

Food and Nutrition Security in India (FaNS)



The situation

India is a country of sharp contrasts. Despite rapid economic growth, the living conditions of the majority of the mainly rural population have yet not improved. A growing and prosperous middle and upper class contrasts with 800 million-plus people living on less than 2 US dollars per day. That is equivalent to almost 70 percent of the population. While the per capita income is rising, per capita calorie consumption has fallen. Almost one fifth of the Indian population suffers from malnutrition and over 40 percent of children below the age of five are underweight.

India is home to the most children worldwide who do not grow according to their age due to malnutrition. 48 million children (2016) suffer from this irreversible consequence which is also caused by the lack of access to clean drinking water and the absence of hygiene practices. Although almost half of the population lives from agricultural activities, the production does not go beyond self-sufficiency level. Cropland is shrinking due to a rising demand for housing area. Impacts of climate change and wrong cultivation practices further accelerate the loss of fertile soil.

Activities in India

- **Computerization of the national food distribution programme (TPDS):** The project provides technical expertise to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution for implementing digitalized recording and access controls for the distribution of subsidized food for the poor to assure that only eligible people actually obtain the food.
- **Improved awareness of the importance of food diversity:** Activities in villages target women of childbearing age to strengthen their knowledge about a healthy diet for them and their children. Meetings and workshops with decision makers promote quality improvements in food and nutrition related public services.

- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:** As food/nutrition and water/hygiene are closely interlinked, the project encourages the uptake of activities like rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge to improve the sustainable availability of water. This supports the sanitation and hygiene practices among the target group.

Objective

650,000 women of childbearing age and small children (6-23 months) at risk of malnutrition have sufficient supplies of healthy food at all times even at times of food crises.



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Region

Sheopur & Chhatarpur districts, Madhya Pradesh India

Project Duration

2/2015 – 12/2019

Budget

EUR 6.1 million

Implementing Partner

Welthungerhilfe and local partner NGOs, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA),
Department of Women and Child Development, Madhya Pradesh

Political Partner

Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

Target group

650,000 women of child bearing age (15-49 years) and 104,000 infants 6 to 23 months.



How we work

The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is the world's largest food distribution scheme. Our FaNS programme provides technical expertise to the Indian central Government. The aim is to use biometric identification to reduce leakages and to make the targeting more efficient. So called Point of Sale devices are installed at the Madhya Pradesh distribution centres and identify the beneficiaries via their fingerprints. The machine reads out aloud how much the beneficiary can take home. This technology increases transparency, reduces leakages and enables the beneficiary to demand the ration at the shop of their choice.

Parallel, in the two districts in Madhya Pradesh, a participatory approach raises awareness among women about a nutritious diet for themselves and their families. It encourages them to use and demand a higher quality of public food and nutrition services. The project promotes kitchen gardens to ensure a greater diversity of food. For example, a theatre campaign with local actors has engaged the villages in spreading the word about nutrition diversity.

The target districts suffer from severe water shortage leaving people without sufficient water for cooking, growing vegetables and personal hygiene. Together with the Women and Child Development Department of Madhya Pradesh, the project has constructed rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge structures in eight model villages.



Results

22,401 distribution centres are now operating and distributing food via Point of Sale Devices, serving 54,300,631 eligible people in all Madhya Pradesh. Together with SEWA we have already supported more than 700 eligible but excluded households to apply for the TPDS.

The first trainings on nutrition are reaching 46,317 women of childbearing age, additionally 4,000 families have been identified and are involved in setting up kitchen gardens. 45 rainwater harvesting & groundwater recharge structures in 8 model villages have been created and rehabilitated, respectively.

Imprint

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Photographs:

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GIZ is responsible for the content of the present publication

February 2017