

Sudeep Banerjee
Secretary

D.O. NO.F. 13-10/2005-EE-5 (MDM) (Pt.)

Dated 27th December, 2005

Subject:- Mobilization of mothers to watch mid-day meal.

Dear

The universalized Mid-Day Meal Scheme now covers nearly 12 Crore children making it the world's largest school feeding programme. A recent research study by Prof. Amartya Sen's Pratichi Trust hails the Mid-Day Meal Programme as "the biggest pro-poor initiative launched since the land reform movement of 1970s".

2. Issues pertaining to regularity and quality of meals, however, continue to evoke concern, necessitating new approaches to monitoring and supervision. One effective intervention could be to empower mothers to watch feeding of the children. The physical presence of atleast one mother (or more than one, wherever possible) could ensure that a good quality meal is served every day without interruption. This would lessen dependence on monitoring through external supervisors/inspectors who are anyway unable to oversee all schools on a daily basis, given the magnitude of the programme.

3. **We do hope that mothers, if encouraged and empowered to take turns to supervise feeding, would be willing volunteers. Presently, they are unable to participate in the programme, their dissatisfaction with its quality notwithstanding. This initiative could give them a voice and a role, resulting in a highly effective mother-watch.**

4. You could also think of additional ways of mobilizing community to add value to this important programme.

5. I would be grateful if the matter receives your personal attention and we are kept apprised of the progress.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-
(SUDEEP BANERJEE)

To
(i) Chief Secretaries of States
(ii) Administration of UTs as per list enclosed.