013, a total of 55216 (45 *per cent*) cooked meals were not taken by the students of the Government Co-Education Senior Secondary School, Bhati Mines, though the total attendance of students was 123275. The Principal attributed the reasons for not taking the MDM to the supply of sub-standard meals by the supplier.

Government stated (April 2015) that Service Provider (M/s Rao Raghubeer Singh Sewa Samiti) has been suspended from the panel. Further, in case of non-supply of MDM in Village Dera School, payment of four days was deducted from the bill. In cases of return of food in eight schools, it was stated that MDM Committee was vigilant before serving the meal, thus sub-standard food was not served to children. In case of Bhati Mines School, it was stated that students were not interested to take the MDM, but now all the students are taking meals. The reply is silent as to the action taken to prevent disruption in supply of MDM.

(ii) Supply of meals on less than prescribed days: Against a target of 210 working days in a year fixed by PAB, meals were served on 179 to 209 working days, in 169 out of 200 test checked cases¹⁰. In upper primary schools, against a target of 220 days (210 for 2009-10), supply of meals ranged from 160 to 206 days, in all 76 test checked cases. This issue was also pointed out in the Previous Report.

Government stated (April 2015) that sometimes MDM is returned due to different reasons which, in turn, reduce the number of days MDM was supplied. It further stated that EDMC and SDMC had achieved the target of 200 days in a year. The fact, however, is that the target set by the PAB was not achieved.

(iii) Failure of cooked food samples: As per guidelines for engagement of NGOs, performance of NGOs should be assessed through a credible system of evaluation and renewal of MoU for the next year, should depend on performance. As per agreements, Service Providers were to supply cooked meal of prescribed nutritive value¹¹. It further stipulated that if sample report of MDM fails in nutritive value in a particular menu continuously, agreements were liable to be cancelled. Audit scrutiny showed that 2102 samples of cooked food from 37 service providers were tested by SRIIR¹² during 2010-14, out of which 1876 samples (89 *per cent*) failed. In case of the selected districts of the Directorate for 2013-14, the failure rate was 100 *per cent*. The Directorate levied a total penalty of ₹ 77.25 lakh on these 37 defaulting service providers. Out of these it extended the supply orders of 31 service providers on 31 March 2014. This included 12 service providers who were penalised every year for the past four years, thereby indicating continuous failure.

In SDMC, 44 out of 137 samples failed during 2012-14 whereas, in EDMC, 113 out of 249 samples failed to meet the prescribed values of calories and protein during 2011-14. EDMC and SDMC neither levied any penalty nor discontinued the services of service providers for supplying substandard meals.

Government stated (April 2015) that EDMC has issued show cause notices to all service providers for failure of samples and action would be taken against the service providers on the analogy of policy adopted by the Directorate. However, the reply is silent regarding reasons for extending supply orders of defaulting service providers.

(iv) Non-obtaining of required licenses and certificates by service providers: As per the Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006, Service Providers are required to obtain license from the Food Safety Department, GNCTD. Further, as per conditions of agreements, service providers had to obtain 'No Objection Certificates' from the Health Department of MCD and from the Fire Department,

¹⁰ 40 selected primary schools x 5 years =200 cases.

¹¹ (i)450 K calories and 12 grams of protein in primary schools (ii) 700 K calories and 20 grams of protein per meal in upper primary schools

¹²Shriram Institute for Industrial Research

GNCTD. Other clearances and health certificates for its employees were also to be obtained. Audit observed that the required licenses and clearances/certificates were not obtained by any service provider during 2009-14 inspite of being pointed out in the Previous Report.

Government stated (April 2015) that 23 Service Providers (out of 31) have obtained the required Food Safety Licenses and fresh directions would be issued to the Service Providers for obtaining the requisite certificates. However, the fact is that the licenses were obtained after being pointed out in audit.

(v) Non-compliance of general instructions issued by the Directorate:

The Directorate issued (December 2009, September 2010 and January 2012) general instructions to be followed for implementation of the MDM scheme. Audit observed that these instructions were not being followed as detailed below:

(a) Scrutiny of inspection reports of EO (Zone-I)¹³ and EO (Zone III)¹⁴ of East district showed that either pest control was not carried out or records in this regard were not maintained by service providers. Thus, audit could not derive an assurance on regular fumigation and pest control in the kitchens.

(b) As per agreement, service providers were required to install and maintain water purification systems in their kitchens. Test check of inspection reports of respective DDEs and EOs showed that water purification systems were either not installed or not working in the kitchens of - (i) M/s Jan Chetna Jagriti Shaikshan Vikas Manch, (ii) M/s Dalit Prahri, and (iii) M/s Bhartiya Manav Kalyan Parishad.

(c) During visits to selected primary and upper primary schools, Audit observed that food distributors did not wear aprons, headgears and gloves in some of the schools. Also, identity cards were not issued to them in 24 primary and four upper primary schools.

(d) Training to Cook-cum-Helpers (CCH) was not being provided by the Directorate.

With regard to issues raised at (a) to (c), the Government stated (April 2015) that necessary instructions would be issued. As regards Training to Cook-cum-Helpers, it was stated that a list of 60 CCHs engaged by Service Providers, for training through Ministry of Tourism, GoI, had been forwarded to MHRD in February 2014, but no response was received.

¹³ November and December 2010 and November 2011

¹⁴ April and August 2013

2.1.5.3 Issues relating to nutrients, nutritional level and health check-ups

(i) **Non-use of double fortified salt in meals:** It was observed in audit that service providers were not using double fortified salt for cooking of MDM as stipulated in guidelines. Government stated (April 2015) that instructions to all Service Providers would be issued afresh.

(ii) **Provision of micro-nutrient for children:** The MDM guidelines (2006) provide for appropriate interventions for micro-nutrient supplementation and de-worming through administration of (a) six monthly dose for de-worming and Vitamin-A supplementation, (b) weekly supplement of Iron, Folic-Acid, and Zinc, and (c) other appropriate supplementation depending on common deficiencies.

The School Health Programme is run in the schools of Directorate under Chacha Nehru Sehat Yojana. In MCsD schools, it is run by respective Health Departments. Under these programmes, health check-up of the students is done in the schools and micro-nutrients, Vitamin A, de-worming tablets, Iron, Folic-Acid and Zinc tablets, are distributed to the students. Audit scrutiny of records showed that -

(a) In nine selected upper primary schools, tablets of Iron and Folic-Acid were provided only 1 to 5 times during the period 2009-14, whereas in four schools, records of distribution of tablets were not available. In 13 schools, tablets of de-worming were provided only 1 to 5 times and in four schools, record was not available.

(b) In 16 selected primary schools, tablets of Iron and Folic-Acid were provided only 1 to 5 times during the period 2009-14, whereas in four schools these were not distributed. In 32 schools, tablets of de-worming were provided only 1 to 5 times during 2009-14. In six schools, records of distribution of tablets were not available.

Government stated (April 2015) that weekly Iron folic acid supplementation programme is being implemented through class teachers/Nodal teachers of the school and records in this regard are maintained in registers as well as online. Reply does not reflect factual position as audit observation is based on the registers maintained by the concerned schools and information furnished by the HoSs.

(iii) **Health check-up of the children:** As per information furnished by 60 selected schools for the period 2009-14, a total of 513 health check-up camps were held, covering 66524 children. It was seen that in two primary and four upper primary schools, no health check-up camp was held. In two primary schools and 16 upper primary schools, camps were not held even once a year. Records relating to these health camps further showed that 412 children of five primary schools were found underweight and 1187 children of 10 primary schools were anaemic. Particularly in MCP School, Chhatarpur, number of anaemic children was as high as 40 *per cent* (360 out of 900) in 2012-13 and 28 *per cent* (224 out of 801) in 2013-14.

Government stated (April 2015) that under Chacha Nehru Sehat Yojana, total 17.66 lakh students were screened of any disease, deficiency and disability in various Delhi Government and Government Aided schools from November 2011 to December 2014. The reply does not address the issue of non-conducting of regular health check-up.

2.1.6 Monitoring and evaluation

2.1.6.1 Formation of Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee and its meetings

The MHRD circular (30 August 2010), envisages setting up of Steering-cum-Monitoring Committees (SMCs) at the State, district and school levels to oversee the implementation of MDM scheme.

Audit observed that the State SMC met only four times during 2009-14, as against a minimum of ten meetings (once in six month). Similarly, against the target of 50 meetings of Zonal SMC during 2009-14, only 18 and 5 meetings were held in Zone 23 and Zone 24 of South District respectively. In three zones of East District, only 18, 16 and 7 meetings were held. No SMC was constituted at Zonal or district level in EDMC and SDMC.

Out of 60 selected schools, SMCs were not formed in three primary and four upper primary schools. In seven primary and seven upper primary schools, though SMCs were formed, no meeting was held. In 28 primary schools, number of monthly meetings was between five and 120 and in three upper primary schools, it was between one and thirty.

Government stated (April 2015) that state SMC meetings would be held in every six months and instructions will be issued for holding regular meetings of Zonal and School SMCs. Further, it also stated that EDMC and SDMC have adopted a mechanism for discussing the issues related to implementation of MDM at schools level. However, the fact remains that EDMC and SDMC did not have any Zonal SMCs.

2.1.6.2 Non-preparation of monthly monitoring reports

DDEs were required to monitor the working of the Committees of MDM at zonal and school level, and submit monthly reports in this regard, to the Additional Director of Education (MDM), through e-mail. Audit observed that monthly reports were not sent to Headquarters by the DDEs.

Government stated (April 2015) that instructions would be issued to all Deputy Directors of Districts in this regard.

2.1.6.3 Non-compliance of measures regarding quality of raw food grains:

The MHRD circulated instructions (February 2010) to be followed by all States with a view to ensure quality of raw food grains to be lifted from FCI godowns and timely payment to the FCI for the same. Audit observed that :

- No such joint inspection with FCI was conducted by the Directorate and EDMC during 2009-14.

- No system was in place for lifting of samples jointly in the presence of officials of GNCTD and FCI.
- Regular meetings with FCI regarding lifting, payment and quality of foodgrains were not conducted.

Issues relating to joint inspections and joint lifting of samples were pointed out in the Previous Report also.

Government stated (April 2015) that according to need, efforts would be made to conduct joint inspections and meetings as prescribed.

2.1.6.4 Non-conducting of regular monthly visits to schools

As per general instructions issued by the Directorate, all EOs were to visit each school of their zone at least once in a month at the time of distribution of MDM for monitoring purpose. On being asked about the periodicity of such visits, EOs (Zone 23 and 24) of South District and EOs of Zone 1, 2 and 3 of East District stated (December 2014 and January 2015) stated that they visited schools as and when required. However, school-wise details of visits were not available with EOs. Government stated (April 2015) that instructions shall be issued to all the DDEs of the districts and EOs of zones to adhere to the general instructions.

2.1.6.5 Short visits to kitchens by DDEs and EOs

DDEs were required to visit kitchens of service providers in their areas at least once a month and EOs once a fortnight. Against a target of 60 visits during 2012-14, only seven visits were made whereas records of visits for 2009-12 were not available. DDE (South) visited kitchens only five times during the period 2009-14. Records of visits by EOs (Zone 23 and 24) of South District and EOs of Zone 1, 2 and 3 of East District were not available. Government stated (April 2015) that instructions shall be issued to all the DDEs of the districts and EOs of zones to visit the kitchens as per extant orders.

2.1.6.6 Redressal of grievances

As per the Directorate circular (13 September 2010), all Heads of Schools should maintain a register for redressal of complaints/grievances/suggestions. Audit scrutiny, however, showed that 13 out of 40 selected primary and 10 out of 20 selected upper primary schools, did not maintain such registers.

Government stated (April 2015) that instructions has been issued in April 2014 and January 2015 to constitute a committee under the chairmanship of Districts Deputy Director for redressal of grievances relating to MDM.

2.1.7 Conclusion

The Directorate failed to cover children studying in AIE/EGS centres as targeted by the PAB. It also did not formulate any plan for creating awareness about the scheme. There were persistent savings in overall allocated budget and delays in release of funds by MHRD. In selected primary schools, average attendance

decreased and coverage of children under MDM also declined. Service providers did not maintain prescribed buffer stock of food grains for one month. There were cases of interruption/stoppage of supply of cooked meal or its non-acceptance by the students due to various reasons like – suspended supply, damage to the vehicle of service providers, and supply of sub-standard meals. Majority of the samples of cooked food failed to meet the standard nutritive value. The Directorate extended the supply order of MDM suppliers, who had been repeatedly penalised. In schools, health check-up of children was not done regularly. The monitoring and inspection of lifting and transportation of food grains, kitchens, and distribution of cooked meals, at the level of DDEs and EOs, was lacking.

2.1.8 Recommendations

The Government may -

- (i) *conduct yearly review of the status of enrolment of children studying in the AIE and EGS centres,*
- (ii) *conduct more programmes like 'Dakhila Abhiyan' and 'Prabhat Pheris' to create awareness amongst the general public to enhance enrolment,*
- (iii) *ensure that the food supplied by the service providers conforms to the prescribed standards of nutritive value, and*
- (iv) *strengthen the monitoring mechanism by regular inspections of schools, kitchens and holding of SMC meetings at State, Zonal and School levels.*