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Feasibility study for nat'l school feeding prog launched

Staff Correspondent | Published at 12:24am on March 14, 2023

State minister for primary and mass education Md Zakir Hossain on Monday launched a feasibility study for the national school feeding programme in partnership with the World Food Programme.

The overall objective of the feasibility study is to explore the most appropriate school feeding modality by looking closely at the acceptability of beneficiaries, the government's capacity to implement and the cost, education and nutrition impact, said a press release issued by WFP.

Global evidence indicates that school meals contribute to children's health and development and positive education and socio-economic outcomes, laying a foundation for human capital development.

'A child's education and health constitute more than their wellbeing – it constitutes the future of a country. The government is determined to make school feeding available to all children enrolled in government primary schools – particularly those from poor and remote upazilas,' said the state minister.

In 2001, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Department of Primary Education with support from WFP, launched the school feeding programme, distributing fortified biscuits.

In 2011, the government launched the 'School Feeding Programme in Poverty-Prone Areas'. By 2022, some three million children in 104 upazilas were covered under the school feeding programme.

A pilot was launched in October 2013, in which cooked meals were provided, comprising of fortified rice, pulses as well as vegetables and eggs sourced from local women farmers.

Both the biscuits and cooked meals as modalities made positive impact on the education outcomes for children.

School enrolment recorded a 4.2 per cent increase, while dropouts reduced by 7.5 per cent.

The prevalence of anaemia in schools with feeding programmes was less than half that of schools without – 10.9 per cent versus 21.9 per cent respectively.



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