



AN ANALYSIS OF PRESENT STATUS OF FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD POLICY IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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Abstract

This article primarily documents the efforts made in the state of Himachal Pradesh to achieve food security. The article provides evidence that Himachal Pradesh has several hunger and malnutrition issues. Anaemia affects 41% of HP's adult women, which is only slightly lower than the national average, and over half of HP's children under the age of five are underweight, according to anthropometric statistics. The demand and supply of various requirements in both the free market and the Public Distribution System are the key foci of the study. The agency is responsible for enforcing the Essential Commodities Act of 1955 as well as the Weights and Measures Act and the Price Stabilization Act. There is growing worry on a global and national scale over whether or not the world's poorest and most vulnerable people have access to adequate food. Out of a total worldwide population of almost 6 billion, roughly 600 million are at risk of becoming hungry. India has the worst food security of all of its south Asian neighbours, according to the latest Global Hunger Index 2022 (GHI), placing it at position 107 overall. Climate change has had a detrimental effect on the reliability of food supplies and on their availability, quality, utility, and accessibility. The Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh shares the nation's struggles with hunger with the rest of the country. The state's 2015–16 food grain production was so high that the Union Ministry of Agriculture presented it with the KRISHI KARMAN AWARD. In order to strike a healthy middle ground, the mountainous state is making concerted efforts to implement TPDS in line with the mandates of the National Food Security Act of 2013. (NFSA). That's why it's crucial to look at how the government now ensures that everyone has access to nutritious meals on a consistent basis. This article examines the causes of food insecurity in Himachal Pradesh and proposes solutions.

Keywords: Himachal Pradesh, Information , Technology, Mukhya Mantri Seva etc



Introduction

The United Nations Committee on World Food Security defines "food security" as the condition in which all people always have access to food that is both plentiful and safe from contamination, as well as nutritionally sufficient to sustain an active and healthy lifestyle. Roughly 90% of Himachal Pradesh's population lives in rural areas. Therefore, agriculture would have been the backbone of the economy in the absence of adequate industrialisation, leaving people with few other options for bringing in a living. Poor and vulnerable agricultural communities are a rising source of worry on a global, national, and local scale. There are 5,078 fair pricing shops in all, with the Cooperative Sector staffing 3,285, the Panchayats overseeing 19, HPSCSC Ltd. managing 65, individuals managing 1,685, and women's self-help groups, Mahila Mandals, overseeing 24. Under the TPDS, the Ration Card is the current unit delivery method. There are 74,26,295 people living in the state, and 19,48,088 Ration Cards have been issued via the TPDS. Here is the breakdown, scheme per scheme:

APL: 11,27,767 APLT: 77,324 BPL: 2,76,506 AAY: 1,69,733 PH: 2,96,758

A.P.L./ B.P.L./ ANTODAYA ANNA YOJNA/ PH FAMILIES & POPULATION IN THE STATE

(AS ON 31-03-2022)

Sr. No.	District Name	Number of Families					Total	Total Population
		A.P.L.	A.P.L.T.	B.P.L.	A.A.Y.	P.H.		
1.	BILASPUR	64,900	3,793	17,259	11,133	18,397	1,15,482	4,31,248
2.	CHAMBA	69,634	4,585	31,255	29,232	860	1,35,566	5,63,880
3.	HAMIRPUR	94,348	7,979	18,820	9,977	16,915	1,48,039	5,53,559
4.	KANGRA	2,65,434	20,413	64,994	36,757	77,258	4,64,856	17,68,912
5.	KINNAUR	14,659	886	3,356	1,261	1,064	21,226	72,600
6.	KULLU	65,077	2,465	16,270	6,878	25,513	1,16,203	4,37,030
7.	LAHAUL & SPITI	5,504	530	740	831	159	7,764	26,551
8.	MANDI	1,79,954	12,818	44,113	25,979	54,913	3,17,777	11,04,774
9.	SHIMLA	1,27,188	7,282	25,535	17,315	22,488	1,99,808	7,50,231
10.	SIRMAUR	79,169	3,127	18,281	8,954	22,396	1,31,927	5,61,695
11.	SOLAN	78,612	7,999	16,521	10,996	26,562	1,40,690	5,61,140
12.	UNA	83,225	5,446	19,353	10,418	30,218	1,48,660	5,94,434
TOTAL		11,27,767	77,324	2,76,506	1,69,733	2,96,758	19,48,088	74,26,295

Source: Department of civil supply Himachal Pradesh

Definition of food security



At the 1996 World Food Summit, the term "food security" was coined to describe "a condition in which all people have adequate, safe, and nutritious food that fulfils their dietary requirements and food choices for a healthy life."

Concept of Food Security

There has been substantial development in the idea of food security since the First World Conference in 1947. There are varying interpretations of this term, which currently means "access by all individuals at all times to adequate food for an active and healthy life." One of ancient India's most prominent politicians, Kautilya, wrote a treatise called "Arthashastra" advising rulers to show their affection for their people during times of famine by distributing food and seeds (321-301 BC)(Bhatia, 1985).

Importance of Food Security

Since its inception, India has made universal access to nutritious food a top priority. When individuals have the means to buy and prepare nutritious food, keep themselves clean, and get basic medical care, they are said to be food secure. Under and malnutrition are still common in our nation despite various government initiatives and safety standards. The most defenceless among us are the young and the female. Our reputation in the battle against hunger and malnutrition remains bad despite major progress in this area, despite all of our triumphs in industry and economic development. A lot has changed in the last decade in terms of meeting fundamental human need. This has given us protection under the law in the areas of learning and knowledge as well as employment. Global food security is a major concern. Members of the United Nations have committed to achieving food security, improving nutrition, and advancing sustainable agriculture by the year 2030.(Sustainable Development Goal 2).

Food security in India

UN-India estimates that about 195 million people in India are undernourished, or almost a quarter of the world's hungry. In addition, about half of India's young people are malnourished. According to the Food Security Index 2022, India is ranked 68 out of 113 large nations. Soybeans, lentils, meat, eggs, dairy, etc., all of which are high in protein, should be made more widely accessible in India at affordable rates, despite the fact that the present nutritional standard

is 100 percent of the required. According to the Human Rights Measurement Initiative, India is only spending 56.8 percent of its revenue on the right to food.



This law, which is also known as the Right to Food Act, aims to feed around 650 million of India's 1,334 million people for free or at a reduced price.

Various schemes under NFSA, 2013

1. NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT, 2013

However, only 30.15 million individuals have been registered so far, and the selection process for the remaining 6.67 million people is still ongoing; the government of India has set a target of covering 36.82 million people under NFSA, 2013. As part of NFSA, 2013, the Indian government is giving out a total of 16857.47 MT of food grains. This includes 9900.613 MT of wheat and 6956.857 MT of rice.

2. ANTODAYA ANNA YOJNA

The BPL list's lowest-income households were singled out for inclusion in the AAY Scheme. According to G.O.I. standards, each household should get 35 kg of food grains each month. Each household in the state of H.P. will get 15 kilogrammes of rice and 18.800 kilogrammes of fortified wheat atta. Wheat may be purchased at a retail price of Rs 2/-, Wheat Atta at Rs 3.20/-, and Rice at Rs 3.



3. ABOVE POVERTY LINE

Prices for APL Wheat Atta and Rice vary each month based on what's on hand at the H.P. State Civil Supplies Corporation. These weights and measures apply statewide with the exception of the Lahaul Spiti, Kinnaur, Pangi, and Bharmour tribal territories, where 20 kilogrammes of wheat, 18.800 kilogrammes of wheat atta, and fifteen kilogrammes of wheat are used instead.

Himachal Pradesh Civil Supply Corporation

The Corporation's major role is to act as the wholesale "CENTRAL PROCUREMENT AGENCY" for all regulated and non-controlled vital goods (as specified by the Central/State Government under the Public Distribution System). The District Co-operative Federations and Tehsil Co-operative Unions act as the middlemen, making the bulk purchases and distributing them to the fair pricing stores. In order to meet customer demand and keep prices low, the corporation is permitted to source, acquire, store, transport (including interstate transit), and resell whatever goods or services it deems appropriate.

Availability Of Food Grains

Using the ration card count of 74,26,295 as of March 31, 2022, and an average per-person intake of 15 kilogrammes of food grains, the annual demand for food in the state is calculated to be 13,374,000 kilogrammes. This amounts to 11,1394 metric tonnes each month. There are now no restrictions on travel between states due to the abundance of food. This department must make prior financial agreements with the F.C.I through the H.P. State Civil Supplies Corp. Ltd. in order to acquire the allocated and needed amount of food grains from the F.C.I's declared primary distribution locations under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). District Officers' requests inform the process of subdividing food grains and arranging the necessary funding. Each week (on Friday), data is collected from all District Headquarters on the retail and wholesale prices of 24 commodities and the retail prices of 14 vegetables. Cost analysis between wholesale and retail The websites of eight locations in Shimla, Mandi, Dharamshala, Solan, Bilaspur, Una, Chamba, and Hamirpur list the daily Distribution Of 22 Necessities.



Control Over The Prices

All of Himachal Pradesh's necessities come from the neighbouring states of Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi. Wholesale and retail pricing in the Pradesh are highly sensitive to movements in the wholesale markets of adjacent States. The State Government has almost little influence on market pricing. The Essential Commodities Act of 1955 allows the government to regulate the supply and price of essential commodities on the open market using a number of different legal mechanisms.

Monitoring Of Prices

Each week (on Friday), data on retail and wholesale prices of 24 commodities and retail prices of 14 vegetables are collected from all District Headquarters and then transmitted to the State Government for trend research. Pricing analysis of retail vs wholesale Eight locations (Shimla, Mandi, Dharamshala, Solan, Bilaspur, Una, Chamba, and Hamirpur) provide 22 daily necessities, as stated on the Government of India's website.

Storage And Preservation

Due to the snowy and mountainous landscape of Himachal Pradesh, the Department had to be extra careful with the buffer storage of food. The total capacity of all 117 warehouses is 59,863 tonnes.

Fair Price Shops

T.P.D.S. relies heavily on fair pricing retailers. It depicts the division's maintenance and upkeep of the grounds. The District Controller, Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs/Deputy Commissioner, based on recommendations from the local Panchayat or Zila Parishad, selects fair pricing stores to serve as distribution points for T.P.D.S. food grains. Priority is provided as follows during the allocation of fair pricing shops:



- 1. First Priority:** Women's groups or government agencies like as Gram Panchayats, self-help organisations, and co-ops are responsible for licencing and managing the stores at fair prices.
- 2. Second Priority:** People with disabilities, as defined by the Person with Disabilities (Equal Chances, Full Participation, and Protection of Rights) Act of 1995, and Ekal Naris (ex-servicemen and educated unemployed people with no family member with a regular job) (as defined by the Women and Child Development Department of the Government of H.P.).
- 3. Third Priority:** H.P. Sate Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd.

There are 5,078 discount stores as of March 31, 2022. There are 1,685 that are run by individuals, 19 that are run by panchayats, 34 that are run by mahila mandals, and 65 that are run by the H.P. state civil supplies corporation limited.

Quality Control

From the very beginning of the Department of Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs, the Quality Control Section has played a crucial role in ensuring the safety and high standards of the food provided to those who qualify for government assistance through the Targeted Public Distribution System and the Himachal Pradesh State Specially Subsidized Food Distribution Program. With the help of the quality control section/technical branch, the division guarantees that all food products are completely safe and of the highest quality.

To make sure that the food given out through the TPDS and the H.P. State Specially Subsidized Schemes is of good quality, the department sends samples of different goods to the food testing laboratory for analysis on a regular basis. All of the food samples sent to the department's food testing lab were tested by experts who used cutting-edge chemical techniques and scientific methods. Labs and places where quality is checked in the food industry use the latest technology.

Conclusion

To guarantee food security, Himachal Pradesh has done an outstanding job of creating and enforcing regulations. India's Department of Food and Public Distribution introduced the first-ever State Ranking Index for NFSA at a New Delhi meeting of food ministers representing



India's states and union territories. For its efforts to implement the National Food Security Act, the state ranks second among all states and union territories in the "special category," showing outstanding achievement in the face of formidable obstacles (NFSA).

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