

# ASSESSMENT OF MID DAY MEAL PROGRAMME IN 8 STATES

Summary of the study conducted to understand and establish the need, impact and continuance of implementing the mid-day meal programme by The Akshaya Patra Foundation – 2014.

**A study by Sigma Research and Consulting Pvt. Ltd**

**2014**

# Introduction

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As a learning move to understand and establish the need, impact and continuance of implementing the mid-day meal programme by The Akshaya Patra Foundation in particular; and the implementation of the programme in general, we conducted a baseline study to assess the outcomes of the programme implementation. This study was conducted in association with Sigma Research and Consulting, one of India's leading survey companies. The findings of this study will be considered a benchmark for future references and periodical / track based studies for year-on-year comparison and assessment of the progress of the mid-day meal programme.

The study was based on the variables pertaining to the following four main objectives:

- i. Elimination of classroom hunger
- ii. Social equity
- iii. Nutrition and health
- iv. Enrolment, Retention and Attendance

A phase-wise calendar was chalked out and the study covered 17 different locations across eight states in India:

- Karnataka: Bangalore - V.K Hill, Bellary, Mangalore
- Andhra Pradesh<sup>1</sup>:Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam (School and Anganwadi Centres)
- Odisha: Puri, Rourkela, Nayagarh (Decentralised Kitchen)
- Gujarat: Gandhinagar, Vadodara, Surat

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<sup>1</sup> The study was conducted before the official declaration of the State of Telangana

- Rajasthan: Jaipur, Jodhpur, Nathdwara
- Uttar Pradesh: Vrindavan
- Assam: Guwahati
- Chhattisgarh: Bhilai

## **Methodology**

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used in this assessment study. A quantitative survey was carried out amongst the school children (Class-III onwards) who are beneficiaries of the MDM programme, using face to face structured interviews. For a holistic assessment purpose, In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were carried out amongst the Headmasters/Teachers-in-Charge, Government Officials, Operations-in-Charges and Nutrition Experts.

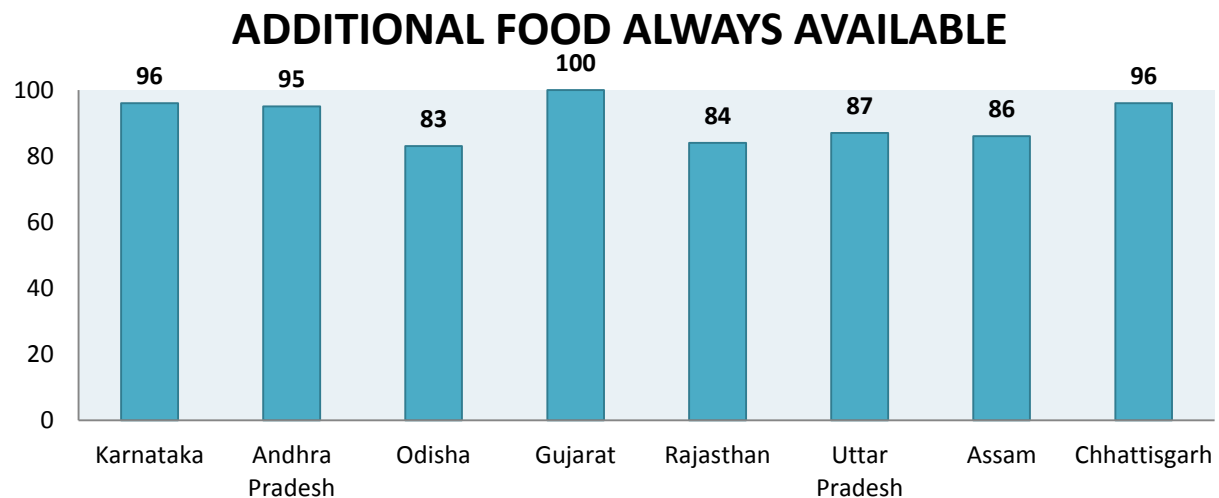
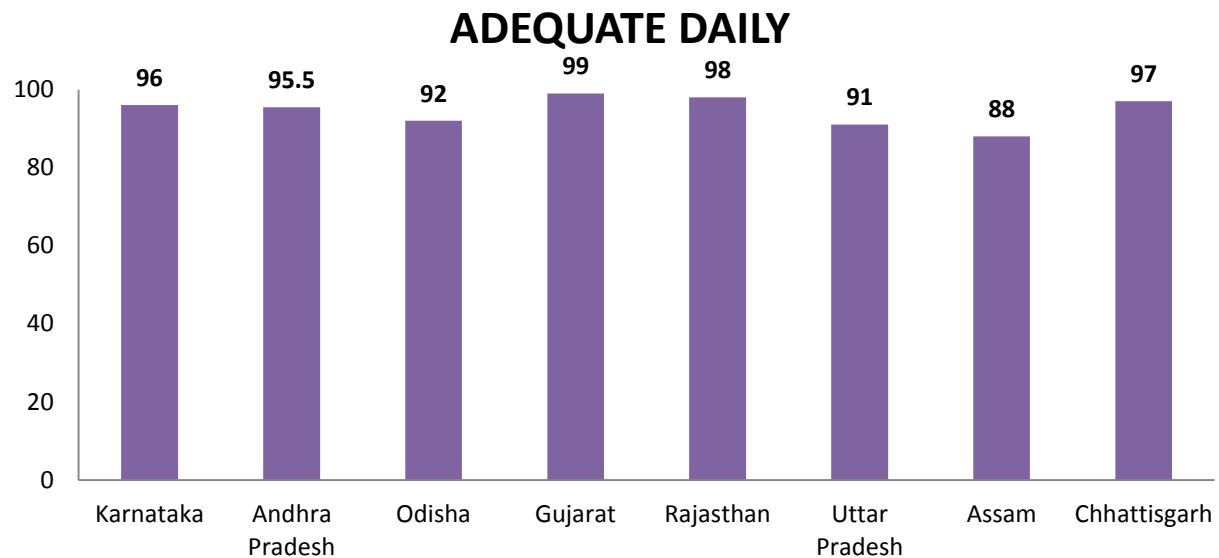
## **Target groups**

- School children and Anganwadi Centre (AWC) children who are beneficiaries of the Akshaya Patra MDM programme
- Headmasters / Teachers-in-Charge of target schools
- Government Officials associated with the MDM programme
- Akshaya Patra Operations-In-Charges
- Nutrition Experts who are not associated with MDM programme

## KEY OUTCOME – BY OBJECTIVES

### CLASSROOM HUNGER

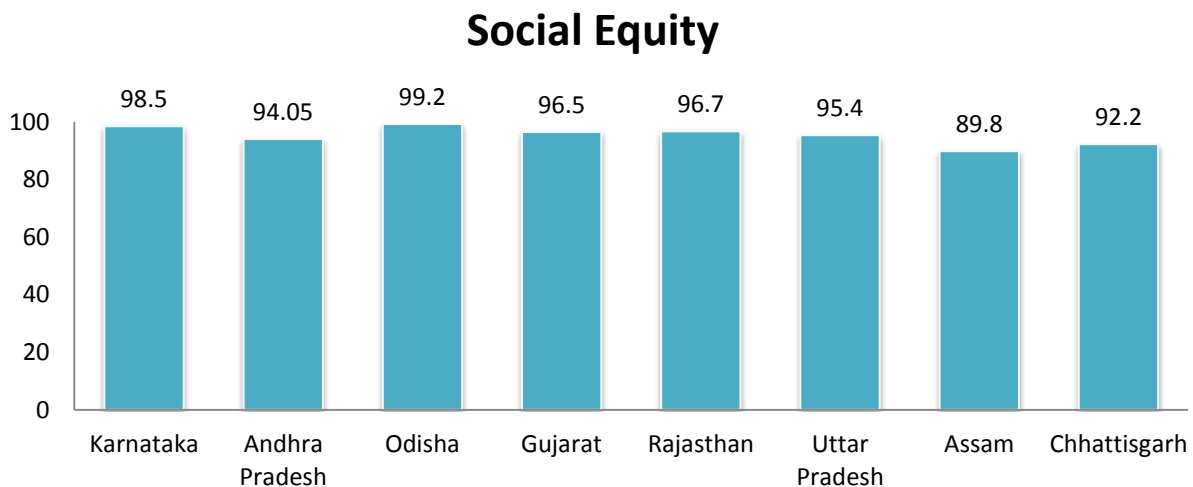
In terms of adequacy and availability of additional food, Gujarat emerged on top. According to most headmasters, food quantity received from The Akshaya Patra Foundation was sufficient and it significantly helped in countering classroom hunger.



## SOCIAL EQUITY

Social equity was maintained almost universally. According to the Kitchen-in-charges, Government Officials and Headmasters, children had mid-day meals together irrespective of caste, religion or economic class in all the states. Parents also never objected to their children eating together with other children.

The graph below projects the extent to which social equity was achieved in each state:



## Health and Nutrition

Food served in all the states was healthy and hygienic. A meticulous and detailed menu design, a variety of items in the meal menu and servings with adequate quantity of food met nutritional requirements, as per the below mentioned norms of the MDM Scheme. An item-wise lab test was also conducted to confirm this.

Almost all the nutrition experts and Government Officials felt that the MDM provided the right nutrition and calorie requirement and this programme should continue.

The table below shows the required dietary norms as stated by the Central Mid-Day Meal Scheme:

Components	Primary	Upper Primary
Calories	450 Cal	700 Cal
Protein	12 grams	20 grams
Micro-nutrients	Adequate quantities of micro-nutrients like Iron, Folic Acid , Vitamin-A etc.	

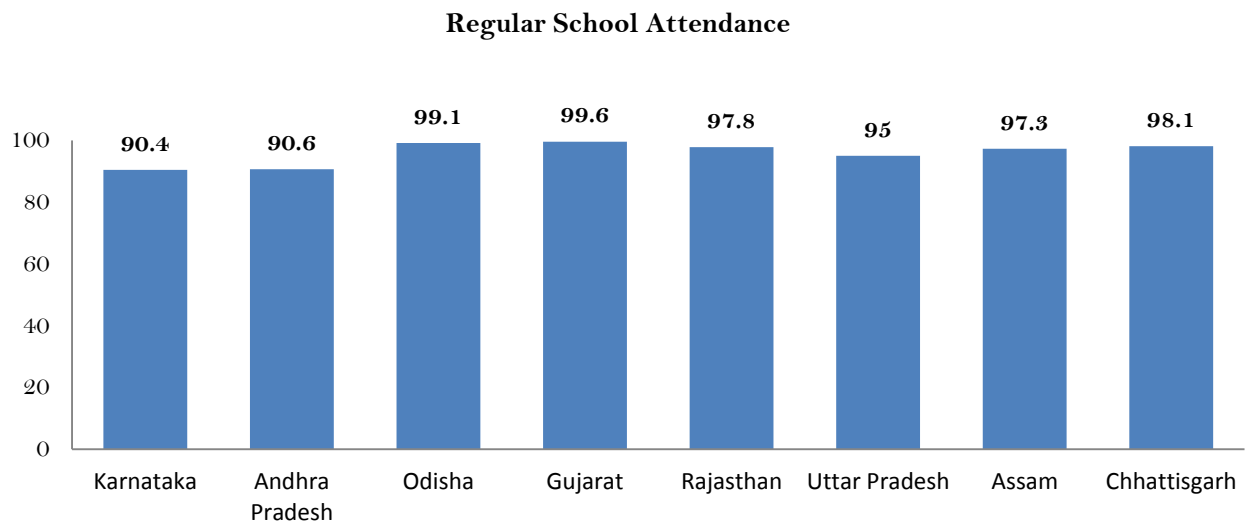
The table below shows the item-wise dietary norms as stated by the Central Mid-Day Meal Scheme:

Sl. No.	Items	Primary			Upper Primary		
		Requirement under MDM (in grams)	Energy content (in grams)	Protein content (in grams)	Requirement under MDM (in grams)	Energy content (in grams)	Protein content (in grams)
1	Food grains (Rice/Wheat)	100	340	8	150	510	14
2	Pulses	20	70	5	30	105	6.6
3	Vegetables	50	25	--	75	37	--
4	Oil & Fat	5	45	--	7.5	68	--
5	Salt & Condiments	As per need	--	--	As per need	--	--
			480	13		720	20.6

## Attendance and Enrolment

Attendance was highly regular across all the states. During in-depth interviews (IDIs), most of the Headmasters mentioned that enrolment and attendance have increased significantly after the introduction of the MDM scheme in the schools. Government Officials also agreed that the MDM scheme had a positive effect on attendance and enrolment.

The graph below indicates the percentage of children who attended school regularly:

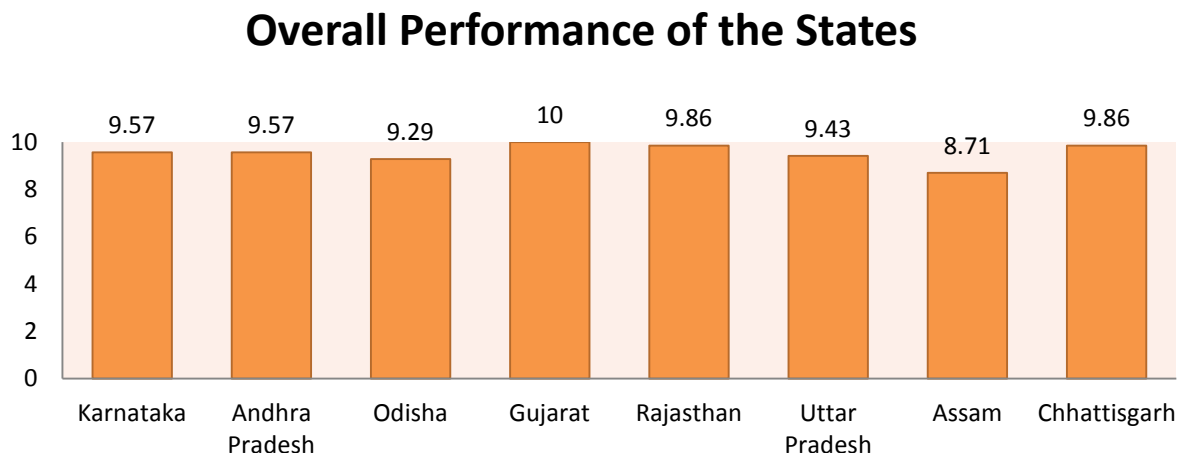




## KEY OUTCOME – BY STATES

Considering all indicators, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh emerged as the best overall performers among all the serving states. In general, Headmasters and Government Officials across most of the locations stated that the MDM programme has helped in increasing enrolment and decreasing drop-out rate. The response of school children and Anganwadi centre beneficiaries in Andhra Pradesh indicate that the mid-day meal is tasty and fresh, served in adequate quantities with sufficient additional food always available. Nayagarh, despite following a decentralised kitchen format feeds a large number of children totalling over 24,908.

The graph below summarizes the results combining states with objectives and gives the performance of different states rated on a scale of 10 (10: > 90%, 9: 81%-90%, 8: 61%-80%, 7: ≤ 60%) on all the indicators.



## **Conclusion**

This impact study was conducted with the aim of understanding and establishing the need, impact and continuance of implementing the mid-day meal programme of Akshaya Patra. Thorough research was conducted by Sigma Research and Consulting Pvt. Ltd across all the three feeding population categories i.e. beneficiaries of Centralised kitchens, Decentralised kitchens and Anganwadi Centres.

The outcome of this study clearly establishes the positive impact of the mid-day programme. Classroom hunger was addressed significantly, with attendance and enrolment receiving a boost. The recommended nutritional requirements were being fulfilled and the food was healthy and hygienic too. Both parents and children confirmed to partaking the mid-day meal together, irrespective of caste, religion and economic status. This trend was observed across all locations signifying the importance of universalisation of the meal. It was realised that there is always room for improvement, and hence taking this study as a reference, Akshaya Patra will continue to better our processes and services in implementing the mid-day meal programme.