

REPORT ON CURRENT EVALUATION OF THE APPLIED NUTRITION PROGRAMME (1964-65)

1. The Study

At the instance of the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, the Programme Evaluation organisation undertook this study. The main focus of this evaluation study-was on the operational aspects of the programme planning, administration and extension aspects..

2. Objectives

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the operational aspects of the programme,analysis of problems faced in the field and suggesting directions for improving the programme implementation. The various aspects of the programme implementation covered in this evaluation were programme planning and the administrative set up, the production schemes, the supplementary feeding programme, nutrition education and the training of personnel.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for selection of Sample

Four States, i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Madras, Orissa and U.P.,where this programme was in operation, were selected for the study. With the deadline of reports set for May,1965, no elaborate field survey could be undertaken. Four groups of activities were taken up i.e. production of nutritive foods, supplementary feeding of vulnerable groups, nutrition education and training of functionaries.

4. Reference Period

The study was conducted in 1964 and the data were collected for the years 1962-63 to 1964-65.

5. Main Findings

1. In Madras and Utttar Pradesh, the blocks to be covered under the programme were selected only in areas where the extension training centres were located.

In **Andhra Pradesh** and Orissa, other factors formed the basis of selection, such as the relative performance of blocks in developmental activities, existence of the primary

health centres, availability of funds in the block budget, local enthusiasm and good communication facilities. The procedure followed in the latter years of the programme, especially in Madras & Uttar Pradesh of selecting blocks adjacent to the training centres, had much to commend itself.

2. The programme had generally suffered wherever areas were selected without fully taking into account the availability of local resources.

3. In Andhra Pradesh, ten villages per block were selected presumably but not necessarily, on the basis of availability of resources and public participation. In Madras, all the villages in a block were considered suitable for the operation of this programme which resulted in **dilution and inadequacy** of returns. The method of selection of villages followed in the States did not indicate that any definite strategy had been worked out for spreading the programme.

4. At the State level, coordination was more or less well achieved through the State Coordination Committee. But, the situation was not very encouraging at the district level. In Madras, no coordination committee was set up at the district level while in Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh meetings of district committees were neither regular nor very effective.

5. Though the Primary Health Centres were expected to play a very important role in identifying the important nutritional deficiencies, advising on the dietary patterns and the nutrition training, they had, at best been involved only in the selection of beneficiaries for the supplementary feeding.

6. Except in Madras, the Panchayats did not play a very useful part in carrying out the ANP. In Andhra, they had almost no role to play as far as poultry and gardening programmes were concerned. Even in pisciculture, they did not evince sufficient interest in the protection and maintenance of tanks.

7. Delay in the construction of poultry farms, supply of fairly old birds, non-replacement of very old birds, poor quality of poultry feed, were among the important factors responsible for a relatively slow progress on the production side.

8. Non-availability of suitable land for village and school gardens was the most important problem in the spread of this programme. Other factors impeding it were lack of irrigation facilities, distance from electricity transmission lines, delay in sinking of wells and lack of supply of oil engines and pumpsets. Sometimes, the size of the garden was too small for a full utilisation of the pumpsets.

9. The supplementary feeding **programme had been working** well in Madras, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. One of the operational problems in this programme was that mothers had a resistance in accepting the supplementary food if it was meant only for them.

6. **Major Suggestions**

1. It would help the programme, if it was initially taken up in villages where the physical, human and institutional resources were available and favourable and the local bodies were keen and receptive.

2. Instances reported from the field suggested the need for better integration and coordination of the working of the different agencies involved in the programme.

3. In order to infuse a greater sense of responsibility and elicit better attention, the Medical Officer of the Health centre should be made responsible for the preparation of the final list of beneficiaries. The maternity assistant should be entrusted with the supervision of the distribution of eggs and fish to the beneficiaries whenever possible.

4. The beneficiaries of the feeding programme were originally expected to be selected on the basis of a nutritional survey conducted in the villages before the operation of the programme. The list was to be periodically revised. The procedure had not been adopted in full in many of these States. It would be desirable to make a fresh approach on the basis of some quick survey. The advise and guidance of the village community, the panchayat and the Medical Officer of the Primary Health Centre, could be taken into consideration. The group from which beneficiaries were to be selected, had to be identified in the light of the objective of this programme, as defined from time to time.

5. Health and nutrition education should be given more attention in the programme implementation. Progress indicators for this sector should be introduced in the progress reporting proforma used at present.

6. Right type of men should be selected for training. Bad selection had adversely affected the programme implementation, and had also resulted in wastage of the efforts put in for training. Like in Andhra, persons trained for poultry keeping did not undertake poultry farming.