

CHALLENGES, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF INDIA'S NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT

Jinesh Soni¹, Prof. (Dr.) Sanjaya Choudhury²

¹Research Scholar, Deptt. of Law, Bhagwant University, Ajmer, Rajasthan

²Professor, Deptt. of Law, Bhagwant University, Ajmer, Rajasthan

Abstract

This paper highlights the need to achieve food security in the recent several years due to the enormous pressure of the ever-increasing population in India. With the passage of time, preferences in crop production techniques are changing and a variety of new challenges and opportunities are attracting our attention towards food security. This paper presents the discussion on various challenges and opportunities for food security in India. Challenges and opportunities such as climate change, mismatches between water demand and availability and new trends in agricultural crop pricing and insurance and globalization are analysed. Financial impact such as household subsidy on food, transparency in food procurement and distribution, reducing corruption, reaching the intended beneficiaries is shown.

Keywords: Impact, Corruption, Household, Subsidy, Challenges etc.

1. Introduction

The Indian PDS is criticized in the literature for its urban bias, poor beneficiary targeting, corruption and operational inefficiencies. Several studies have pointed out issues related to the Indian PDS, and various reforms have been suggested from time to time. Gulati and Krishnan (1975) proposed a levy scheme for food producers, equity among states and wider distribution among weaker sections with an affordable price. Ramani and Bhatnagar (1988) addressed the basic level problems in the functioning of FPS and proposed a Management Information System for State Governments to monitor the distribution of essential commodities through State warehouses and FPSs. The debate over the urban bias of the Indian PDS and the reforms needed is studied by several researchers (Dev and Suryanarayan, 1991; Hauz and Jha, 1992; Ahluwalia, 1993). Several researchers have tried to evaluate the effectiveness of Indian PDS and point out that its benefits are not reaching the masses.¹ needy people, and hence the objective of poverty alleviation has not been met (Radhakrishna and Subbarao, 1997; Tritah, 2003; Jha et al., 2013). The relationship between the quality of wheat available at FPS and shifting of consumers to the open market has been studied by Ramaswamy and Balakrishnan (2002). In a comparative study of Indian and Chinese PDS, Zhou and Wan (2006) suggested the need for modification and flexibility to reduce the burden on Indian PDS. Practical difficulties and issues with FPS and related remedial actions have been suggested by Saxena (2010). The need for a change in the objective of the PDS and procurement process, and the need for a holistic approach has been discussed by Kumar et al. (2007). Kumar and Mohanty (2012) have studied the need to strengthen consumer forums to check corruption. The barriers to sustainable food production in India and remedial actions in this regard have been discussed by Gahookar (2011). The preface to the Global Hunger Index, published by the International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington DC, begins with the quote- "Hungry dogs are not dead; some are sleeping, others are biting".² Unsurprisingly, the issue of hunger and food insecurity arising from poverty or other causes remains a matter of concern to policy makers, administrators, social researchers and academics, especially in third world countries. India has been quite successful in ensuring adequate availability of food in the country.³ But providing food is only one aspect of food security, although it is an important aspect. Economic access to food and its absorption by people for better nutrition are other important aspects of food security. The world's growing population, environmental degradation, limited natural resources and climate change are the biggest challenges to the food security of the human population. It is estimated that around 870 million people are malnourished and 98% of these live in developing countries such as India (sources: FAO, WFP and IFAD, 2012). In addition, one billion people lack adequate nutrition. Hunger and malnutrition alone are killing approximately 6 million children worldwide each year.⁴ In India, the situation is even worse, with about 17.5 percent (217 million) of the population undernourished and the country ranked 63 out of 69 countries on the Global Hunger Index (source: IFPRI, 2013). The incidence of underweight among children under five is also worrying, with 40.2% of children being underweight and India ranks second in terms of underweight children out of 129 countries, the second highest prevalence in the world. (Source: IFPRI, 2012). The situation for women is even worse, with around

36% of Indian women of childbearing age being underweight, compared to only 16% in 23 sub-Saharan African countries (sources: Deaton and Dreze, 2009). Pervasive hunger and malnutrition have placed the country at 70 out of 107 countries in the Global Food Security Index (The Economist, 2013). On the human development front, India's performance is again very poor, ranking 136th in the Human Development Index (UNDP, 2013). Food security and human development are inextricably linked and their consequences are important code-determined (Miselhorn et al., 2012). Ensuring food security of 17% of the world's human population and feeding 10.71% of the world's livestock with 2.4% of the world's geographical area and 4% of water resources is a major challenge before India.⁵

2. Issues and Challenges of Food Security Act in India

Inside the Indian context, the basis of humans's food security can be observed in the constitution, despite the fact that there is no clear provision on the proper to food. The essential proper to lifestyles enshrined in Article 21 of the charter has been interpreted by means of the excellent courtroom and the countrywide Human Rights commission to consist of the right to stay with human dignity, including the proper to food and other fundamental requirements. Under the Directive concepts of state policy, it's far provided below Article 47 that the kingdom shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the same old of dwelling of its humans and the improvement of public fitness as considered one of its number one obligations.⁶

Presenting food security has been the focal point of the government's planning and policy. Food safety refers to the availability of sufficient meals grains to satisfy domestic call for as well as get right of entry to food in enough portions at low cost prices at the character level. Achieving self-sufficiency in food grain manufacturing on the countrywide stage has been one of the principal achievements of the USA. To deal with the problem of food safety on the family level, the government is enforcing focused Public Distribution machine beneath which sponsored meals grains are furnished to the eligible families. This definition of meals safety has evolved over a time frame. As a idea, food protection originated in the mid-1970s, in the wake of worldwide meals disaster.⁷ The initial awareness of attention changed into assuring the supply and to some diploma the charge balance of simple foodstuffs at the global and country wide level. This changed into then broadened to comprise the call for facet of meals security in early 1980s. Throughout the Nineteen Nineties troubles such food safety, vitamins, dietary needs and meals choices have been also considered crucial substances of food security. In FAO report on 'The kingdom of meals insecurity, 2001', meals security is defined as a " --- scenario that exists while absolutely everyone, always, have bodily, social and monetary get admission to to enough, safe and nutritious meals that meets their dietary wishes and meals possibilities for an energetic and wholesome existence".⁸

3. Salient capabilities of the Act

(i) Insurance and entitlement beneath targeted Public Distribution system (TPDS): up to seventy five% of rural populace and 50% of urban populace could be covered below TPDS with the identical entitlement of five kg in keeping with man or woman per month. but, given that Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households are the poorest, and are presently entitled to 35 kg in step with own family in keeping with month, the entitlement of current AAY families could be protected by way of 35 kg per circle of relatives in step with month.⁹

(ii) Kingdom-wise coverage: The state-clever coverage could be determined by means of the critical authorities, similar to the all India coverage of 75% and 50% in rural and urban areas respectively. The state-smart insurance has been determined by using the making plans fee on the premise of statistics from the NSSO family consumption Expenditure Survey for 2011-12.

(iii) Concessional costs under TPDS and their amendment: Foodgrains underneath TPDS might be made to be had at concessional costs of Rs. 3/2/1 according to kg for rice, wheat and coarse cereals for a duration of three years from the date of commencement of the Act. The fees will then be definitely connected to the minimal guide fee (MSP).¹⁰

(iv) If the allocation of a kingdom underneath the proposed regulation is less than their current allocation, it is going to be protected as much as the level of average offtake during the last 3 years beneath everyday TPDS on the costs constant by the imperative authorities. The contemporary charge for APL households i.e. Rs. Rs 6.10 according to kg for wheat and Rs eight.30 in line with kg for rice has been fixed as problem fee for added allocation to guard the common offtake.

(v) Identity of households: below the prescribed TPDS for each country, the paintings of identification of eligible families is to be done via the States/UTs.¹¹

(vi) Dietary aid to girls and youngsters: Pregnant girls and lactating mothers and children inside the age organization of 6 months to 14 years can be entitled to food as consistent with the dietary norms prescribed beneath included child development services (ICDS) and mid-day food. (MDM) schemes. higher nutritional norms have been prescribed for malnourished youngsters up to 6 years of age.

(vii) Maternity advantage: Pregnant ladies and lactating moms can also be entitled to get hold of maternity advantage of no longer less than Rs. 6,000 as in keeping with the plan to be prepared with the aid of the primary authorities.

(viii) Girl's Empowerment: The eldest female of the age of 18 years or above will be the head of the family for the reason of issuance of ration card.¹²

(ix) Complaint Redressal Mechanism: criticism Redressal Mechanism at District and country stage. States will have the ability to apply the existing machinery or installation a separate mechanism.

(x) Price of inter-country transportation and managing of food grains and margin of fair fee save sellers: The principal government assists the states to satisfy the charges incurred on intra-nation transportation of meals grains, its coping with and margin of honest price save dealers. Norms to be framed for this cause.

(xi) Transparency and duty: To ensure transparency and accountability, provisions had been made for disclosure of data relating to Public Distribution device, Social Audit and constitution of Vigilance Committees.¹³

(xii) Food security Allowance: Provision of meals security Allowance to eligible beneficiaries in case of non-deliver of entitled food grains or meals.

(xiii) Penalty: In case of non-compliance of the relief encouraged through the District criticism Redressal Officer, the country meals commission shall impose penalty on the general public servant or authority.

Based on the provisions of the Act, the requirement of food grains for TPDS and other welfare schemes is estimated to be 614.4 lakh lots. 1,31,086 crore, which means an additional Rs 27,000 crore on account of implementation of NFSA.

The National Food Security Act, 2013 provides for identification of households eligible to receive subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution Gazette (TPDS) for a period of one year after the commencement of the Act, i.e. up to 04.07.2014. So far, 11 states/USA, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar have conveyed their readiness to implement the Act. For this reason they have been allotted food grains under the Act. In the last 25 States/UTs, allocation under the existing TPDS is in progress.

Since the eligible households were not identified and the implementation of the Act had begun in these States/USA, the length of 365 days provided in the Act was crowned with glory.

The tenure was to be extended by using first 3 months and then six months i.e. up to the first week of April, 2015 for glorifying various preliminary measures for identification of eligible families and implementation of the Act.

The degree of preparedness in the 25 states/US States where the Act is yet to be implemented varies among states/UTs. Apart from identification of eligible households to be covered, the preparedness may also include compulsorily strengthening of TPDS so that it ensures effective and timely shipping of entitlements under the Act. Factors that seek focused interest for the State Governments and Union Territories Management are beneficiary identification in a fair and transparent manner with the intention of avoiding errors in inclusion and exclusion, shipping of food grains to the doorsteps of honest duty shops TPDS Computerization of operations, strengthening mechanism of vigilance committees at multiple levels and effective grievance redressal mechanism. Such reform measures are important to ensure no leakage and diversion of PDS and additionally to ensure that no needy person is deprived of the blessings.

4. Challenges and Opportunity of Food Security Act in India

Assured meals protection have to be of exquisite importance for a rustic like India, wherein extra than a 3rd of the population is in reality negative and half of all children are malnourished in a few manner or the alternative. In the closing two decades, many rising problems have emerged inside the context of meals safety in India. those are: (i) economic liberalization in the 1990s and its impact on agriculture and meals protection; (ii) the establishment of the sector exchange corporation: specifically underneath the agreement on Agriculture (AOA); (iii) the demanding situations of weather trade; The disaster of the three Fs, viz., meals expenses, gasoline costs, and the financial crisis; (iv) incidence of hunger amongst abundance, i.e. accumulation of shares with excessive levels of poverty inside the early years of this decade and in 2008-09; (v) the advent of concentrated on inside the Public Distribution system (PDS) for the primary time in the 1990s; (vi) supreme courtroom orders on 'right to food' campaign and mid-day meal schemes to enhance food safety within the U.S .; (vii) suggestion for a national food safety Act (proper to food); and (viii) monitorable goals just like the Millennium improvement desires (MDGs) on poverty and girls and toddler nutrients underneath the tenth and 11th 5 yr Plans. These tendencies over the last two many years have provided both possibilities and demanding situations to the food and dietary security of the United States.

Suspicious behavior of vendors can be monitored by the efforts of village committees, SHGs and cooperatives at district and block level as well as end point to check illegal diversion of food grains. During the transition from one scheme to another such as PDS to Targeted PDS and Targeted PDS to NFSA, due to the newly introduced inclusion and exclusion norms and from the State also there is severe pressure from the beneficiaries on the vendors to maintain the newly introduced system. it happens. This double pressure pushes them towards illegal practices to survive in the system (Kheda, 2016). Therefore, income base of sellers should be expanded by increasing

commission and allowing them to sell other items other than PDS products being supplied by government machinery and consumed by NFSA beneficiaries.

The good potential of production of many crops in these parts of the country should be taken advantage of early in the coming years. Hence, "a strategy for agricultural development in eastern and north-eastern India that includes multiple livelihood opportunities, sustainable agricultural development through a farming system approach, efficient national resource management, ecological technology mission and rice-based farming system", says the survey. Another important issue is supply chain management in agricultural marketing in India. Poor roads, basic market infrastructure and excessive regulation impede farmers' access to markets. Many agricultural crops are perishable in nature and post-harvest Farm income is affected by handling issues and marketing problems.

Suggestion and Recommendations for effective implementation of the Act

Regardless of the authorities's initiative to present impact to the Act, the subsequent recommendations are encouraged based on the above discussions for powerful implementation of the NFS Act.

1. Adoption of more clinical and safer strategies of meals garage by means of FCI, SFC

Meals garage through FCI and kingdom Meals Company (SFC) desires to keep tempo with the progress received in technology to shop grains to guard them from infection by bugs, fungi and rodents. Due significance should be given to good enough measures to prevent theft and make certain accountable offtake at the time of shipping to the country Governments.

2.FCI should take measures to carry meals grains via avenue shipping apart from railways

even as it's miles inevitable to use the railway network for the transportation of meals grains, it's miles critical to make the pleasant use of different method of street and waterways as per the state of affairs and demand.

3. Obvious exclusion criteria.

This is the most vital measure which the country governments ought to initiate without any delay. it's miles the handiest practical and sensible solution to ensure that eligible will get only food grains and ineligible humans are saved out of the purview of the Act.

4. To ensure proper functioning of Anganwadi centres.

Due to the fact that, infant nutrition is a much bigger undertaking than that, due importance must take delivery of to the established order of Anganwadis in the ones places where they're not functioning and necessary measures should additionally be taken to ensure their proper functioning. supplying maternal health care and maternal blessings as envisaged inside the Act. To be located by means of the enforcing corporations. Vigilance committees must respond to the complaints and grievances of the human beings with out losing any time.

5. Lactating moms and children to be designated on qualitative terms based totally on dietary scientific evaluation.

The thought became made via the United countries kid's Fund (UNICEF) at the same time as commenting on the draft model of the bill. UNICEF states that children of various ages require unique forms of food excessive in protein, nutrients and minerals and for this reason efforts should be made to put together focused food in step with the requirement of the kid's body structure. Inside the context of the dialogue at the meals safety Act, the phrases of Dr. M. S. Swaminathan assume unique importance for the farmers and the democratic method to imposing the Act. This bill will be a success or unsuccessful depending on the production of the desired quantity of wheat, rice or millet. Our farmers can legitimately be taken into consideration as the custodians of the food security gadget in our united states. Alas, the farmer did no longer find a place on this bill. There have to be at the least one lady and one male farmer in the country food commission. After this a farmer member became protected within the state meals commission which is a welcome step towards giving voice to the farming community on troubles associated with them.

5. Conclusion

To avoid the dangerous effects of global warming, small modifications in our each day way of life is a turning factor that desires proper interest. The strategies of faraway Sensing and Geographic information device (GIS) want to be explored very well towards various unforeseen outcomes due to fluctuations in climatic conditions. latest advances in technological know-how and novel technologies/principles for his or her ultimate capability like genetic engineering, ailment resistant varieties, embryo transfer technology, artificial insemination, improved genetics and breeding practices, cloning, nutrigenomics, immunomodulatory, need to be completely explored. Those can help boom and promote each agricultural and animal products, such as vegetation, grains, ingredients, milk, meat and different products as a whole, and permit us to feed populations with improved food safety for all will assist in attaining the objective. Universal, it is able to be concluded that food safety in India may be finished with the aid of paying greater interest to issues like climate exchange, integrated water management, agricultural pricing and crop insurance. The impact of globalization inside the shape of SEZs and different factors has been each wonderful and poor in terms of agricultural prosperity and there may be a dire want to regulate policies related to globalization to

reduce its bad affects on food security in India. Greater than 1.2 billion will get their lengthy due function of a frontrunner on a worldwide scale. However starvation and malnutrition, affecting extra than a third of its citizens, will now not bode properly for its objectives. In this context it is suitable to mention an African quote. "One's hunger is a shame for every person". India's dream of becoming a worldwide superpower cannot be achieved earlier than addressing the starvation of all its citizens. The country wide food safety Act - despite the fact that not on time, is a first-rate step in that course. Implementation of food security cannot be accomplished without proper health, drinking water, sanitation and clean fuels for cooking, all of which are included in the NFSA, the Sustainable Development Goals and the earlier Millennium Development Goals. Sustainable Development Goals objectives can be achieved with proper implementation of NFSA.

References

- [1]. Anonymous, 2013 B, Report of the Expert Committee on National Food Security Bill, Office of the PrimeMinister, New Delhi. 2013.
- [2]. Mishra Prachi, 2013, Financial and Distributional Implications of the Food Security Law, Econ. & Pol. Weekly,
- [3]. Sinha Dipa, 2013, Cost of implementing the National Food Security Act, Econ. & Pol. Weekly,
- [4]. FAO. 1983. World Food Security: a Reappraisal of the Concepts and Approaches. Director General's Report. Rome as quoted in Trade Reforms and Food Security, FAO, 2003
- [5]. FAO. (1996). The Sixth World Food Survey. Rome: FAO.
- [6]. FAO (2014). The State of Food Security in the World 2014. Rome: FAO.
- [7]. FAO (2015). UN Sustainable Summit Report 2015. New York: FAO.
- [8]. Government of India. (2013). Annual report 2012-13 Planning commission report, New
- [9]. Delhi: Government of India Publication Division.
- [10]. Gulati A., Gujral J., Nandakumar T., Jain S., Anand S., & Joshi P. (2012). "National Food Security Bill: Challenges and options" Discussion Paper No. 2, New Delhi: Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices.
- [11]. Gupta K., Parasuraman S., Arokiasamy P., Singh, S.K., & Lhungdim, H. (2007). "National Family Health Survey -3(2005-06)", New Delhi: Government of India.
- [12]. Gustavsson J., Cederberg, C, Sonesson, U, Van, O.R, & Meybeck, A. (2011). "Global Food losses and food waste: Extent causes and prevention" Rome: FAO.
- [13]. HUNGaMA Survey. (2011). Andhra Pradesh: Naandi Foundation