Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1   The Scheme

Public Distribution System is an instrument of the Governments' economic strategy to ensure timely availability of essential commodities to the public, particularly to the weaker sections of the society. The Department distributes rice, wheat, levy sugar, iodised salt and kerosene as notified by the Central Government. The system involves procurement, storage and distribution of foodgrains to the ration card holders and it is regulated under the provision of "Public Distribution System (Control) order, 2001".

To strengthen the PDS, Government in June 1997 introduced the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) to provide foodgrains to rural poor at subsidised prices by issuing special cards to families Below Poverty Line (BPL). Under the TPDS, the States were required to formulate and implement foolproof arrangements for identification of the poor, delivery of foodgrains to Fair Price Shops (FPS) and distribution in a transparent and accountable manner at the FPS level to enhance the food security for the poor.

The identification of poor under the scheme was done by the State as per State-wise poverty estimates of Planning Commission based on the methodology of the 'Expert Group on estimation of proportion and number of poor in 2004'.

Below Poverty Line (BPL) Scheme intended for providing foodgrains at subsidised rates to the identified families through issue of distinctive ration card. The State was required to formulate and implement arrangements for identification of poor and distribution of foodgrains through the Fair Price Shops (FPS) in an accountable and transparent manner. The scale of issue of foodgrains (either rice or wheat or combination of both) was fixed at 35 kilogram (Kg) per month since April 2002. The cost of foodgrains was fixed at ₹6.15 and ₹6.25 per kg of rice and wheat (atta) respectively.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) launched in December 2000 was a part of TPDS, focused to the poorest of the poor to provide more substantial benefit and nutrition to reduce hunger among the poorest segment of the BPL population through issue of distinctive ration cards. The scale of issue of foodgrains was fixed similar to BPL Scheme. However, the cost of foodgrains was fixed at ₹3 per Kg in respect of rice and ₹2 per Kg in respect of wheat against the Central Issue Price (CIP)[1].

Above Poverty Line (APL) families were also provided with family identity cards to avail foodgrains allocated through FPS. The scale of issue of foodgrains (either rice or wheat or combination of both) was fixed at 35 kg per month from April 2004. Central Issue

---

[1] CIP is the uniform price of essential commodities fixed by GoI from time to time for issue to the States/UTs for distribution under TPDS.

Price of the foodgrains was fixed at ₹8.30 and ₹ 6.10 per kg of rice and wheat respectively.

Annapurna scheme aims at providing food security to those senior citizens who were eligible but have remained uncovered under National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS). The age of the identified beneficiary should be 65 years or above irrespective of gender, provided they were not in receipt of any pension either from State or under NOAPS. Distinctive ration cards would be issued to the beneficiaries so as to provide 10 kg rice per month free of cost.

Food Corporation of India provides the allocated foodgrains through five Food Storage Depots[2] and the Department of Food and Civil Supplies (FCS) ensures the lifting and supply of essential commodities through 238 authorised FPS and the subordinate offices in the district to cover 2.95 lakh households in the State.

Convergence programme aims to provide assistance of 15 kg foodgrains per resident per month in hostels having 2/3rd students belonging to SC/ST/OBC, Welfare Institutions viz. NGOs/Charitable Institutions which help the shelterless poor and other categories not covered under TPDS or under any other Welfare Schemes.

To safeguard against malnourishment during the period of natural calamity or during lean seasons when the marginalised households do not have sufficient resource to purchase the rations, the PDS provides 4 MT rice to every Village Grain Bank set up in the selected villages. These programmes were operated through the Department of Food and Civil Supplies in accordance with the prescribed scale and criteria fixed by Government of India.

Mid-day-meal programme implemented by the Department of School Education, aims to cover students of Class I-VIII in Government Schools, Schools aided by Government and the Schools run by local bodies at the rate of 150 gram per child per school day. Effective from April 2008, cooked/processed hot meal with a minimum content of 300 calories and 8-12 gms of protein was being served each day of school for a minimum of 200 days or 3 kgs per student per month for 9-11 months in a year, where foodgrains were distributed in raw form.

Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP) launched by Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resources Development was implemented through the Department of Social Welfare in Nagaland. The programme aims to provide nutritious energy food to the children between the age group of 1-6 years and pregnant lactating women from disadvantaged sections for 300 days in a year at 100 gram per beneficiary free of cost through ICDS projects.

---

[2] Dimapur(2), Tuensang(1), Mokokchung (1) and Mon (1)

Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) is a centrally assisted programme implemented by the Department of Women Development in the State with an objective to improve the food security and healthcare to the undernourished adolescent girls in the State in the age group of 11-19 years @ 6 kg per beneficiary per month as identified by weight (less than 35 kg) which would be covered irrespective of financial status of the family to which they belong. Free foodgrains would be provided to the adolescent girls initially for a period of three months.

Foodgrains under convergence programmes were procured from FCI at BPL rates and distributed to the beneficiaries by the implementing Units.