



BUDGET BRIEFS

Vol 14/Issue 3

PRADHAN MANTRI POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN (PM POSHAN) GoI, 2022-23

The National Programme of **PM POSHAN**, previously known as the National Scheme for Mid-Day Meals in schools (MDM), is a scheme to provide one hot cooked meal in government and government-aided schools. It aims at improving the nutritional status of students.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, this brief uses government data to analyse:

- Past trends in allocations, releases, and expenditures;
- Timing of GoI releases for recurring components;
- Coverage and provision of meals to students; and
- Nutrition intervention and social audits.

Cost share and implementation:

Funds are shared between GoI and state governments in a 60:40 ratio for cooking cost and honorariums. For other recurring components, GoI bears the entire cost. For the North Eastern Region (NER) and Himalayan states, the ratio is 90:10. Union Territories (UTs) without legislature are fully funded by GoI.

HIGHLIGHTS

₹1,04,278 cr

GoI allocations for Ministry of Education (MoE) for FY 2022-23

₹ 10,234 cr

GoI allocations for PM POSHAN in FY 2022-23

SUMMARY & ANALYSIS

- During Financial Year (FY) 2021-22, in order to ensure adequate provision during the COVID-19 pandemic, GoI had announced an increase in PM POSHAN allocations to ₹12,700 crore from ₹11,500 crore in the Budget Estimates (BEs). Revised Estimates (REs) for the year, however, stood at ₹10,234 crore or 19 per cent less than those initially proposed.
- For FY 2022-23, GoI has allocated ₹10,234 crore for the scheme, same as the previous year's REs but 11 per cent lower than the BEs.
- Release of funds to the states significantly slowed down in FY 2021-22. On average, only 48 per cent of the funds approved were released till December. The figure for the corresponding period in FY 2020-21 was 73 per cent. Moreover, between April to December 2020 and April to December 2021, the total quantum of funds released by GoI for PM POSHAN saw a 30 per cent decline.
- In FY 2022-23, the scheme is to be expanded to include pre-primary students. As per our estimates, additional funds between ₹345 crore and ₹374 crore will be needed from GoI to provide meals to the 32 lakh students studying in pre-primary or Bal Vatikas in government and government-aided primary schools.

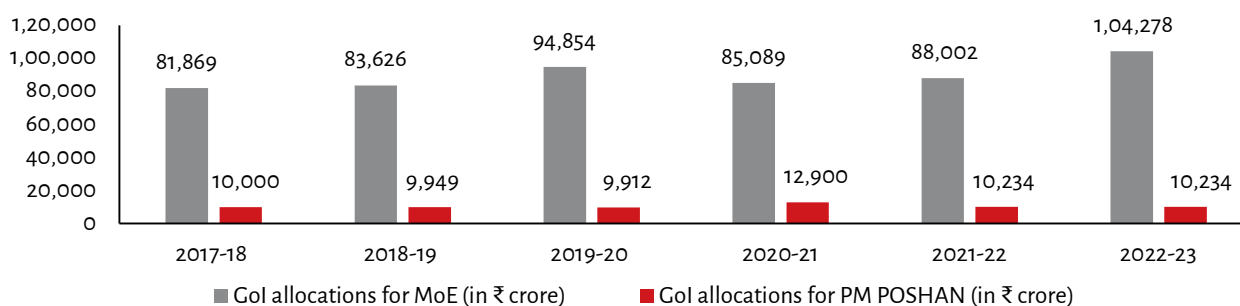
- On 29 September 2021, the National Programme of Mid-Day Meals in School (MDM) was renamed the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme (PM POSHAN), with an aim to expand and provide hot cooked meals to students studying in pre-primary section or Bal Vatikas along with elementary school students. The primary objective of the scheme is to improve enrolment, retention, and attendance while simultaneously improving nutritional levels by providing supplementary nutrition in districts with high incidence of anaemia.
- PM POSHAN is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of the Ministry of Education (MoE). Since 2007, in its previous form, the scheme covered all government, local body, and government-aided primary and upper primary schools, and Education Guarantee Scheme or Alternate Inclusive Education centres. In September 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) cleared PM POSHAN for five more years for government and government-aided schools.
- Cabinet approval for continuance of the scheme was conditional on some key changes. First, under the refurbished scheme, GoI would ensure Direct Beneficiary Transfer (DBT) from states to schools, with an emphasis on transferring cooking cost directly to a school's bank account. It would also try to ensure payment of honorarium to cook-cum-helpers (CCH) through DBT directly from the state. Second, the revamped scheme also seeks to promote the development of nutrition gardens in schools and cooking competitions to promote ethnic cuisine. Finally, a social audit of the scheme has also been instructed for each school to study its execution.

TRENDS IN GOI ALLOCATIONS, RELEASES AND UTILISATIONS

Allocations

- At the start of Financial Year (FY) 2022-23, Budget Estimates (BEs) for MoE stood at ₹1,04,278 crore. This was an 18 per cent increase from the previous year's Revised Estimates (REs) but a 12 per cent increase from the BEs.
- PM POSHAN is the second largest scheme of MoE, accounting for 10 per cent of the Ministry's allocations in FY 2022-23. Allocations for the scheme have remained relatively stagnant over the last five years but declined in the latest budget. For FY 2022-23, GoI has allocated ₹10,234 crore for the scheme, same as the REs for FY 2021-22 but 11 per cent lower than the BEs.
- To maintain the nutritional levels of children and aid in safeguarding their immunity during the pandemic, the Supreme Court of India instructed all states to provide Food Security Allowance (FSA) comprising foodgrains, pulses, oil, etc directly to children's homes. The amount of FSA provided was to be equivalent to the cooking cost component within the scheme.
- Consequently, GoI allocations were increased to ₹12,700 crore in FY 2021-22. This included an additional allocation of ₹1,200 crore for providing PM POSHAN during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this announcement, REs for FY 2021-22 were actually 19 per cent lower and stood at ₹10,234 crore.

₹10,234 CRORE ALLOCATED FOR PM POSHAN IN 2022-23, 11% LOWER THAN THE BES BUT SAME AS THE RES

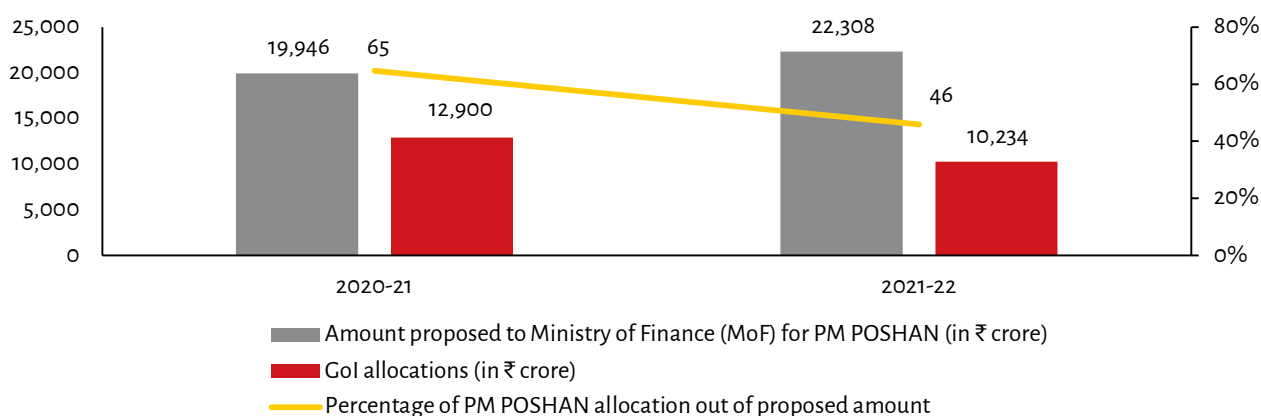


Source: Union Expenditure Budget, MoE, FY 2018-19 to FY 2022-23. Available online at: <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in>. Last accessed on 1 February 2022.

Note: Figures are in crores of Rupees and are Revised Estimates (REs), except for FY 2022-23, which are Budget Estimates (BEs).

- Allocations also remain lower than those demanded by MoE. In FY 2019-20, while the CCEA had approved an outlay of ₹12,054 crore for the scheme, revised allocations were 18 per cent less at ₹9,912 crore.
- Over the last two years there have been attempts to expand the coverage of the scheme. In FY 2020-21, the Ministry had requested ₹19,946 crore for the scheme. This was partly to increase the scope of the programme, including expanding coverage to include pre-primary and Grades 9-12, additional funds for providing breakfast, and a revision of honorarium to CCH. The proposal, however, was under consideration at the time of the budget and revised allocations were 35 per cent lower than the demand even after accounting for the additional allocations provided due to the pandemic.
- Similarly, for FY 2021-22, keeping in mind the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, MoE once again sought an extension of PM POSHAN to include pre-primary and the provision of breakfast. Accordingly, ₹22,308 crore was proposed for the year. The inclusion of breakfast, however, was not accepted. Moreover, the extension to pre-primary grades was agreed only for activities not already being undertaken by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). Revised allocations or REs, however, were 54 per cent less than this demand.

ONLY 52% OF REQUESTED FUNDS WERE APPROVED AND 46% WERE ALLOCATED IN 2021-22



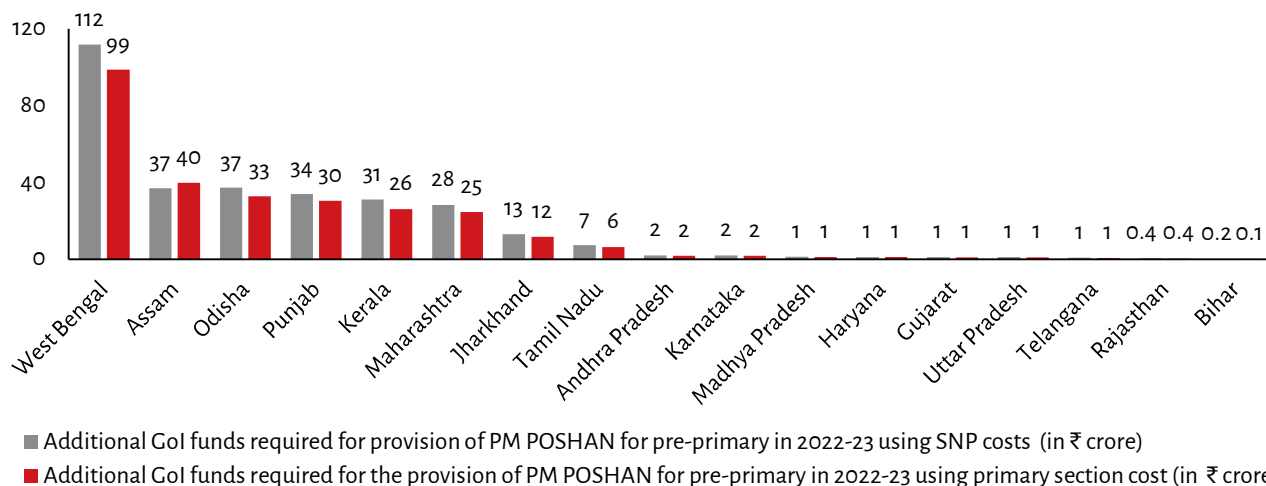
Source: (1) Projected demand from 312th Rajya Sabha committee report: Demand for Grants FY 2020-21 (Demand no.58) of DoSEL, dated 5 March 2020. Available online at: https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/Committee_site/Committee_File/ReportFile/16/123/312_2020_3_12.pdf. Last accessed on 16 December 2021. (2) Projected demand from 323rd Rajya Sabha committee report: Demand for Grants FY 2021-22 of DoSEL, dated 9 March 2021. Available online at: https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/Committee_site/Committee_File/ReportFile/16/144/323_2021_7_15.pdf. Last accessed on 16 December 2021. (3) REs are from Union Expenditure Budget, MoE FY 2021-22 and 2022-23. Available online at: <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/>. Last accessed on 1 February 2022.

Funds Required for Provision of PM POSHAN at Pre-Primary Level

- The decrease in allocations comes despite the extension of the scheme to students receiving pre-primary education in government and government-aided schools from FY 2022-23. We tried to estimate the extent of additional funds that would be needed to cover these additional pre-primary students. Since per child costs for pre-primary section are currently unavailable, two methods were used for these estimations.
- First, we used cost norms for the three to six age group from the Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) within the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). This has been multiplied by the estimated 32 lakh students studying in pre-primary or Bal Vatikas in government and government-aided primary schools (based on U-DISE 2019-20 enrolment numbers) and Programme Approval Board (PAB) approved days for the financial year.
- Second, we assumed that the cost norms remain the same as the primary section and extended it to cover pre-primary sections by multiplying it by students enrolled and PAB approved working days. The calculation, in this case, is based on recurring PM POSHAN components such as foodgrains, cooking cost, honorarium (not including states' additional share), transport assistance, monitoring, management, and evaluation.

- Both methods yielded similar results. In FY 2022-23, using the SNP unit cost, it is estimated that an additional amount of ₹345 crore would be required from GoI. On the other hand, when estimated using primary section unit costs, the figure comes to ₹374 crore. Adding state shares, the total cost required amounts to ₹605 crore using SNP unit cost and ₹550 crore using primary section unit costs.

ADDITIONAL GOI FUNDS FOR THE PROVISION OF PM POSHAN FOR PRE-PRIMARY STUDENTS ESTIMATED TO BE ₹345 CRORE USING SNP COST AND ₹374 CRORE USING PRIMARY SECTION COST



Source: (1) Pre-primary enrolment, U-DISE 2019-20. Available online at: https://dashboard.udiseplus.gov.in/assets/images/pdf/UDISE+2019_20_Booklet.pdf. Last accessed on 2 January 2022. (2) PAB approved days, foodgrains allocation for MDM, FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/Files/Food%20Grain%20Allocation/2021-22/Allocation%20of%20food%20grains%20to%20States%20and%20UTs-1-10-2021.pdf. Last accessed on 2 January 2022.

Note: Authors' calculation based on U-DISE 2019-20 data which are used for pre-primary enrolment, and PAB approved working days for which primary section numbers are used.

TRENDS IN STATE-WISE ALLOCATIONS, RELEASES AND EXPENDITURES

- Release of funds for PM POSHAN are based on plans submitted by states estimating the number of children likely to avail the scheme and approved cost norms. Budgets proposed by states are approved by the PAB, under MoE, after discussions and negotiations with individual state governments.
- Total approved budgets for a state include both state and GoI shares for the specific financial year as well as the unutilised amount from the previous year. Once approved, funds are released by both GoI and states as per their fund sharing ratio.

Approvals

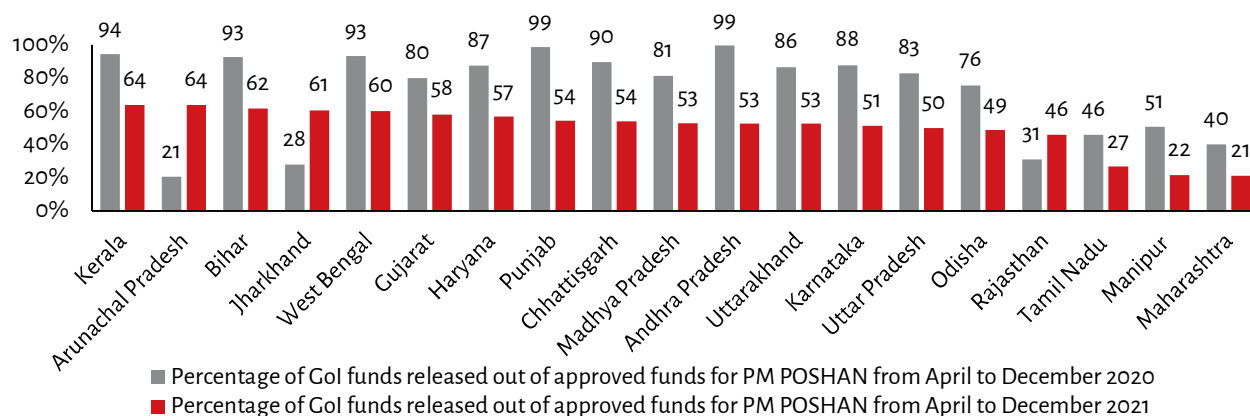
- Even prior to the pandemic, not all states had received full approval of their plans, but approvals have further declined over the last two years since FY 2019-20.
- In FY 2021-22, 14 states had their entire proposed budgets approved by GoI. This was much lower than FY 2020-21 when 22 states had 100 per cent of their proposed budgets approved and FY 2019-20 when 25 states had their entire proposal approved.

Releases

- Release of funds was low in FY 2021-22 compared to the previous year. In FY 2020-21, 73 per cent of the PM POSHAN approved budgets had been released by GoI till December 2020 (three quarters into the fiscal year). Releases were significantly lower in FY 2021-22. Till 31 December 2021, only 48 per cent of the approved budgets had been released.

- After considering the revalidation amount under releases, in FY 2020-21, 80 per cent of the approved amount for PM POSHAN had been released by Gol till December 2020. Despite adding the revalidation amount, releases were still lower in FY 2021-22 at 52 per cent of the approved budget.
- There are some state variations in releases. Out of 36 states and UTs only seven had received more than 60 per cent of their funds by 31 December 2021. The corresponding number of states for the same period in the previous year stood at 18.
- In FY 2021-22 (till 31 December), release of funds was lower than the national average for Rajasthan (46 per cent), Tamil Nadu (27 per cent), Manipur (22 per cent), and Maharashtra (21 per cent).

IN 2021-22, ONLY 48% GOI APPROVALS HAD BEEN RELEASED FOR PM POSHAN TILL DECEMBER COMPARED TO 73% DURING THE SAME PERIOD IN 2020-21

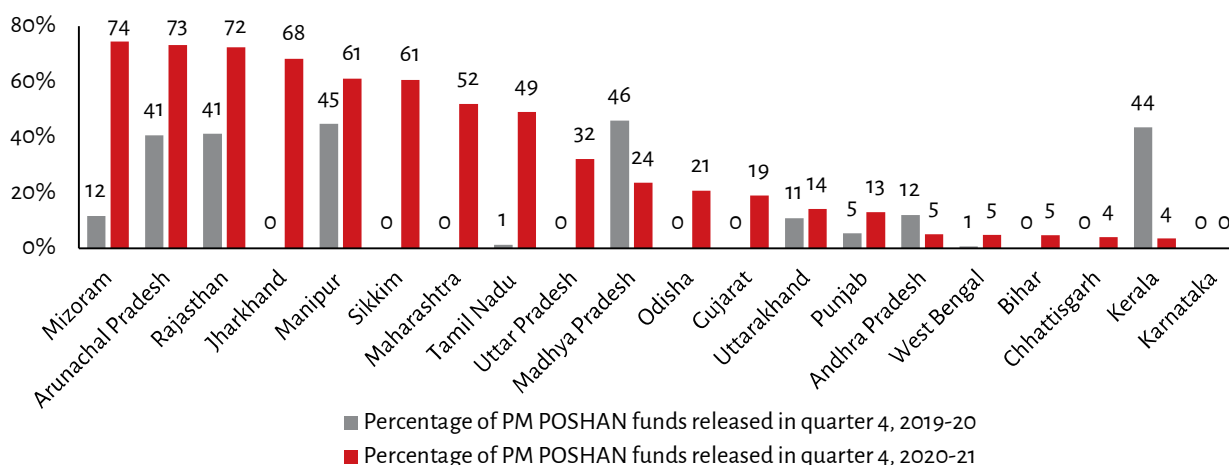


Source: (1) PAB Minutes, PAB Meeting for PM POSHAN, FY 2020-21, and FY 2021-22. (2) Central Assistance Released, FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 2 January 2022.

Timing of Fund Release

- Pace of fund release was also slow in FY 2020-21 compared to the previous year. In FY 2019-20, around 90 per cent of funds were released in the first three quarters and only 10 per cent were released in the fourth quarter.

27% OF TOTAL FUNDS FOR PM POSHAN WERE RELEASED IN LAST QUARTER IN 2020-21



Source: Central Assistance Released, FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 2 January 2022.

- In FY 2020-21, only 35 per cent of the total funds released were in the first two quarters. Instead, 38 per cent were released in the third quarter and 27 per cent in the last quarter of the financial year.
- There are state variations. For states such as Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan, more than 70 per cent of funds were released in the last quarter of FY 2020-21, compared to less than 50 per cent in FY 2019-20. In contrast, Karnataka had received 100 per cent of its funds by the third quarter.

Expenditures

- Expenditures can be assessed in two ways. First, as a proportion of the total allocations; and second, as a share of total funds available. Fund availability each year includes opening balance (or unspent funds from the previous year) and releases by both Gol and states.
- In FY 2020-21, on average, considering all states and UTs, 90 per cent of funds allocated and available for recurring costs were spent. Utilisation was highest in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, where more funds were utilised than available. This increase can be due to the release of additional grants for recurring central assistance, due to an increase in the number of children availing MDM, over and above the PAB-MDM approval. For instance, Madhya Pradesh gave FSA to an additional 18 lakh children, Andhra Pradesh to an additional 5 lakh children, and Karnataka to an additional 3 lakh children.
- In contrast, utilisation was lowest in Tamil Nadu (70 per cent), Jharkhand (58 per cent), and Assam (47 per cent).

COMPONENT-WISE TREND

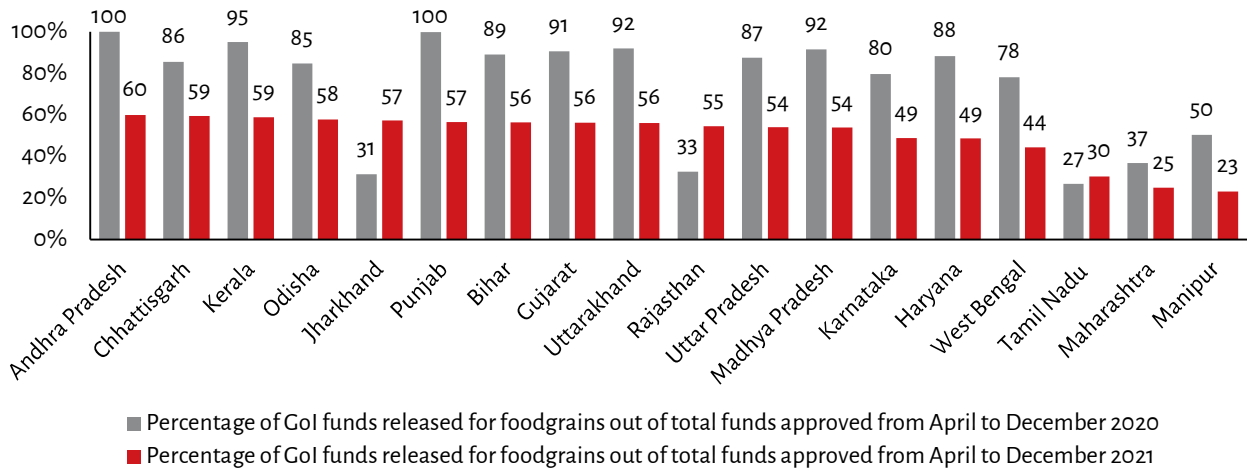
- Under PM POSHAN, funds for recurring components are provided for the following activities:
 - **Foodgrains** – Gol norms specify that every child should be allotted 100 grams of rice and wheat for primary schools (Grades 1-5) and 150 grams for upper primary schools (Grades 6-8). Gol provides foodgrains free of cost through the Food Corporation of India (FCI).
 - **Cooking Cost** – Costs of ingredients such as pulses, vegetables, cooking oil, salt, and condiments are provided on a per-child, per-day basis.
 - **Honorarium to Cook-cum-Helper (CCH)** – Monthly honorarium of ₹1,000 is given to CCH for 10 months in a year, based on a norm of one CCH per 25 students in a school. Some states provide extra honorarium from their own resources.
 - **Transportation Assistance (TA)** – TA is given for carrying foodgrains from FCI depots to schools in all states and UTs at Public Distribution System (PDS) rates; and
 - **Monitoring, Management and Evaluation (MME)** – MME accounts for 2.7 per cent of the recurring central assistance for cost of foodgrains, cooking cost, transportation charges, and honorarium to CCH.

Foodgrains

- Wheat, rice, and fortified rice grains are bought centrally by the FCI and sent to the states. States and UTs further allocate foodgrains to their districts as per requirement. After obtaining foodgrain allocations, the district administration schedules lifting from the local FCI depot. These may be lifted either monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly. The cost of foodgrains provided by the FCI is made available to district-level authorities in states and UTs directly by Gol as per the approved plan.
- Supply of foodgrains to primary and upper primary schools happen at National Food Security Act (NFSA) rates, which is ₹1 per kg for coarse grain, ₹2 per kg for wheat, and ₹3 per kg for rice.

- Similar to the overall trends of slow release, release of funds for foodgrain procurement has also been slow. In FY 2021-22, till 31 December, GoI released only 47 per cent of its funds approved by PAB. The figure for the same period in FY 2020-21 stood at 71 per cent. Fund releases were less than 33 per cent of approved budgets for states such as Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Manipur.

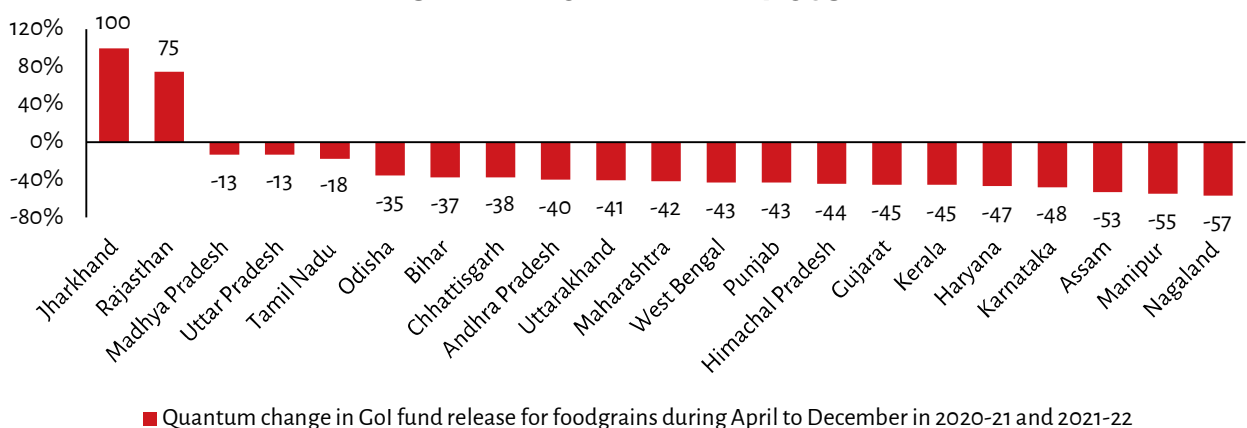
IN 2021-22, ONLY 47% GOI APPROVALS WERE RELEASED FOR FOODGRAINS TILL DECEMBER COMPARED TO 71% IN 2020-21 TILL DECEMBER



Source: (1) PAB Minutes, PAB Meeting for PM POSHAN FY 2020-21, and FY 2021-22. (2) Central Assistance Released, FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 15 December 2021.

- The decline is evident when looked at in terms of actual quantum of funds. Between April to December 2019 and April to December 2020, the total quantum of funds released by GoI for foodgrain procurement saw a 2 per cent decline.
- In FY 2021-22, the decline was starker. A comparison between April to December in FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22 shows a further 32 per cent decrease in GoI fund release for foodgrain procurement. In fact, 31 states and UTs had spent less till December 2021 than in the previous year and states such as Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland saw more than a 50 per cent decrease.
- Jharkhand, though, stands out with its releases doubled in FY 2021-22 till December. This, however, is on account of a very low base due to only ₹8 crore being released in FY 2020-21.

32% LESS FOODGRAINS RELEASED IN 2021-22 TILL DECEMBER COMPARED TO THE SAME PERIOD IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR



Source: Central Assistance Released, Foodgrain for FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 2 January 2022.

Foodgrains Allotted

- To ensure nutritional security and to deal with anaemia and micronutrient deficiency in the country, GoI approved a Sponsored Pilot Scheme on 'Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System' for a period of three years starting from FY 2019-20.
- Based on an RTI response dated 21 December 2021, offtake of normal and fortified rice has been low. Till December, while 46 per cent of regular rice allocated had been lifted, the proportion for fortified rice stood at only 16 per cent. For 13 states and UTs, there were no allocations under fortified rice.

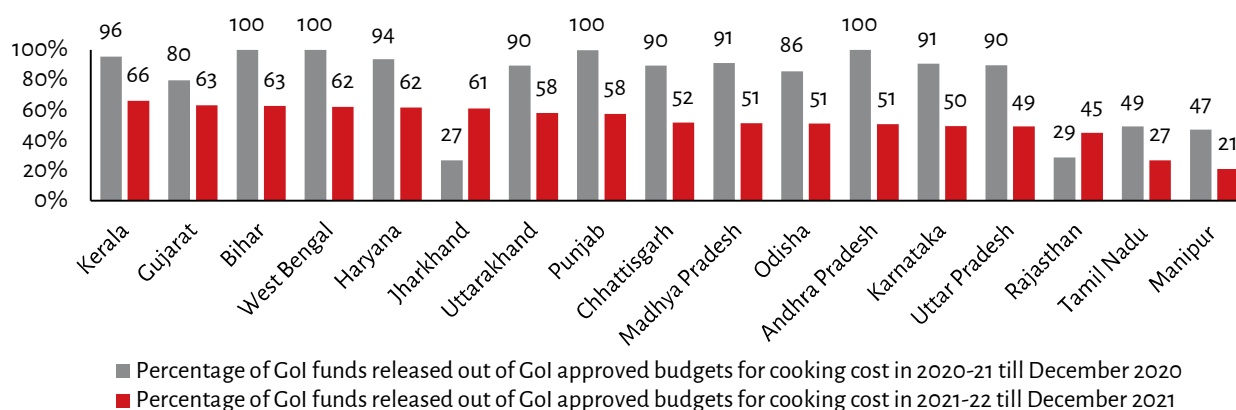
Utilisation

- Low releases has impacted the utilisation of funds. In FY 2020-21 on average, considering all states and UTs, only 53 per cent of allocated funds were spent. However, the proportion increases to 84 per cent when considering the funds available.
- Utilisation as a proportion of funds available was amongst the highest in Punjab and Jharkhand where more funds were utilised than available. In contrast, it was lowest in Arunachal Pradesh (55 per cent) and Assam (35 per cent).

Cooking Cost

- Costs for ingredients such as pulses, vegetables, cooking oil, other condiments, and fuel constituted the largest share of the PM POSHAN budget. As per the revised norms, in FY 2020-21, the minimum allocation for cooking cost per child, per day is ₹4.97 for primary school students and ₹7.45 per child, per day for upper primary school students.
- As per letter dated 6 October 2021, the Department of School Education and Literacy will form a committee to review components of cooking cost, the formula and methodology of its revision, actual consumption, and coverage.
- As with overall trends, a comparison of funds approved for cooking for the first three quarters of FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22 with actual releases during the same period found that only 48 per cent of approved funds had been released in FY 2021-22 compared to 78 per cent in the previous year. States with the highest differences included Andhra Pradesh (49 percentage points), Punjab (42 percentage points), and Karnataka (41 percentage points).

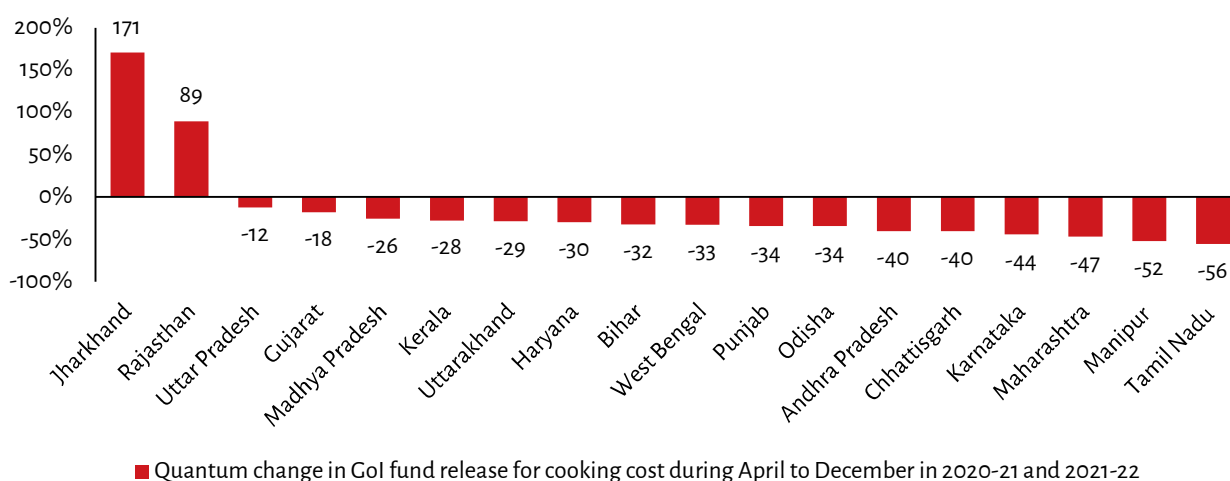
IN 2021-22, ONLY 48% GOI APPROVALS WERE RELEASED FOR COOKING COST TILL DECEMBER, COMPARED TO 76% DURING THE SAME PERIOD IN 2020-21



Source: (1) PAB Minutes, PAB Meeting for PM POSHAN FY 2020-21, and FY 2021-22. (2) Central Assistance Released, FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 15 December 2021.

- The total quantum of funds released in FY 2021-22 till December were on average 28 per cent lower than in the same period in the previous year. There are however state differences. In FY 2021-22, till December, 29 states and UTs had received less funds compared to the same period in the previous year. The decline was more than 40 per cent for states such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, and Tamil Nadu.
- On the other hand, states such as Jharkhand and Rajasthan received more funds this year when compared to the same period last year. As for Jharkhand, only ₹72 crore was released in FY 2020-21, whereas releases stood at ₹194 crore on 31 December 2021.

RELEASES FOR COOKING COST DECREASED BY 28% IN 2021-22 TILL DECEMBER 2021



Source: Central Assistance Released, Cooking Cost for FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 2 January 2022.

Utilisation

- In FY 2020-21, on average, considering all states and UTs, 89 per cent of funds available for cooking cost and 88 per cent of total allocations towards cooking cost were spent. Utilisation was amongst the highest in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh where more funds were utilised than available. In contrast, it was lowest in Assam (41 per cent).

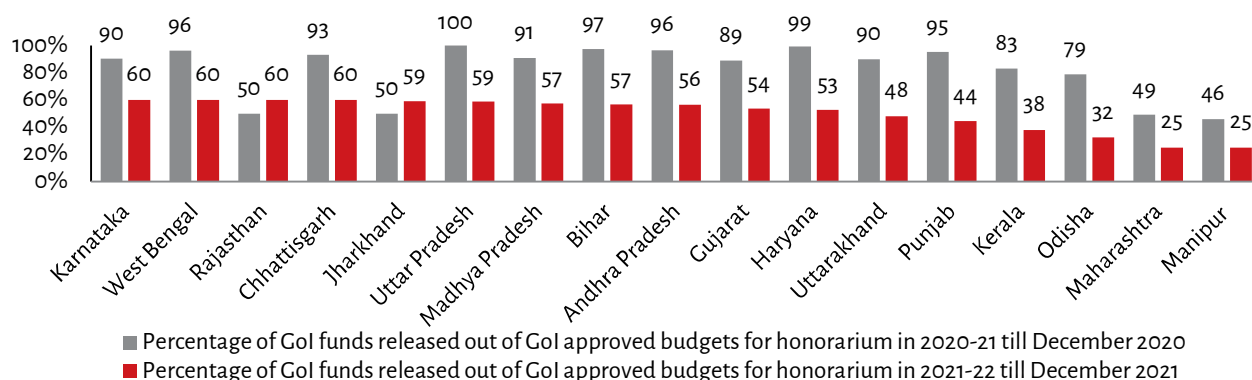
PM POSHAN Provisions During Summer Vacation

- Like last year, in FY 2021-22, MoE proposed additional allocations of ₹1,200 crore as a one-time special welfare measure due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to provide FSA during the summer months. While in FY 2020-21, it included the provision of foodgrains, cooking costs, and transport assistance; for FY 2021-22, DBT of only the cooking cost component was to be provided to all eligible students.
- The pace of release of funds for this component has been slower in FY 2021-22 than the previous year. In FY 2020-21, till December 2020, of the 27 states and UTs that received their funds; 14 received them at the end of the second quarter and 13 at the start of the third quarter i.e. between October and November.
- For FY 2021-22, no funds were released in the first two quarters. Instead, most states started receiving funds only towards the end of the third quarter i.e. from December 2021. In fact, only 15 states and UTs had received their funds till 31 December 2021.

Cooks-cum-Helpers (CCH)

- According to the norm, one CCH must be engaged in a school having up to 25 students, two CCHs for schools having 26 to 100 students, and one CCH for every additional 100 students. As per PM POSHAN guidelines, an amount of ₹1,000 per month is provided as honorarium to a CCH for 10 months. The amount is shared between Union and states or UTs as per existing pattern.
- In addition, many states provide additional funds as honorarium to CCH. Based on FY 2021-22 PABs, 22 states and UTs provide additional honorarium from their own resources. In fact, the monthly honorarium in Tamil Nadu stood at ₹10,083 (average is taken as the state has special slabs) and in Kerala at ₹11,750 at an average. However, due to school closures because of the COVID-19 pandemic and since the services of cooks were utilised only for packing and distribution of kits, CCH in Kerala received a significantly lower amount of ₹1,600 per month in FY 2020-21.
- Like foodgrains and cooking costs, release of funds for CCH out of approved budget declined significantly. In FY 2021-22 till December, only 49 per cent approved funds for CCH was released as compared to 80 per cent during the same period in FY 2020-21.
- States such as Punjab and Odisha saw the highest decrease, with less than 50 per cent of approved budget released till December. During the previous year, the states had received 95 per cent and 79 per cent of their approved budgets, respectively.

IN 2021-22, ONLY 49% GOI APPROVALS WERE RELEASED FOR HONORARIUM TILL DECEMBER, COMPARED TO 80% IN 2020-21 TILL DECEMBER



Source: (1) PAB Minutes, PAB Meeting for PM POSHAN FY 2020-21, and FY 2021-22. (2) Central Assistance Released, FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 2 January 2022.

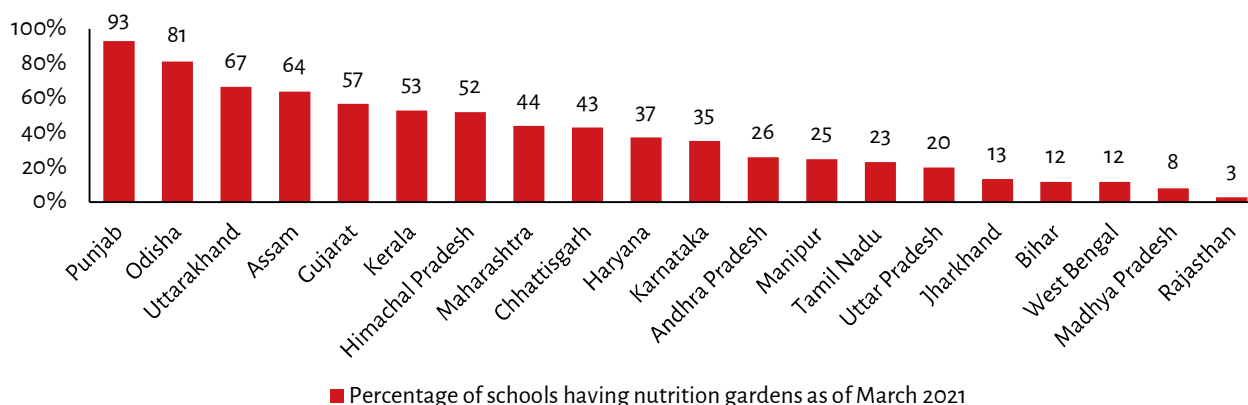
SPECIAL NUTRITION INTERVENTION

School Nutrition Garden

- In FY 2021-22, the Cabinet approved several initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the scheme. One of such interventions was the development of school nutrition gardens to give children first-hand experience with nature and gardening. The harvest of these gardens is meant to be used in the scheme to provide additional micronutrients.
- Progress on setting up nutrition gardens has been slow. At all-India level, only 30 per cent schools had active nutrition garden out of all schools where setting up of kitchen garden was possible as of March 2021, whereas only 22 per cent schools out of all schools had active nutrition garden.

- Only two states, namely Punjab and Odisha, had completed setting up nutrition gardens in more than 80 per cent of schools. In contrast, less than 20 per cent of schools in Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan had set up nutrition gardens.

30% OF SCHOOLS HAVE ACTIVE NUTRITION GARDENS WHERE SETTING A KITCHEN GARDEN WAS POSSIBLE AS OF MARCH 2021



Source: AWPBs of PAB meetings, FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 16 December 2021.

COVERAGE

Provisions Made for Eligible Beneficiaries Under Food Security Allowance (FSA)

- Due to school closures, FSA was provided in different forms across states and UTs. This ranged from either foodgrains and DBT of cooking cost or foodgrains, pulse, oil, etc. or a combination of both.
- Thirteen states and UTs provided foodgrains and DBT for cooking cost, 16 states and UTs provided foodgrains and pulse, oil, etc., and 6 states and UTs provided combination of both under FSA provision.

13 STATES AND UTs PROVIDED FOODGRAINS AND DBT OF COOKING COST FOR THE PROVISION OF FSA

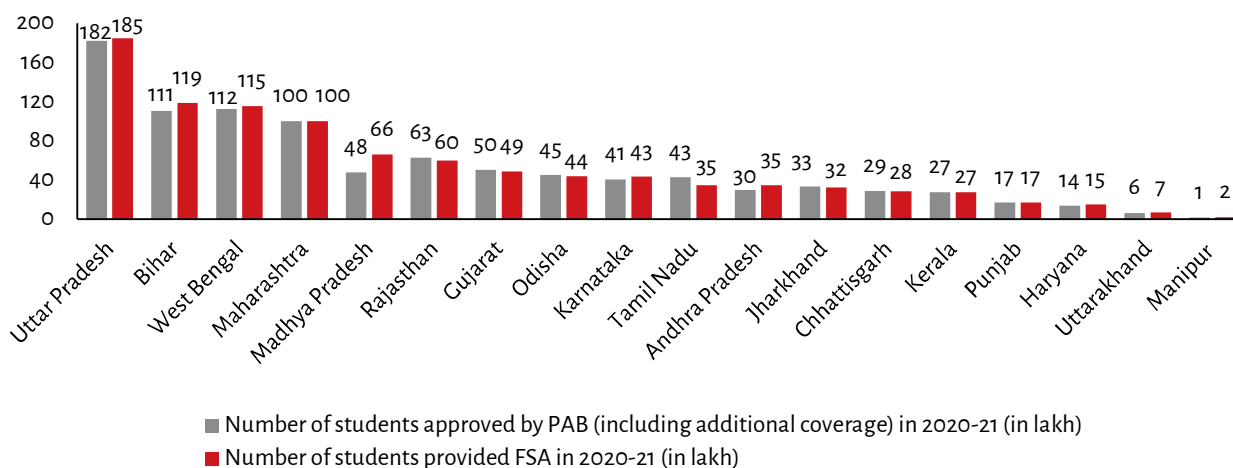
State/UT	Foodgrains and DBT of Cooking Cost	Foodgrains and pulses, oil, etc.	Combination of both
Andhra Pradesh	-	Yes	-
Bihar	Yes	-	-
Gujarat	Yes	-	-
Kerala	-	Yes	-
Jharkhand	-	-	Yes
Karnataka	-	Yes	-
Madhya Pradesh	-	-	Yes
Maharashtra	-	Yes	-
Rajasthan	-	Yes	-
Tamil Nadu	-	Yes	-
Uttar Pradesh	Yes	-	-
West Bengal	-	Yes	-

Source: Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question Number 1959, answered on 5 August 2021. Available online at: <https://pqars.nic.in/annex/254/AU1959.pdf>. Last accessed on 16 December 2021.

FSA Coverage

- The number of students provided with FSA was marginally higher than those approved by the PAB.
- In FY 2020-21, 9.25 crore students were initially approved for FSA. Due to the pandemic and additional demand, more students were approved and at the end of the year, total number of approved students for FSA stood at 10.31 crore. Yet, as per official data, 10.67 crore students were provided FSA, which was 1.42 crore higher. In other words, even after accounting for additional coverage, 36 lakh additional students, beyond the approved figure, were provided with FSA.
- There were variations among states. Gap between FSA approved and FSA provided was highest in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. In Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, 35 lakh students were provided FSA out of the approved figure of 43 lakh students.

36 LAKH MORE STUDENTS WERE PROVIDED FSA THAN APPROVED FOR 2020-21



Source: (1) Foodgrain allocation for MDM, FY 2020-21. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/Files/Food%20Grain%20Allocation/2020-21/Food_Grains_Allocations_3rd_4th_Qtr_2020-21.pdf. Last accessed on 16 December 2021. (2) FSA from AWPBs of PAB meetings, FY 2021-22. Available online at: http://mdm.nic.in/mdm_website/. Last accessed on 16 December 2021.

SOCIAL AUDITS

- Social audit is a democratic process which involves a collective monitoring of a scheme by people's active involvement, covering issues of equity, equality, and expenditure management. Under the revamped scheme, district-wise social audits have been made mandatory for greater accountability.
- In FY 2019-20, out of 36 states and UTs only 16 had fully or partially conducted social audit in their districts. In FY 2020-21, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this dropped further to only 7 states. Even when audits were undertaken, they were often not done regularly and did not always cover every district. In FY 2019-20, only two states, namely Jharkhand and Himachal Pradesh, had conducted social audits in all districts. In FY 2020-21, Assam was the only state to have done the same.