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Improving Child Nutrition Through Rice Fortification

Implemented in district Gajapati, Odisha in collaboration with the Government of Odisha

Beneficiaries:
97,790 school children aged 6-14 years

5352 mt of rice fortified for consumption in schools

Project launched in December 2012

Project taken over and sustained by the government

Objective

To operationalize fortification of rice through the platform of mid day meals (MDM).

India is home to the world's largest youth population, potentially a great asset for a developing nation. The Mid-Day Meal (MDM) programme of India is the largest school-feeding safety net in the world. Despite this, India continues to have large numbers of anemic children in the world. The MDM is therefore a crucial programme that can be used to address nutritional deficiencies among school-going children. Investing in MDM can improve the health and productivity of the young population of the country.

Recent advances in food technology have led to the production of 'fortified rice kernels', which can be successfully blended with regular rice in special blending machines to fortify the rice.

Taking advantage of this new technology for rice fortification, WFP has collaborated with the Department of School and Mass Education, Government of Odisha to fortify the rice used under the MDM scheme with iron. The iron-fortified rice is being consumed by school children in Gajapati district, Odisha.



Gajapati, Odisha

Impact of the initiative

- **Reduction of anemia** prevalence by 20 percent points among school going children in Gajapati. Out of this total reduction, a significant 6 percent point reduction can be directly attributed to consumption of fortified rice under the MDM
- **Increased knowledge** amongst children on nutrition and good health practices
- **Improved cooking practices** in schools to retain the nutritional content in food