Food Security in India- issues and challenges

This definition of food security has evolved over a period of time. As a concept, food security originated in the mid-1970s, in the wake of global food crisis. The initial focus of attention was assuring the availability and to some degree the price stability of basic foodstuffs at the international and national level. This was then broadened to incorporate the demand side of food security in early eighties. During the nineties issues such food safety, nutrition, dietary needs and food preferences were also considered important ingredients of food security. In FAO report on 'The State of Food Insecurity, 2001' , food security is defined as a " --- situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".

In the Indian context, the underpinnings for food security of the people can be found in the Constitution, though there is no explicit provision on right to food. The fundamental right to life enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution has been interpreted by the Supreme Court and National Human Rights Commission to include right to live with human dignity, which includes the right to food and other basic necessities. Under Directive Principles of State Policy, it is provided under Article 47 that that the State shall regard raising the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties.

Providing food security has been focus of the Government's planning and policy. Food security means availability of sufficient foodgrains to meet the domestic demand as well as access, at the individual level, to adequate quantities of food at affordable prices. Attainment of self-sufficiency in foodgrains production at the national level has been one of the major achievements of the country. In order to address the issue of food security at the household level, Government is implementing the Targeted Public Distribution System under which subsidisedfoodgrains is provided to eligible households.

To further strengthen the efforts to address the food security of the people, the Government has enacted the National Food Security Act, 2013. It marks a paradigm shift in approach to food security – from a welfare to rights based approach. The Act legally entitles upto 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population to receive subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System. About two thirds of the population therefore will be covered under the Act to receive highly subsidised foodgrains. There is a special focus in the Act on nutritional support to pregnant women and lactating mothers and children upto 14 years of age by entitling them to nutritious meals. Pregnant women will also be entitled to receive cash maternity benefit of Rs. 6, 000 in order to partly compensate her for the wage loss during the period of pregnancy and also to supplement nutrition. Keeping in view the important role that women play in ensuring food security of the family, the Act contains an important provision for women empowerment by giving status of head of the household to the eldest woman of the household, for the purpose of issuing of ration cards.

Salient features of the Act

(i) **Coverage and entitlement under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS):** Upto 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population will be covered under TPDS, with uniform entitlement of 5 kg per person per month. However, since Antyodaya AnnaYojana (AAY) households constitute poorest of the poor, and are presently entitled to 35 kg per household per month, entitlement of existing AAY households will be protected at 35 kg per household per month.

(ii) **State-wise coverage**: Corresponding to the all India coverage of 75% and 50% in the rural and urban areas respectively, State-wise coverage will be determined by the Central Government. State-wise coverage has been determined by the Planning Commission on the basis of 2011-12 NSSO Household Consumption Expenditure Survey data.

(iii) **Subsidised pricesunder TPDS and their revision:** Foodgrains under TPDS will be made available at subsidised prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains for a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act. Thereafter prices will be suitably linked to Minimum Support Price (MSP).

(iv) In case, any **State's allocation** under the proposed legislation is lower than their current allocation, it **will be protected** upto the level of average offtake during last three years under normal TPDS, at prices to be determined by the Central Government. Existing prices for APL households i.e. Rs. 6.10 per kg for wheat and Rs 8.30 per kg for rice has been determined as issue prices for the additional allocation to protect the average offtake.

(v) **Identification of Households**: Within the coverage under TPDS determined for each State, the work of identification of eligible households is to be done by States/UTs.

(vi) **Nutritional Support to women and children:** Pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years will be entitled to meals as per prescribed nutritional norms under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal (MDM) schemes. Higher nutritional norms have been prescribed for malnourished children upto 6 years of age.

(vii) **Maternity Benefit:** Pregnant women and lactating mothers will also be entitled receive maternity benefit of not less than Rs. 6,000 as per scheme to be formulated by the Central overnment.

(viii) **Women Empowerment:** Eldest woman of the household of age 18 years or above will be the head of the household for the purpose of issuing of ration cards.

(ix) **Grievance Redressal Mechanism:** Grievance redressal mechanism at the District and State levels. States will have the flexibility to use the existing machinery or set up separate mechanism.

(x) **Cost of intra-State transportation & handling of foodgrains and FPS Dealers' margin:** Central Government will provide assistance to States in meeting the expenditure incurred by them on transportation of foodgrains within the State, its handling and FPS dealers' margin as per norms to be devised for this purpose.

(xi) **Transparency and Accountability:** Provisions have been made for disclosure of records relating to PDS, social audits and setting up of Vigilance Committees in order to ensure transparency and accountability.

(xii) **Food Security Allowance:** Provision for food security allowance to entitled beneficiaries in case of non-supply of entitled foodgrains or meals.

(xiii) **Penalty:** Provision for penalty on public servant or authority, to be imposed by the State Food Commission, in case of failure to comply with the relief recommended by the District Grievance Redressal Officer.

Based on the provisions of the Act, the requirement of foodgrains for TPDS and other welfare schemes is estimated to be 614.4 lakh tons The estimated food subsidy for implementation of the Act at 2014-15 costs, is about Rs. 1,31,086 crore, which implies additionality of about 27,000 crores due to implementation of NFSA.

The National Food Security Act, 2013 provided for a period of one year after the commencement of the Act, i.e. upto 04.07.2014, for identification of eligible households for receiving subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). So far, 11 States/UTs viz., Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Karnataka,

Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar have informed their readiness to implement the Act. Accordingly, foodgrains under the Act have been allotted to them. In remaining 25 States/UTs, allocation underexisting TPDS is continuing.

As identification of eligible households had not been done and implementation of the Act was yet to start in these States/UTs on completion of one year period provided in the Act, time period for identification of eligible households and completion of other preparatory measure for implementation of the Act had to be extended first by three months and then again by six months i.e. upto first week of April, 2015.

Level of preparedness in 25 States/UTs where the Act is yet to be implemented varies across States/UTs. Besides identification of eligible households to be covered, preparedness would also include necessary strengthening of TPDS so as to ensure effective and timely delivery of entitlements under the Act. Aspects which need focused attention of State Governments and UT Administration relate to beneficiary identification in a fair and transparent manner so as to avoid errors on inclusion and exclusion, delivery of foodgrains upto door-steps of fair price shops computerisation of TPDS operations, strengthening of the mechanism of Vigilance Committees at various levels and effective grievance redressal mechanism. Such reforms measures are crucial to ensure a leakage and diversion free PDS and also to ensure that no needy person is denied benefits.

Reforms and Initiatives

in

Public Distribution System

Experience Sharing

Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection

## Government of Chhattisgarh, (ICT Partner NIC, Chhattisgarh)

Index

1.0 Introduction

Government of Chhattisgarh has taken many initiatives during the last 4 years to improve the performance of public distribution system in the state. The initiatives/reforms include both technical and non-technical with the single objective of creating food security to 37 Lakh BPL families without diversion and leakage in a transparent way. As a part of these reforms Chhattisgarh has computerized the whole food grain supply chain from procurement to lifting of PDS commodities to FPS with the help of National Informatics Centre. Technology has been effectively used in the system to address some of the prevalent problems in public distribution. The initiatives are now giving encouraging results towards achieving the envisioned objective. Government of India is kind enough to evaluate the system at different occasions and rank the practices as best practices.

As the objectives and problems are similar in public distribution of every state, it is thought that the experience can be shared to other states through this document to eliminate duplication or re-invention of the same at the cost of public money. Sixteen such practices are identified which can be replicated in other states to advantage. Each practice is briefly described. How that practice can address a known problem is also mentioned. Pre-requisites for implementing the practice and challenges faced are also documented against each practice.
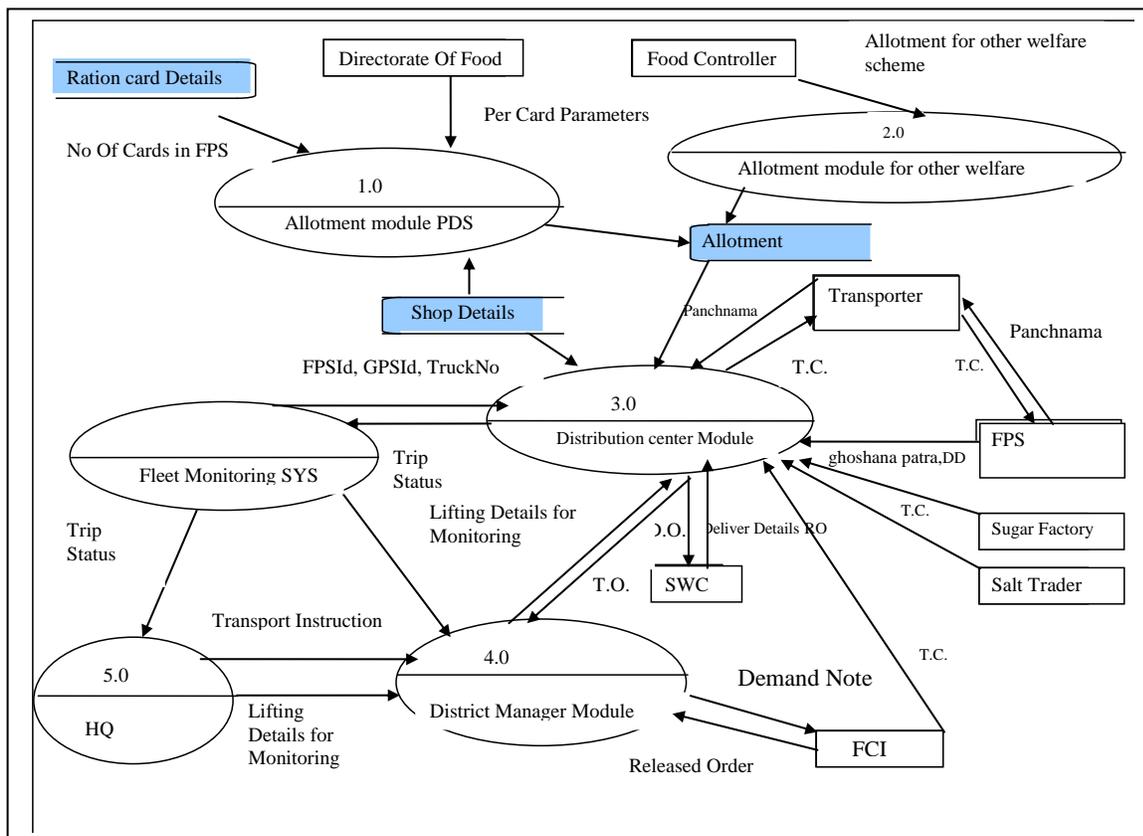
Department Of Food, NIC	Data Flow Diagram For Targeted PDS	1st Level DFD

Initiatives

based on

Information and Communication Technology

2.1	**Automated Allotment Calculation for PDS schemes.**

Description of the practice

Manual granting of allotment has been stopped since Jan. 2008. As we have 37 Lakh beneficiary details on server and their mapping to the 10427 FPS it is now possible to calculate allotment of all 10427 FPS from state directorate within one hour by just entering per card parameters for different commodities. A person authorized uses a web based application to enter per card parameters and releases the shop-wise allotments.

Problems addressed

- **Excess allotment to FPS**

  Directorate used to give district-wise allotments. District food controller used to give shop-wise allocation manually. There was no check whether the allotments are as per number of cards or not. FPS owner could influence food controller to get higher allotment than was required to distribute to the card holders attached to the shop. Excess allotment means diversion and black-marketing of excess quantity of commodities. Some shops used to get less allotment than was required to cater the ration card holders.

- **Delay in communication of allotment details to the end user.**

  In case of allotment given manually by sending a signed paper document from directorate to district, district to block and then CGSCSC distribution centre it used to take 7 to 15 days (as per study done by NISG) to reach allotment details to the distribution centre where from commodities go to FPS. This used to result in delayed lifting and thus diversion.

How can the practice address the problem?

As the allotment is calculated by machine as per number of cards linked to the shop there is no chance to get excess or less allotment. District Food Controller intervention has been completely eliminated. Grafts and influences to get excess allotment have been eliminated by automated allotment calculation. The details are instantly available on web and from different modules of the system reducing 15 days delay to hours.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

Master table of FPSs in the state with type-wise number of cards attached to the shop should be available. The data stored in the table should be authenticated by the District Food Officers. Web-based software for maintaining the FPS details should be available.

Challenges expected/faced

If the details of cards stored in the table are wrong the FPS shall get wrong allotment causing public tension. Creation of authenticated FPS table is a real challenge.

2.2	Monthly submission of FPS sales details by declaration

Description of the practice

FPS is now required to give a declaration stating sales of the previous month. The details are entered in computer. Computer automatically calculates the balance quantities at FPS. The system allows giving delivery of the [allotment – balance] quantity only. It checks building of excess quantities at FPS. The affidavit submission is defined under EC act.

Problems addressed

- **Surplus quantities building-up at FPS leading to diversion/spoilage**

  Every month quantities equal to the allotment were given earlier without considering the balance quantities available at FPS. This resulted in building surplus stocks at FPS. Surplus commodities mean either diversion or spoilage.

How can the practice address the problem?

The sales details submitted by FPS can be used to issue PDS commodities considering the balance quantities at FPS. This eliminates the subject problem.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

Control Order should be amended to make the submission of affidavit with sales details mandatory. Computerized system should be used to issue the PDS commodities at distribution centres to make the calculations easy. Manual issue considering the sales quantities may be difficult.

Challenges expected/faced

PDS commodities can not be issued unless sales details are submitted. May sometimes lead to delay in lifting, if not monitored properly.

2.3	Web-based software module for CGSCSC Distribution Centre

Description of the practice

A web-based software takes care of all operations done at Distribution Centre to receive PDS commodities from different sources and issue to FPS. All Fair Price Shops (FPS) are required to give declaration of their stocks and sales in the previous month before issue of PDS commodities. These figures are entered in this web application. Based on allocation, stock and sales figures of FPS, the actual amount of PDS commodities to be issued to the FPS is calculated by the software, and a delivery order is issued on the web application. After the issue of the delivery order a truck challan is issued indicating the truck number, driver's name, quantity dispatched etc. The truck challan is also generated using the web application. Receipt and movement of commodities between distribution centres is also done through this application. Thus stock position at any given point is available on web.

Impact Expected

- Efficient Inventory management at distribution centres.

- Up to date lifting information for effective monitoring.

- Optimal movement plan

How can the practice address the problem?

The software runs in real time to capture receipt and issue of PDS commodities. Thus the inventory and lifting information is available online and real time.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

Shop-wise allotment should be online.

Internet connectivity with good speed should be available at distribution centres.

Challenges expected/faced

Distribution centres are mainly located at sub-district level and internet connectivity with good speed is not available at all places. Wherever broadband is available, broadband connection can be taken. At those places where broadband connection is not available VSAT can be tried. As all operations at the distribution centre are dependent on web-based software, redundancy should be maintained for connectivity in the form of USB based internet connectivity etc.

2.4	Truck Dispatch Information through SMS to registered users

Description of the practice

Citizen interface web-site provides a method of citizen participation in monitoring of PDS. Citizens can register their mobile numbers on this web-site for participation in the monitoring of PDS by selecting one or more FPSs. Whenever PDS commodities are dispatched to an FPS from the warehouse, an SMS is sent to all the mobile numbers registered for that FPS. This message has the truck number, the quantities of PDS commodities being sent by that truck, and the date and time of dispatch. This improved transparency and community participation.

Problems addressed

Diversion of PDS commodities while transporting to FPS.

One of the common methods of diversion in PDS is while transporting to FPS from the distribution centre. Truck with PDS commodities is dispatched for a FPS. But it sometimes does not reach the shop and is diverted to black market. FPS operating agency is also part of diversion and tells the beneficiaries that there is no allotment. Community has no means of knowing whether commodities have been dispatched for the shop or not as per records.

How can the practice address the problem?

This facility provides a mechanism to get an alert through SMS when truck is dispatched for the registered FPS. The SMS contains details wise commodities, truck number, date & time of dispatch. Any citizen can register and start mentoring whether the truck reaches the destination with proper quantities or not. If any discrepancy is found one can complain in the call centre. With this facility PDS commodity dispatch can be watched by anybody. Whether somebody watches or not is immaterial. 'The fear of being watched' itself controls diversion.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

- Truck dispatch details from distribution centres need to be captured centrally, ideally at real time, with a web-based application running at distribution centres. It can also be captured at district offices by entering the manually generated truck dispatch details, even though it is not preferred.

- GPRS modem (costs Rs 10,000), URL for sending SMSs from any vendor (0.25 per SMS).

- Relevant software which can be taken from NIC.

Challenges expected/faced

Wide publicity is required so that public can really participate in monitoring.

2.5	**Unified Ration Card Database**

Description of the practice

In April 2007 the State decided to make a unified computerized database of ration cards. An order was issued canceling all existing ration cards, and new ration cards were made using computer software. Since new ration cards were made using computer software on a central server, a unified ration cards database was automatically created. These ration cards have two unique identifiers – a numeric code and a bar code printed on the ration card. All the details including the name of the head of the family, his caste, address, entitlements, ration shop etc. are all printed on the card from the database, and every family gets a custom made ration card. . The maintenance of the ration card database is now done through a web-based module.

Problems addressed

- Fake/ duplicate ration cards.

- Lack of transparency in the list of beneficiaries.

- Lack of authenticated information on the number of ration cards in the state.

How can the practice address the problem?

Software can check creating duplicate ration card on the same BPL survey number. But it can check duplicity to a limited extent only. The created unified database was made public through web and printed media to increase the transparency so that fake/duplicate ration cards could be identified. The printed ration cards were distributed in public gatherings like gram sabhas so that Ghost ration cards could be identified and eliminated.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

Government Orders are required to cancel all manual ration cards and give validity to the computer generated ration cards only.

Challenges expected/faced

The task involves huge data entry and verification. About 34 Lakh ration card holders' details are entered in the database for creating computerized ration cards. Since the data was enormous, the only option was a decentralized data entry. A windows based form was developed for data entry. In the field Microsoft Access was used for data entry and transporting data to the State Headquarters for convenience. The windows data entry software had elaborate validation checks to minimize mistakes in data entry. In addition to that, checking software was developed to check the data for mistakes when it was received at the State Headquarters. Once checked the data was imported into Microsoft SQL Server 2005 which was used to generate and print ration cards.

2.6	Call Centre and Complaint Monitoring System

Description of the practice

Convenient complaint lodging/feedback giving mechanism is essential for effective implementation of any welfare scheme. As per the current technology level, call centre with toll free number may be treated as the most convenient mechanism for lodging complaint. A call centre with a toll free number has been operational since 21st January 2008. The toll free number is 1-800-233-3663. Citizens can dial the toll free number and register a complaint or give a suggestion. Every complaint is given a number. The citizen is immediately given this number for future reference. Complaints are monitored at all levels using Complaint Monitoring System. Call centre also provides information on various schemes implemented by the Department.

Impact Expected

The department moves nearer to the citizen by establishing a call centre. Citizen can access any information pertaining to the department, lodge complaint or give feed back by just calling at toll-free number. All complaints lodged from anywhere from the state are centrally captured and monitored in a transparent way at all levels.

How can the practice address the problem?

Telephony today has reached the remotest corner of the country. Making a complaint through telephone does not even require writing skills. Thus citizens feel convenient to lodge complaints through this system whenever some discrepancy is noticed in the public distribution, even though they are not direct victims of the discrepancy. Monitoring of the complaint redress becomes efficient by using web-based complaint monitoring system.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice.

Connectivity at all district level offices is essential. Call centre software and complaint monitoring system developed in Chhattisgarh can be used as it is at other states. National Informatics Centre can be contacted to obtain the software.

Challenges expected/faced

Call centre and complaint monitoring system requires publicity as well as day to day monitoring from higher authorities. If call centre does not respond on public calls the system reflects negative feedback.

2.7	**Truck Photograph to replace Gate pass**

Description of the practice

Whenever truck enters or leaves a warehouse gate pass is required to be created for obvious reasons. With the advent of technology, the purpose of this gate pass can be augmented by including truck photograph with latitude and longitude of the place where the photograph is taken. When a truck with rice and other commodities reaches the warehouse for delivery, the truck is photographed using an application loaded in GPS enabled mobile. The truck and receiver's photograph along with latitude and longitude is sent to the server by the application using GPRS service. Server side program compares the latitude and longitude of truck with latitude and longitude of the warehouse to ensure that the truck is in the warehouse premises on the said date and time. The system is under pilot implementation in Chhattisgarh.

Problems addressed

- Recording receipt of commodities by a truck without physically receiving the truck at warehouse.

  At remote places it sometimes comes to the light that warehouse-in-charge has not physically received the commodities but shown in the records that they have been received and again issued. We need some technology to ensure that truck was actually in the warehouse at the given time and date.

How can the practice address the problem?

A GPS enabled mobile loaded with necessary software developed in J2ME can be used at warehouses. All the trucks that are received by warehouse are to be photographed along with the persons those receive the commodities. The technology checks whether the photo is taken within the premises of the said warehouse or not. This at least guarantees that the said truck was at the warehouse at the said time and date. Of course whether the truck had the intended commodities or not is still a doubt to be cleared.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

- GPS enabled mobile (Rs 13500 minimum) per warehouse and proper software for which NIC can be contacted.

Challenges expected/faced

- NIL except initial resistance from the employees.

2.8	Transparency by hosting majority of the reports generated by the system on web in public domain

Description of the practice

We are all aware that transparency is the only ultimate solution to reduce corruption. As a proactive measure Chhattisgarh has hosted majority of the reports generated by the system on web accessible to the public on Citizen Interface web site. Below listed details are available for public scrutiny.

- Ration Card holders' details.
  Village-wise, ward-wise or FPS-wise details of individual ration card holders along with his name, father's name and type of ration card.
- Fair price shop details
- FPS-wise allotment details
- FPS-wise lifting details.
- FPS-wise Sales details.
- Details of 'RICE FESIVAL'
- Details of rice procurement-CMR and levy
- Details of complaint lodged and its status.

Problems addressed

- Diversion, corrupt practices and inadvertent mistakes

How can the practice address the problem?

- No explanation is required. Transparency is the ultimate solution to reduce corruption or inadvertent mistakes.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

The whole process is required to be computerized.

Challenges expected/faced

Change management, Capacity building and determination at higher levels are essential for computerizing the whole process.

2.9	Inter warehouse truck transport information through SMS

Description of the practice

Large quantities of commodities are required to be transported from surplus district warehouses to deficit district warehouses. Whenever a truck is dispatched from a warehouse to any other warehouse through the computerized system, SMSs are automatically sent to both the District Managers (source and destination) giving the details about the transport. If receipt of the truck is not recorded within 3 days after dispatch, an alert SMS is automatically sent to General Managers of Civil Supplies Corporation for further necessary action.

Problems addressed

- Diversion while transporting from one warehouse to the other warehouse

How can the practice address the problem?

In most of the cases of this type of diversion, destination in-charge claims that he is not aware of the dispatch. Many a time diversion comes to the light only after lapse of a long time. By that time it would be too late to catch the persons responsible for diversion. This diversion can be eliminated by automatic and immediate communication to the destination and daily reconciliation. Sending SMSs automatically by the system eliminates the communication gap and facilitates fast reconciliation.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

Warehouse operations should be through a computerized, web-based system i.e Practice should be operational.

Challenges expected/faced

NIL

Non-ICT Initiatives

2.10	Rice Festival

Description of the practice

On a fixed, pre announced day in a month, PDS commodities are distributed in the presence of public and nominated government officials. Other benefits to BPL families like old age pension etc. are also extended on this day along with PDS commodities. Beneficiaries can take their quota on any day in a month. But we encourage them to take on this day in a group under supervision of nodal officer and public representatives. Presence of one of the vigilance committee members is also a must during the day. When commodities are distributed in public there is little chance that they are under weighed or charged more. 40% of the total beneficiaries in the state are taking their entitlement on the Rice Festival day which explains the popularity of the programme. This practice increased transparency and community participation.

Problems addressed

- Under weighing of PDS commodities at FPS.

- Over charging for PDS commodities by FPS

- Denying issue of PDS commodities to the genuine card holders

How can the practice address the problem?

On Rice festival day, beneficiaries taking their entitlement are in a large group and hence strong enough to fight for their rights in case of any discrepancy. There is supervision of government officials, political leaders belonging to different parties and vigilance committee members. It is guaranteed that beneficiaries shall get their full entitlement without any harassment on this day.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

A simple Government Order and political & bureaucratic will.

Challenges expected/faced

Monitoring of conducting 'rice festival' at different shops, number of beneficiaries availing the facility is to be done through web-based software. Otherwise monitoring will be difficult resulting in poor performance of the practice.

2.11	De-privatization of Fair Price Shops

Description of the practice

Prior to 2005, Fair Price Shops were in the hands of private people. New Control Order was issued on 23rd December, 2004. All 2,872 FPS run by private shopkeepers were removed from private hands. FPSs were given to Gram Panchayats, Co-operative societies, Self Help Groups, Forest Protection Bodies and urban local bodies. The change improved the situation of PDS in Chhattisgarh.

Problems addressed

Less accountability in FPS operating agency and hence more corruption.

How can the practice address the problem?

Cooperative societies, elected bodies and Self Help Groups etc. prove to be more accountable than private parties as they have their own internal checking mechanism.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

Revision of control order.

Challenges expected/faced

There was a great resistance to implement this practice. 400 petitions were lodged in High Court against this decision. After a long fight, High Court pronounced its judgment in favour of de-privatization. Strong support from the commissioner of Supreme Court for PDS helped the Government to win the case. The situation may not be that serous in case of other states that try to de-privatise as there exists judgment from High Court of Chhattisgarh in favour of it.

2.12	Strengthening of PDS infrastructure.

Description of the practice

Chhattisgarh has strengthened PDS infrastructure by constructing 2500 shop-cum-godowns and creating 10,000 KL storage capacity for kerosene. The funds were managed under different schemes.

Problems addressed

- Delay in lifting due to lack of adequate storage capacity.
- Spoilage of commodities due to lack of proper storage space.

How can the practice address the problem?

- Creating proper and adequate storage capacity at FPS solves both the problems.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

- None

Challenges expected/faced

- NIL

2.13	**Economic Viability of Fair Price Shop**

Description of the practice

When FPS is not economically viable, operating agency is forced to adopt corrupt practices to sustain. Hence it is essential to ensure the shops with average number of ration cards are economically viable getting a minimum profit margin of Rs. 2000 - 3000. Chhattisgarh has the following steps to improve the economic viability of FPS.

- State Government has provided Rs. 42 crores (@ 75,000 per shop- 20 Year interest free) as seed capital to Gram Panchayats and SHGs for running FPS.

- Commission on FPS food grains revised from Rs. 8 per quintal to Rs. 30 per quintal.

- One month credit facility or loss compensation to FPS.

- FPSs are allowed to sell non-PDS commodities.

Problems addressed

- When FPS is not economically viable, operating agency is forced to adopt corrupt practices to sustain

How can the practice address the problem?

- Credit facility and interest free seed capital reduces interest burden and hence increases profit.

- Increase of commission on food grains adds the profit.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

None

Challenges expected/faced

NIL.

2.14	Door Step Delivery

Description of the practice

There used to be middle agencies like Lead Agency to take PDS allocation of a shop from Civil Supplies Corporation's (CGCSC) distribution centre and supply to the FPS. They get their commission and transport charges for doing this job. But it is observed that the involvement of third agency in between FPS and CGCSC for transporting the commodities increased the diversion and delay in lifting. Chhattisgarh has removed these middle agencies and has given the responsibility of reaching commodities to the door steps of the FPS from CGSCSC. CGSCSC is now responsible for reaching the PDS commodities to the door steps of FPS by its own transport as per the allocation released by Department of Food. FPS operating agency weighs the commodities being received at FPS and gives a receipt (Panchnama) signed by at least 5 people from the village. This practice is known as Door Step Delivery.

Problems addressed

- More delay and more chances of diversion due to involvement of middle agency to reach PDS commodities from CGSCSC distribution centre to FPS.

How can the practice address the problem?

- Door Step Delivery completely eliminates middle agencies and assigns the responsibility to CGSCSC. This helps increase efficiency in monitoring of lifting. It also makes CGSCSC more accountable for lifting it being single agency responsible for lifting.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

None

Challenges expected/faced

NIL except slight opposition from middle agencies. If the performance of middle agency is good enough this practice need not be followed.

2.15	Colouring of the trucks carrying PDS commodities in yellow

Description of the practice

Chhattisgarh has issued orders to transport the PDS commodities in trucks coloured in YELLOW so that transparency is increased. Strict monitoring is present to ensure the order is followed throughout the state.

Problems addressed

- In case of diversion public can not know whether the commodities belong to PDS or not.

How can the practice address the problem?

- By colouring the trucks public can easily know that the truck is carrying PDS commodities.

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

- Door Step Delivery helps enforce this practice easily.

Challenges expected/faced

- NIL

2.16	Performance of District Food Controllers and District Collectors

Description of the practice

As all the operations involved in PDS in Chhattisgarh are being done on computers it has been possible to calculate performance indicators of District Food Controllers and District Managers of CGSCSC automatically by the system. All the district officers' performance are ranked and displayed publicly on web. Orders have been issued to consider performance in PDS while writing ACR of district collectors.

Impact Expected

- Improvement in the performance of PDS in the district

How can the practice make the impact?

- self explanatory

Pre-requisites to replicate the practice

- NIL

Challenges expected/faced

- NIL

3.0 Short Description of Software Modules Operational in Chhattisgarh

3.1 Allotment Module for PDS Schemes

As the Ration Card database of all 37 Lakh Ration Card holders and the database of Fair Price Shop are available, it is now possible to calculate the shop wise allocation for every shop for a month. Each Ration Card is linked to a Fair Price Shop and type of Ration Card (BPL, APL etc.) is also available. Using the data a view is created containing number of cards in each shop for each type/Scheme.

The representative of directorate of FOOD enters per card parameters (i.e. the quantities of different commodities to be given for a card in a given scheme). As number of cards attached to a particular FPS and the quantities to be given per card are available, computer can generate total allotment of different commodities under different schemes. Thus the allotment calculation for PDS commodities is completely automated.

Some FPSs are inaccessible (Pahunch Vihin) i.e. they are not accessible during rainy season. Hence the required commodities for May to September (5 months) are to be stocked in the May itself so that public distribution through the shop continues during the rainy seasons also.Directorate of food is responsible to mark FPS as inaccessible.

Computer automatically calculates 5 months allotment in May itself for inaccessible shops and for June to September there will be no allotments.

3.2 Allotment Module for welfare schemes other than PDS

Through FPS the commodities for other welfare schemes like Mid Day Meal, ICDS, Hostels are also distributed. The allotments for these schemes are not card based and hence automatic calculation is not possible. It is the responsibility of the Food Controller to enter shop wise allocation for a given month. The allocation for Mid Day Meal is entered by Block Education Officer. The allocation for ICDS is entered by Woman and Child Development Department. These allocations do not generally change from month to month. Hence a button to carry forward the allocation from previous month is provided. FOOD Controller or Block Education Officer is supposed to enter allocation for next month before 15th of current month so that lifting can be started from 16th and completed by 6th of the month.

3.3   C.G. State Civil Supplies Corporation Warehouse Module

The primary job of the distribution centre is to procure the PDS commodities and to send them to the FPS as for the allotments for the distribution to the Ration card holders. Lifting can start as soon as the allocations are calculated or entered by the person concerned in the department of food. In Chhattisgarh some FPS are cash shops i.e. they deposit cash in advance and get the commodities for public distribution. Some FPSs are credit shops who get the commodities on credit for a month. They are supposed to sell the commodities under public distribution and deposit the money before they get next month quota. All FPSs are required to give an affidavit declaring the sale of commodities under different schemes in the previous month. Credit shops shall deposit the money as per the declaration. There are 99 distribution centres which send commodities for public distribution to 10400 FPS. There are four main functions that are held at distribution centre in sending these commodities. They are described below in short.

- Sending commodities to FPS
- Sending and receiving commodities to and from other distribution centers.
- Receiving Rice and Wheat from FCI
- Receiving Sugar from sugar factory and salt from traders.

3.3.1.   Sending commodities to FPS

Lift of commodities for a month actually starts with the submission of declaration and money in the form of DD by a FPS. The declared sale quantities by a shop are entered into the system. The system shall calculate the available stocks in the FPS from the stocks available in the FPS, commodities lifted in the previous month and commodities sold as per declaration. Maximum that can be issued to the FPS under the scheme is calculated. DD details are captured in the system. DO is generated based on the amount received and allotments. DO is printed and signed by the in charge to send it to SWC godown. The commodities are weighed and loaded on trucks by combined supervision of SWC in charge and distribution centre in charge. Then truck challan is generated by entering truck details and commodity details. Along with the truck challan, panchnama is also printed. When the panchnama is signed and received back the panchnama is marked as received. The process continues for all FPSs attached to the centre. The lifting is supposed to be completed before 6th of ever month and hence generally starts from 15th of previous month.

3.3.2. Sending and receiving commodities to and from other distribution centers

To maintain sufficient stocks at each distribution centers inter distribution center commodity transfer is often required. District Manager is authorized to create transport order for inter distribution center transfer within a district. Inter district transfer is initiated by the instruction from headquarter of Civil Supplies Corporation. Ones transport order is issued; the source distribution center sends commodities either by trucks or railway rack depending on the distance and availability. In both the cases truck Challans are created entering truck details and commodities details. When the Truck reaches the destination distribution center the commodities are weighted and received. The damage or loss during transact are responsibility of transporter.

3.3.3 Receiving Rice and Wheat from FCI

C.G. mainly uses rice procured and DCP for public distribution but it also receives rice and wheat from FCI under different welfare schemes like Mid Day Meal. ICDS and hostels etc. District Manager sends a demand note along with demand draft if required to FCI to release necessary commodities under different schemes. FCI then creates a release order to issue the same. After getting the commodities DM shall prepares Truck Challans to send the commodities to different distribution centers. It is also possible to physically receive the commodities at one center and logically transfer them to different distribution centers for distribution under the schemes. When the trucks reach the distribution center the receipt details are captured into the system.

3.3.4 Receiving Sugar from sugar factory and salt from traders:

Distribution center also receives sugar from sugar factory and salt from salt traders as per the demand raised by District Manager. When these commodities reach the distribution centers the receipt details are captured into the system.

3.4. District Managers Module:
The main responsibilities of the District Manager (CGSCSC) are as below.

- To ensure sufficient stocks are available at all distribution centers by way of procurement and inter distribution center transfer.
- To procure rice and wheat from FCI by raising demand note time to time.
- To procure sugar from sugar factory and salt from traders as per requirement.

- To compile and en-cash the amount received from different FPS's.
- To monitor and supervise for ensuring timely lifting and proper public distribution without leakage or diversion.

District Manager Module allows creating transport order, release order in addition to the necessary reports available for effective monitoring and supervision.

3.5 C.G.S.C.S.C. Headquarter Module:

Headquarter is responsible for monitoring and decision making for proper public distribution eliminating leakage and diversion. It also gives necessary transport instructions for inter district movements. Various reports are provided in the Headquarters module for necessary monitoring and decision making.

3.6 Citizen Interface

A citizen's website interface has also been created. The URL of the website is http://www.cg.nic.in/citizen. This website has been inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh on 21st January 2008. This website offers following services: -

A citizen's website interface is created with the following features.

3.6.1 Information to Public - This web-site has all information relating to public distribution system including lists of all ration card holders, list of FPS, details of lifting and sales of PDS commodities by FPS etc. The website also has information about other schemes of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department particularly details of paddy procurement. The information on paddy procurement includes farmer wise information giving details of the amount of paddy procured from each farmer, and money paid to him. In addition the website will have information on citizen charter and right to information.

3.6.2 Public Grievances - There is a provision for registering public grievances and giving suggestions. Grievances registered on the website are tracked through a web application (Complaint Monitoring System). Action is taken on all complaints within time limit, and citizens are informed by e-mail about the result of inquiry. The result of inquiry into the complaints is also notified on the website.

3.6.3 Citizen Participation in monitoring of PDS and checking Diversion and Leakage - This web-site also provides a method of citizen participation in monitoring of PDS. Citizens can register their e-mail id or mobile numbers on this web-site for participation in the monitoring of PDS. It is possible to register for more than one FPS. Whenever PDS commodities are dispatched to an FPS from the warehouse an e-mail message and an SMS is sent to all the e-mail Ids and mobile numbers registered for that FPS. This message has the truck number, the quantities of PDS commodities being sent by that truck, and the date and time of dispatch. Citizens participating in monitoring of PDS can then check whether that truck arrived at the FPS will full quantities dispatched. They can even get PDS commodities unloaded and stored in the FPS in their presence. They can remain present at the time of sales of PDS commodities. If commodities do not arrive at the FPS in full quantity within reasonable time, citizens can register their complaint at the website which is then attended to immediately.

3.7. Call center

A call center with a toll free number has been started from 21st January 2008. The toll free number is 1-800-233-3663. It may be noted that 3663 also stands for FOOD on a telephone keyboard. It can be dialed from anywhere in the State of Chhattisgarh. At present the service is available from 8 in the morning till 10 in the evening. Citizens can dial the toll free number and can register a complaint of give a suggestion. Every complaint is given a number. The citizen is immediately given this number for future reference. Complaints have been classified, and time limits have been fixed for inquiry into each type of compliant. The complainant is given the approximate time required to inquire into his complaint at the time of registration. If the complainant gives his contact details, he is informed about the result of the inquiry into his complaint. The complainant can choose between e-mail, SMS, voice call or a letter by post for getting information on the result of inquiry. If the complainant does not give his contact details he can still get information by calling the call center and giving the number of his complaint. Results of inquiry into complaints are also shown on the citizen website. Call center also provides information on various schemes implemented by the Department.

3.8. Complaint Monitoring System

Complaints lodged through citizen interface or call centre are monitored through this system. Attending a complaint follows the below given flow.

- Receive the complaint and mark if the complaint is not related to the department of food.
- Nominate an enquiry officer if the complaint relates to the department.
- Get the report submitted by enquiry officer
- If complaint is found correct take action.

4.0 Conclusion

NIC, Chhattisgarh State Centre is the ICT partner in the PDS computerisation. **NIC and Government of Chhattisgarh are ready to share their experience and technology to any other states in implementing similar system for public distribution.** Duplication and re-invention are the two common extravagancies in the current ICT scenario. One can avoid these two by horizontal transfer of technology and experience from one place where an ICT project is successfully implemented to other parts of the country. NIC, being central government organization with its offices at all states and union territories, has ability to transfer the technology and experience through out the country with no much effort

Contact for further details

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1. **Objective**

With a view to strengthening the Public Distribution system , the Government of Assam has decided to introduce more non PDS items in the PDS basket of commodities, so that both the general public and the PDS retailers reap benefits. It has been observed that the PDS commodities transacted by the FP shops at the cutting edge level of the Distribution network, do not make the FP shops viable to the desired level of profitability. There is scope of the FPs in terms of time and space to accommodate non-PDS items to be transacted from the shops. The viability of the FPs, in terms of the livelihood concerns of the PDS licencees, is intended to be improved, by making the shops attractive to the consumer appeal, through the trading of selected non PDS items. The general public, in addition to the FIC holders, will also have access to the basket of essential commodities at lesser price.

During the Rongali Bihu festival last April 2010, a pilot scheme involving the 638 FPs of Guwahati city under the jurisdiction of Kamrup Metropolitan District was implemented in a participatory and experimental mode. The features of the effort were as under:-

1) Meetings were held with the Distributors, Stockists, Wholesalers, Sub-Wholesalers and retailers to sensitise them of the scheme
2) The modality of the scheme was that the Distributors, Stockists and Wholesalers would issue adequate quantities of selected commodities on the basis of demand, at their landing cost plus minimum profit to the FP shops by eliminating the intermediate agencies.
3) The issue price at both levels was determined upon mutual agreement between the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesaler and the FP shops, which was much below the printed MRP based on the landing cost and minimal profit.
4) The FP shops were allowed to add Rs. 2 only per kg/liter as profit and transportation.
5) The FP shops created a sustainable platform so that their bargaining power in the market enhance as a single entity.
6) The selected items were edible oils (Mustard oil, refined oil, soya oil, tea packets, packed Atta, packaged iodised salt, branded rice that have printed MRP), potatoes, onions, sugar, pulses, (masur dal), common rice.
7) The Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers were benefited by getting bulk customers through the scheme which resulted in lesser cost to the FIC holder / customer, without disturbing the existing Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers margin.
8) The additional basket of commodities made available and advertised by the FP shops were attracted customers in addition to their tagged FIC holders.
9) The products were transacted between the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers and the FP shops in both delivery mode and pick up mode.
10) The additional products were mostly MRP based fast moving consumer goods (FMCG)

11) All FPs agreed to install conspicuous Flexi – signboards of deep blue colour in front of their shops. These display boards announced the availability of the items that were agreed to be transacted by the selected FPs at the agreed reduced prices.

12) All FP shops displayed the prefixed prices on the display boards located in front of the shops.

13) The prices that were agreed and prefixed both at the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers level and the retail FP shop level were made stable for one month upto the conclusion of Bihu Festival.

14) The prices of the commodities agreed upon to be transacted by the FPs were widely publicized through the print and electronic media (Newslive and print media)

15) The Govt acted only as a catalyst and there were no fund implications on the State exchequer.

16) Review meetings were held fortnightly so that the market adjustments in terms of prices and volume could be pragmatically accommodated in the scheme.

17) All transactions between the FPs and the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers were done purely on cash basis

2. **The proposal now**

Considering the success of the scheme as above during the last Rongalil Bihu, The Govt of Assam has decided to embark upon the scheme throughout the State. The features envisaged in the same are as follow:-

1) The State target for the scheme is 10,000 shops

2) The scheme has a brand name of "AAMAR DUKAN" and a logo of "Jago Grahak Jago" as publicized by the Govt of India

3) The same is implemented in all 27 Districts of the State

4) The modalities of the scheme are that the Distributors, Stockists and Wholesalers issue adequate quantities of selected commodities on the basis of demand, at their landing cost plus minimum profit **to the selected group of FP shops by eliminating the existing intermediate agencies.**

5) MoUs are prepared by the Deputy Commissioner / Principal Secretary of Councils / Subdivisional officers (civil) upon mutual agreement and signed by the Distributors, Stockists and Wholesalers on one part and the FP shops in the other part for assured supply of selected commodities in terms of quality and quantity, and also the period for which the prices at both levels will remain valid until next review.

6) Should there be a fall in Wholesale / Distributor / Stockist prices of the commodities during the intervening period between review meetings, the items are made available by them and by the FP shops at reduced prices to the FIC holder / customers. On the contrary, should there be a rise in prices during the same period, the prices are to be maintained at the agreed level.

7) The FP shops created a sustainable platform so that their bargaining power in the market enhance as a single entity.

8) All selected FPs install conspicuous Flexi-signboards of yellow colour with green letters in front of their shops. These display boards announce the availability of the items that are transacted by the selected FPs at the agreed reduced prices.

9) The criteria for selection of FPs are as under:-

10) Urban areas (Municipal Corporation, Municipal Boards and Town Committees)-
   a. One to three shops for every ward in the urban areas depending on the population concentration and demand, preferably in market areas.
   b. One shop in every WCCS counter.
   c. All Industrial towns – 5 to 10 shops.
   d. All District Headquarters – at least 25 FP shops
   e. All Subdivisional Headquarters – At least 15 shops
11) Rural areas-
   a. One shop in every GPSS / LAMPs area, which may also be attached to the GPSS PDS outlet.
   b. One shop in every major / established market area frequented by people on a regular basis.
   c. Two-three shops in every Block Headquarters.
12) Other criteria for selection of FP shops
   a. Each shop may either be in rented or own premises but must be free from dispute / litigation in Courts of law.
   b. Each shop must have valid renewed PDS licence.
   c. Each shop must not have been implicated in any breach of laws/ rules in consequence of which its licence was suspended or subjected to penalties under the EC Act and its subservient Control oders.
   d. Each shop must be presently dealing with non PDS items in addition to PDS items.
   e. Each shop must be financially viable in terms of volume of business and profit.
   f. Each shop must have sufficient ventilation, light and space to allow comfortable movement of customers and stocking space.
   g. The shop must remain open throughout the month subject to compliance with provisions of the Shops and Establishments Act.
   h. The selected shop must issue cash memo for each transaction as per prevalent laws.
   i. The shop should remain open throughout the day.
   j. The shop should maintain cash book and stock register which should be updated on a daily basis.
   k. Each shop should have an unique identifying number.

13) The Deputy Commissioners / Principal Secretaries of Councils / Subdivisional Officers (civil) hold meetings initially and subsequently every fortnight with the Local Stockists / Distributors / Wholesalers to ensure quality, quantity, price stability.
14) The performance of the FP shops are reviewed fortnightly by the Deputy Commissioner / Principal Secretary of Councils for sadar subdivisions and the Subdivisional officer for the mofussil subdivisions.
15) The issue price at both levels are determined upon mutual agreement between the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers and the FP shops, which should be much below the printed MRP based on the landing cost and minimal profit. This should not affect the benefits that may be provided by any manufacturer / Company under any special scheme that may be announced from time to time.

16) The FP shops will be allowed to add a maximum of Rs. 3 only per kg / liter which included both print and transportation.
17) The Deputy Commissioners / Subdivisional officers facilitate negotiations with polythene bag distributors so that the packing bags are made available at reduced costs, which further reduce the end retails price of the items.
18) The Deputy Commissioners / Subdivisional officers explore the possibility of creating a pool of mobile vans with the design and logo which will sell the recommended items on location demand basis.
19) The items suggested transacted under the scheme are-
    a) Rice
    b) Branded /Premium rice
    c) Sugar
    d) Gur
    e) Pulses (Masur Dal)
    f) Pulses (Moong Dal)
    g) Packaged iodised Salt (Tata, Nirma, Captain Cook etc)
    h) PDS iodised salt
    i) Biscuits and Confectionary
    j) Packaged Atta
    k) Packaged Maida
    l) Packaged suji
    m) Tooth paste
    n) Soaps (bathing and washing)
    o) Packaged tea (Tata, Golaghat, Nameri, etc etc)
    p) Spices (MDH, Sona etc Agmark / FPO products)
    q) Packaged Ghee
    r) Packaged Butter
    s) Chana Gota
    t) Moong Gota
    u) Potato
    v) Onion
    w) Edible oils (Mustard, Soya, Dalda, Vegetable, Refined etc)

20) The Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers are benefited by getting bulk customers through the scheme which result in lesser cost to the FIC holder / Customer, without disturbing the existing Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers margin.
21) The products transacted between the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers and the FP shops in both delivery mode and pick up mode, depend upon convenience of both parties.
22) The Deputy Commissioner / Principal Secretary of Councils / Sub divisional officers may decide and add additional MRP based fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the prescribed list of commodities.

23) The prices of commodities to be agreed upon for transactions by the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers and the selected FPs are widely publicized through the print and electronic media.

24) The Govt acts as a catalyst and there are no fund implications on the State exchequer.

25) Review meetings are held fortnightly by the Deputy Commissioner / Principal Secretary of Councils / Sub divisional officers (Civil) so that the market adjustments in terms of prices and volume are pragmatically and progressively accommodated in the scheme.

26) All transactions between the FPs and the Distributors / Stockists / Wholesalers are done purely on cash basis.

27) Separate records such as stock register, sales day register, voucher file, return file, cash book, cash memos etc are maintained in the FP shops under the scheme.

28) Returns in prescribed format have to be submitted fortnightly by the FPs, Wholesalers / Stockists / Distributors to the Deputy Commissioner / Principal Secretary of Councils / Subdivisional officers (Civil)

29) The Deputy Commissioner / Principal Secretary of Councils / Subdivisional officers (Civil) submit fortnightly return in prescribed format to the Principal Secretary, F,CS and CA and the Director of F,CS and CA.

30) Compliance and enforcement are done through the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affair Department field officers, who will have powers of inspection, search and seizure under the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and Control orders thereunder.

31) The monitoring is done by the existing Vigilance and Monitoring Committees for PDS / TPDS items at the FP shop / Agent levels, GPSS / WCCS / LAMPS level, Subdivisional level and District level at regular intervals.

32) The scheme has encompassed 2841 shops so far.

Best Practices – Madhya Pradesh

Implementation of TPDS in Madhya Pradesh – An IT supported initiative

The system of online identification, verification and categorization of beneficiaries and generation of e-ration cards based upon the online identification, verification and categorization process is unique to the State of Madhya Pradesh. The State has identified over 5.09 crore beneficiaries so far utilizing this process which is over 92% of the total targeted population in the state.

As per provisions of NFSA, 2013, Targeted PDS Operation is being implemented in the state of Madhya Pradesh since 1st March, 2014. The beneficiary population that can be covered in the state under NFSA, 2013 is 5.46 crore which is 75% of total population and which will cover approximately 125 lakh families. Currently, 115 lakh eligible families are receiving subsidized food grains. Considering this figure is estimated to grow to about 125 lakh families, it has become essential that current PDS system is made more effective and influential using increasing usage of Information Technology.

SAMAGRA (All-Inclusive) platform has been designed and developed in MP with the aim to streamline processes and enable ICT based implementation of individual and family oriented schemes. It also aims to facilitate proactive and entitlement approach for governance. "SAMAGRA" portal (food.mp.gov.in) has been created as an integrated database of all families and residents of the State. The portal also facilitates implementation of various mechanisms to allow verification and maintenance of the database and various attributes of families and residents by concerned authorities / department in a collaborative environment.

A unique **SAMAGRA** Family ID has been provided to each family and a Unique **SAMAGRA ID** has been provided to each resident. The portal is being owned and maintained by the concerned local bodies. All concerned departments use the portal for updating and maintaining their department / scheme specific attributes and run scheme specific MIS on the platform.

The system facilitates listing of all due entitlements and display the list of beneficiaries and service providers in public domain thereby ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness by the State government. The department f food and civil supplies has completely internalized the **SAMAGRA** platform and leveraged it to address the legal and procedural requirements for effective and transparent implementation of National Food Security Act, 2013.

Identification, Verification and categorization of all families / residents of State is being done by their respective local bodies online. Households found to be eligible for benefit under any of the designated categories are getting linked to their respective fair price shops electronically and their e-ration card is being generated from the system. The e-ration card is now dynamic and will get updated every month as per the change in the category of the family and change in the number of members. The system has allowed authentic and accurate monthly FPS shop-wise allocations of food grains with a single click.

Further, since the identification of the beneficiaries is conducted by the gram panchayats in the rural areas and by urban local bodies in the urban areas, this has eliminated the need for the beneficiaries to approach to a centralized government office thus saving the transaction costs for the beneficiaries as well as saving the overall time required to complete the process.

The Portal and online work-flow based system has facilitated a common platform for residents, local bodies, PDS officials, SDOs labor department and others. It has ensured the identification of over 92% of target population and providing them the entitlement slips which depict their monthly allocated entitlements, thus ensuring the effective and transparent implementation of targeted public distribution system.

Key Elements:

Some of the key elements of the project are noted as below:

- Entire Public Distribution System for 13 million families is being governed through this project which includes monthly allocation and distribution of food grains, sugar, salt and kerosene
- Online database of all families and residents included in portal scanned and over 13 million family beneficiaries identified and verified as Household eligible for benefits under NFSA.
- Each and every family provided an opportunity for raising objections and Families / residents can download and print monthly entitlement slips that indicate their respective allocation, FPS and the amount to be paid
- Family beneficiaries have been able to receive regular ration commodities on a monthly basis as per their entitlement. System facilitate automatic updation of the entitlement on the basis of the change in the number of family members or change on the category of the family form PH to AAY without involvement of PDS officials.

Key Benefits:

The following are some of the key benefits that have resulted from this model:

a) Establishment of a system for online maintenance of State Population (households and residents) and maintenance of registers of families and members that are registered under various schemes.
b) Generation of family and individual member SAMAGRA ID numbers, De-duplication of the families, residents of various parameters, identification and removal of ghost and no-eligible beneficiaries
c) Generation of online beneficiary family entitlements slips
d) Since over 92% of the beneficiary population has been mapped and verified with a SAMAGRA ID on the portal, food department created accurate online monthly food allocation based upon the population (in line with NFSA guidelines) using the database maintained within the portal, thereby reaching to the poorest of the poor beneficiaries as well as other priority households.
e) It is possible for each beneficiary family to generate their own ration cards online using the portal every month, download the ration cards and carry the cards to their associated FPS shops obtain ration as per their allocation.

f) Each eligible household has been mapped with an Fair Price Shop within the portal and the data is available in real-time for the beneficiaries to find out the associated FPS along with the address of the FPS in order to obtain the ration

g) All the FPS have been further mapped with all the issue centers leading to identification of all the FPSs that are associated with a particular issue center

h) Other services as part of transparency portal under Component – I are available to beneficiaries on the portal

Cost Effectiveness of the Project:

This project is a fully-funded government initiative being conducted under the auspices of Government of India's 12th 5-Year Plan. It is a State Mission Mode Project under the National e-governance Plan and hence the entire funding has been received from the Central and State Government in the 60:40 ratio. Therefore, there is no burden on the actual beneficiaries with regard to utilizing the benefits of the project. All the facilities including generation of online entitlement slips, obtaining grievance redressal and services available via transparency portal are available without any charge t the beneficiaries.

Implementation of TPDS in Madhya Pradesh – An IT supported initiative

The system of online identification, verification and categorization of beneficiaries and generation of e-ration cards based upon the online identification, verification and categorization process is unique to the State of Madhya Pradesh. The State has identified over 5.09 crore beneficiaries so far utilizing this process which is over 92% of the total targeted population in the state.

As per provisions of NFSA, 2013, Targeted PDS Operation is being implemented in the state of Madhya Pradesh since 1st March, 2014. The beneficiary population that can be covered in the state under NFSA, 2013 is 5.46 crore which is 75% of total population and which will cover approximately 125 lakh families. Currently, 115 lakh eligible families are receiving subsidized food grains. Considering this figure is estimated to grow to about 125 lakh families, it has become essential that current PDS system is made more effective and influential using increasing usage of Information Technology.

SAMAGRA (All-Inclusive) platform has been designed and developed in MP with the aim to streamline processes and enable ICT based implementation of individual and family oriented schemes. It also aims to facilitate proactive and entitlement approach for governance. "SAMAGRA" portal (food.mp.gov.in) has been created as an integrated database of all families and residents of the State. The portal also facilitates implementation of various mechanisms to allow verification and maintenance of the database and various attributes of families and residents by concerned authorities / department in a collaborative environment.

A unique **SAMAGRA** Family ID has been provided to each family and a Unique **SAMAGRA ID** has been provided to each resident. The portal is being owned and maintained by the concerned local bodies. All concerned departments use the portal for updating and maintaining their department / scheme specific attributes and run scheme specific MIS on the platform.

The system facilitates listing of all due entitlements and display the list of beneficiaries and service providers in public domain thereby ensuring transparency, efficiency and effectiveness by the State government. The department f food and civil supplies has completely internalized the **SAMAGRA** platform and leveraged it to address the legal and procedural requirements for effective and transparent implementation of National Food Security Act, 2013.

Identification, Verification and categorization of all families / residents of State is being done by their respective local bodies online. Households found to be eligible for benefit under any of the designated categories are getting linked to their respective fair price shops electronically and their e-ration card is being generated from the system. The e-ration card is now dynamic and will get updated every month as per the change in the category of the family and change in the number of members. The system has allowed authentic and accurate monthly FPS shop-wise allocations of food grains with a single click.

Further, since the identification of the beneficiaries is conducted by the gram panchayats in the rural areas and by urban local bodies in the urban areas, this has eliminated the need for the beneficiaries to approach to a centralized government office thus saving the transaction costs for the beneficiaries as well as saving the overall time required to complete the process.

The Portal and online work-flow based system has facilitated a common platform for residents, local bodies, PDS officials, SDOs labor department and others. It has ensured the identification of over 92% of target population and providing them the entitlement slips which depict their monthly allocated entitlements, thus ensuring the effective and transparent implementation of targeted public distribution system.

Key Elements:

Some of the key elements of the project are noted as below:

- Entire Public Distribution System for 13 million families is being governed through this project which includes monthly allocation and distribution of food grains, sugar, salt and kerosene
- Online database of all families and residents included in portal scanned and over 13 million family beneficiaries identified and verified as Household eligible for benefits under NFSA.
- Each and every family provided an opportunity for raising objections and Families / residents can download and print monthly entitlement slips that indicate their respective allocation, FPS and the amount to be paid
- Family beneficiaries have been able to receive regular ration commodities on a monthly basis as per their entitlement. System facilitate automatic updation of the entitlement on the basis of the change in the number of family members or change on the category of the family form PH to AAY without involvement of PDS officials.

Key Benefits:

The following are some of the key benefits that have resulted from this model:

i) Establishment of a system for online maintenance of State Population (households and residents) and maintenance of registers of families and members that are registered under various schemes.
j) Generation of family and individual member SAMAGRA ID numbers, De-duplication of the families, residents of various parameters, identification and removal of ghost and no-eligible beneficiaries
k) Generation of online beneficiary family entitlements slips
l) Since over 92% of the beneficiary population has been mapped and verified with a SAMAGRA ID on the portal, food department created accurate online monthly food allocation based upon the population (in line with NFSA guidelines) using the database maintained within the portal, thereby reaching to the poorest of the poor beneficiaries as well as other priority households.
m) It is possible for each beneficiary family to generate their own ration cards online using the portal every month, download the ration cards and carry the cards to their associated FPS shops obtain ration as per their allocation.

n) Each eligible household has been mapped with an Fair Price Shop within the portal and the data is available in real-time for the beneficiaries to find out the associated FPS along with the address of the FPS in order to obtain the ration

o) All the FPS have been further mapped with all the issue centers leading to identification of all the FPSs that are associated with a particular issue center

p) Other services as part of transparency portal under Component – I are available to beneficiaries on the portal

Cost Effectiveness of the Project:

This project is a fully-funded government initiative being conducted under the auspices of Government of India's 12th 5-Year Plan. It is a State Mission Mode Project under the National e-governance Plan and hence the entire funding has been received from the Central and State Government in the 60:40 ratio. Therefore, there is no burden on the actual beneficiaries with regard to utilizing the benefits of the project. All the facilities including generation of online entitlement slips, obtaining grievance redressal and services available via transparency portal are available without any charge t the beneficiaries.