



**EVALUATION
OF
THE EXPANDED
NUTRITION
PROGRAMME**



IN ORISSA



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FOREWORD

This evaluation report of the expanded nutrition programme in Orissa, probably one of the first of its kind in India, will I am sure, serve a very useful purpose not only to the administrators, nutritionists and social educators in Orissa but also to all workers in the field of Applied Nutrition throughout the country.

Mal-nutrition is widely prevalent in Orissa. It has been responsible for high rates of mortality in children, for various specific deficiency diseases in men and women and for weakening their resistance to diseases. The evil effects of mal-nutrition persists throughout life and it is claimed that a part of the lethargy and low production is due to inadequate nutrition. There are many ways of tackling the problem of nutrition. One of the ways adopted in Orissa is to introduce what is known as the Applied Nutrition Programme planned and implemented with the joint resources of the Central and State Governments on the one hand and the international agencies of the UNICEF, WHO and FAO on the other. A nutrition programme was taken up in Orissa in 1959-60. A number of blocks were selected for demonstrating the possibility of producing nutritious foods in the villages and to prove the feasibility of preserving a portion of the community's production for the purpose of feeding the weaker sections of the community and to educate women in the preparation of balanced and nutritious diets. Each year the programme has spread with regard to the area of operation and also with regard to contents of the programme. The revised Applied Nutrition Programme has for its main objective the progressive development of a co-ordinated and comprehensive national programme of education and training in applied nutrition and related subjects with the object of establishing an effective field service to improve local diets through the production, preservation and use of protective foods and to ensure the effective utilisation of these protective foods by pregnant and lactating women, infants, pre-school and school children through adequate consumption by these groups of energy producing foods. After 4 or 5 years of this programme it was considered necessary to evaluate this programme in order to assess its impact on the villages with regard to its acceptance and increase in production and consumption of nutritious foods.

The evaluation was undertaken by an independent Evaluation Organisation of the Planning & Co-ordination Department under the direction of Shri J. K. Misra, Deputy Economic Adviser. The enclosed report very ably sums up the results of the evaluation study. Field surveys were carried out in 32 villages covering 1,090 families spread over all the 13 districts of Orissa. The sample surveys have brought out useful information on various aspects of the programme.

Some of the notable conclusion of the survey are—

(1) *Poultry*—The poultry expansion programme through Mahila Samitis, Youth Clubs and other village organisations resulted in the increase of birds by about seven times in the villages. The *per capita* consumption of eggs showed an increase of over three times.

(2) *Kitchen Gardens*—Sixty-five per cent of the families had kitchen gardens and more vegetables were grown. The consumption also increased, but there was scope for moving towards the ideals of having a reasonable sized kitchen garden in every home to be supplemented by community gardens to be managed by Panchayati Raj bodies.

(3) *Orchards*—Fifty-six per cent of the families had orchards growing mostly banana, guava and papeya. The consumption of fruits increased. Here again the surveys recorded the need for more fruits as the present consumption was still inadequate.

(4) *Pisciculture*—More fish was produced in the village tanks. The quantity produced, however was not adequate to meet the minimum requirements of nutrition suggesting an intensive drive for bringing all available tanks under pisciculture.

(5) Where women of the Mahila Samitis took active interest in the village programme and received good support from Panchayati Raj institutions and other agencies, the production and consumption figures were twice as much as those in other A. N. P. areas. This is a very significant observation suggesting the need for

strengthening Women's and Youth Clubs and encouraging them with knowledge and equipment to spearhead the drive for more production of fruits, vegetables, poultry and fish.

(6) The Applied Nutrition Programme in Orissa has helped considerably the drive for increased production and consumption of protective foods in the villages and that this programme needs to be continued over a wider area more intensively.

Despite these improvements, the general level of consumption in Orissa is still very much below the composition of a balanced diet as suggested by the Indian Council of Medical Research with regard to vegetables, fruits, milk and other protective foods. It is clear, therefore, that much has yet to be done to remove under-nourishment in the State. We have still to think of more effective ways of increasing food production, of directing agricultural policies to meet the demands of nutritive and protective foods, of changing food habits, of interesting people in the problems of public health and nutrition.

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