



## Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY): Feeding the poor

Leela Krishna Chaithanya<sup>1</sup>, K. Bhanusri<sup>2</sup>, Sukanya Barua<sup>3\*</sup>

### 1. Introduction:

Various programmes were launched in India to save the poor from volatility in food prices, provide sufficient food to each and every family, restrict the poor from starvation, and provide food security. The National Food Security Act and Antodaya Anna Yojana under the public distribution system (PDS) have pushed to make the National Food Security Program a greater success in India. To combat the COVID-19 pandemic, Government of India announced relief fund of Rs. 1.70 Lakh Crores under the auspicious programme of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKY) which was launched on March 26, 2020, to ensure the food security of the people during the crisis. This scheme is aimed at giving free food grains to the rural poor. PMGKAY is a crucial starting point to cover a population as diverse as India's. PMGKAY is also said to be the largest food security programme in the world. This programme has successfully maintained the food security during the COVID pandemic. This programme is also said to be the game changer in the food security in India.

### 2. Benefits of the scheme:

Currently there are 81.35 crore people benefitting out of the scheme. The Central Government, under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) has decided to continue to provide food grains at free of cost to all the beneficiaries for a period of next five years with effect from 1st January, 2024. Under this scheme 35 kg of food grains will be provided for the AAY households per month and 5 kg of food grains per person per month in the case of Priority Household. This decision was taken to strengthen the provisions of National Food Security Act (NFSA) of 2013 in terms of accessibility, availability, and affordability of food grains. This provision of free food grains under PMGKAY for next five years reflects the long-term vision of the government for addressing national food and nutritional security. This scheme will help the poor to mitigate the financial hardships.

### 3. Success story of PMGKY:

Government has circulated Banners from time to time (between June 2020 and Dec 2021) in Hindi and 10 regional languages, namely - Assamese, Bengali, Telugu, Punjabi,

Leela Krishna Chaithanya<sup>1</sup>, K. Bhanusri<sup>2</sup>, Sukanya Barua<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Research Scholar, Division of Agricultural Extension, ICAR-IARI, New Delhi – 110012

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D. Research Scholar, Agronomy Section, ICAR-NDRI, Karnal – 132001

<sup>3</sup>Scientist (Sr. Scale), Division of Agricultural Extension, ICAR-IARI, New Delhi – 110012

**Table 2.1. Quantity of food grains distributed in LMTs under PMGKAY**

PMGKY	Duration	Quantity in LMTs
Phase - I (3 months)	April'20 - June'20	112.6 LMT
Phase - II (5 months)	July'20- Nov.'20	186.2 LMT
Phase - III (2 months)	May'21 - June'21	75.2 LMT
Phase - IV (5 months)	July'21- Nov.'21	186.7 LMT
Phase - V (4 months)	Dec'21- Mar'22	149 LMT
Phase-VI (6 months)	April'22- Sep'22	217 LMT
Phase-VII (3 months)	Oct'22- Dec'22	88.27 LMT
<b>Total (28 months)</b>		<b>1,015 LMT</b>

*Source: Ministry of consumer affairs, food and public distribution, GoI*

Marathi, Malayalam, Odiya, Kannada, Tamil and Gujarati with all States/UTs for display at all godowns and other places of PDS operating sites. Over 75 crore beneficiaries have been provided with foodgrains every month during implementation of PMGKAY in Financial Year 2020-21, 2021-22. Same kind of pattern of distribution was done in the foodgrains distribution under PMGKAY implemented during Financial Year 2022-23. Depending on evaluation reports got from Monitoring Institutes (MIs) from 30 States/UTs, 98 percent of the surveyed households noted to receive their full entitlement under PMGKAY

#### 4. Shortcomings of PMGKY:

The beneficiaries of National Food Security Act (NFSA) are based on the census which was done in 2011. The number of food insecure people has increased since then and they remain uncovered. PMGKAY is very

expensive for the government to sustain and increases the need for an abundant supply of cheap grains. It could pose a risk to the government's aim to further narrow the fiscal deficit to 6.4 percent of Gross Domestic product (GDP). Coordinating among various ministries and state governments to ensure smooth implementation and addressing logistical issues will become more complex.

#### 5. Conclusion:

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) has been a crucial lifeline for millions of poor families all over India, maintain and ensuring food security during crisis, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite its major impact, PMGKAY encountered many challenges, including identification of beneficiaries, fiscal burden, inflationary pressures, supply chain logistics, and administrative coordination.

Addressing these shortcomings is crucial for the scheme's long-term success. Continuous efforts to update beneficiary data, combat fiscal impacts, streamlining of supply chains, and mutual coordination among various government bodies is vital. However, PMGKAY remains a cornerstone of India's social safety net, demonstrating the government's commitment to supporting its poor.

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