

REPORT ON 'LET'S FIX OUR FOOD'

TOPIC: 'Let's Fix Our Food: Dissemination & Stakeholder Consultation'

Date: 28th March 2025

Venue: Conference Hall, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Ansari Nagar, New Delhi

Attended by: Ms Vidhi Oberoi (TGT Bio) Ms Neha Gupta (TGT H.Sc) & Vishvesh Gupta (Class XII)

Participation as Panelist: Vidhi Oberoi, Health and Wellness Club Incharge, Bal Bharati Public School, Noida



The 'Let's Fix Our Food: Dissemination & Stakeholder Consultation' event was a landmark initiative aimed at fostering awareness and action towards healthier food choices for adolescents. Representing Bal Bharati School, Ms. Vidhi Oberoi, TGT Biology along with Ms. Neha Gupta, TGT Home Science, and Vishvesh Gupta, a Class XII student, had the opportunity to engage in insightful discussions with policymakers, educators, and public health experts. This participation was made possible under the visionary leadership and guidance of our esteemed Principal, Mrs. Asha Prabhakar, whose unwavering commitment to student well-being continues to inspire health and nutrition initiatives at our school.

The conference served as a platform to emphasize the critical link between nutrition and learning outcomes. As stated by renowned nutritionist Dr. Bharati Kulkarni, **“Healthy children make better learners. When we nourish their bodies, we empower their minds.”** This statement set the tone for the discussions that followed.

Event Highlights

The event commenced with a warm welcome by Dr. SubbaRao M Gavaravarapu, who invited esteemed dignitaries onto the dais. Dr. Bharati Kulkarni, Director of ICMR-NIN, delivered the welcome address, emphasizing, **“Schools play a crucial role in shaping students' understanding of nutrition. Educators must be at the forefront of this movement.”**

Master Jyotirmay Routray, an adolescent ambassador, reinforced the importance of youth participation, stating, **“The future of food is in our hands, and we must act now to demand healthier choices.”**

Dr. Monika Arora, Vice President of PHFI, along with key representatives from ICMR-NIN and UNICEF India, provided an overview of the 'Let's Fix Our Food' initiative. Several policy briefs were released, including those on food labelling, taxation on unhealthy food, and nutrition education in schools.

Keynote and Special Addresses by Ms. Niti S Sharma from CBSE highlighted the urgency of integrating nutrition education into school curricula, stating, **“A well-informed student is an empowered consumer. Nutrition literacy must be embedded in the education system.”**

Dr. Rajiv Bahl, Secretary of the Dept. of Health Research, delivered the keynote address, reaffirming the government's commitment: **“Public health begins with informed choices. Schools, families, and policymakers must work together to ensure a healthier future for our children.”**

Guest of Honour, Dr. V.K. Paul from NITI Aayog, further stressed the importance of multi-sector collaboration in achieving better nutritional outcomes for youth. **“If we want to build a healthier nation, we must start by transforming our school food environments,”** he remarked.

Panel Discussion: Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration was held to explore effective strategies for improving adolescent food environments. Ms. Vidhi Oberoi had the honour to represent BBPS, Noida as one of the panellists alongside a distinguished group of experts that included:

- Dr. Shikha Vardhan (DGHS, MoHFW, Govt. of India)
- Dr. Alka Rao (Advisor, FSSAI)
- Dr. Zoya Rizvi (Deputy Commissioner, National Health Mission, MoHFW)
- Dr. Ranadip Chowdhury (Society for Applied Studies)
- Mr. Harish Kumar Meena (Asst. Professor, NCERT)



| Let's Fix Our Food Let's Fix Our Food: Dissemination & Stakeholder Consultation 28 th March 2025 Conference Hall, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Ansari Nagar, New Delhi | | |
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| 9:00 – 09:30 am | Registration | |
| 09:30 – 09:35 am | Inaugural Session | |
| | Inviting Dignitaries onto the Dais | Dr. Subhash M Gavaravara Scientist F & Head, Nutrition Information, Communication and Health Education (NICHE) Division, ICMR-NIN |
| 09:35 – 09:40 am | Welcome Address | Dr. Bharati Kulkarni Director, ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition |
| 09:40 – 09:45 am | Setting the context | Master Jyotirmay Routray, LFOF Adolescent Ambassador, Tarek International School, New Delhi |
| 09:45 – 09:50 am | Let's Fix Our Food (LFOF): An overview of the initiative and brief outline of achievements. | Dr. Monika Arora, Vice President, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) Dr. Subhash M Gavaravara, ICMR-NIN Mr. Arjan de Wagt, Deputy Representative Programmes, UNICEF India |
| 09:50 – 09:55 am | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Release of Policy Briefs: Advancing young people's right to healthy foods; Regulating Advertisements & Marketing Taxation on HFSS Foods; SBCC; Nutriguide for Educators/schools Model School Nutrition Curriculum Food Label Comic Book | All Dignitaries |
| 09:55 – 10:05 am | Opening Remarks – Importance of integrating nutrition into school curricula | Ms. Niti S Sharma, Dy. Secretary, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Ministry of Education, Govt. of India |
| 10:05 – 10:15 am | Keynote Address | Dr. Rajiv Bahl Secretary, Dept. of Health Research, Govt. of India & Director General, ICMR |
| 10:15 – 10:30 am | Address by Guest of Honour | Dr. V.K. Paul Hon'ble Member, NITI Aayog |
| 10:30 – 10:40 am | YOUTH VOICES VIDEO | |
| 10:40 – 10:45 am | Vote of Thanks | Dr. Priyanka Gupta Bansal Scientist E, ICMR Division, ICMR |
| 10:45 – 10:50 am | GROUP PHOTO | |
| 10:50 – 11:20 am | Panel Discussion – Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Bettering Food Environments for Adolescents | Moderators – Ms. Preeti Mishra and Dr. Tina Rawal Panelists: 1. Dr. Shikha Vardhan, ADG, DGHS, Nodal Office for NCEDs, MoHFW, Govt. of India 2. Dr. Alka Rao, Advisor (S&S), FSSAI 3. Dr. Zoya Rizvi, Deputy Commissioner - National Health Mission, MoHFW, Govt. of India 4. Dr. Ranadip Chowdhury, Scientist & Dy Director, Society for Applied Studies 5. Ms. Vidhi Oberoi, Bal Bharati School, Noida 6. Mr. Harish Kumar Meena, Asst Professor, of Population Education and Adolescence Education Programme (AEP), DESS, NCERT, Ministry of Education |
| 11:20 – 11:30 am | DISCUSSION - ALL PARTICIPANTS | |
| 11:30 am | Closing Remarks & Key Take Aways | Dr. Subhash M Gavaravara |
| | TEA & NETWORKING | |
| | COLLABORATORS | |
| | | |

As a representative from the education sector, Ms. Vidhi Oberoi shared insights on school-based nutrition initiatives, stating, **“Schools are not just centres of learning but also environments that shape lifelong health habits. We must lead by example in promoting nutritious food choices.”**

The discussion highlighted several key aspects:



- Stricter regulations on unhealthy food advertisements targeting children
- Mandatory nutrition education in schools
- Encouraging healthy food options in school canteens
- Strengthening collaborations between educators, health professionals, and policymakers

One of the most impactful moments came when Dr. Alka Rao from FSSAI stated, **“Food choices are a reflection of our knowledge. If we teach our children to read food labels and understand what goes into their meals, we are giving them a lifetime of good health.”**

Youth Engagement and the Role of Schools was one of the highlights of all discussions. The conference emphasized that young voices matter. A compelling youth video was showcased, where students from across India voiced their concerns about misleading food advertisements and the rising consumption of high-fat, sugar, and salt (HFSS) foods.

Reflections of Vishvesh Gupta (Class XII)

Reflecting on this, Vishvesh Gupta, our Class XII student representative, shared, **“As students, we are the future consumers and decision-makers. Schools should encourage critical thinking about food choices, not just in textbooks but in everyday practice.”** He was also given a chance to welcome the dignitaries by presenting planters.



Following an engaging Q&A session, Dr. SubbaRao M Gavaravarapu provided closing remarks, summarizing the key takeaways. The event concluded with a group photo session and a networking tea break.

Dr. Zoya Rizvi from the National Health Mission left a lasting impression with her words, “Nutrition isn’t just about preventing disease; it’s about enabling potential. A well-fed mind is an unstoppable force in learning, creativity, and leadership.”

Attending this event was an enriching experience that reinforced the crucial role of schools in promoting healthy eating habits. The insights gained will be instrumental in enhancing Bal Bharati School’s health and wellness initiatives.

We, as educators and mentors, must recognize that food is more than sustenance—it is an integral part of cognitive development, emotional well-being, and academic success. Moving forward, we are committed to:

- ✓ Implementing healthier school meal programs
- ✓ Conducting regular nutrition awareness workshops
- ✓ Encouraging students to become ‘nutrition champions’ in their communities



As the saying goes, “Good nutrition and good education go hand in hand. When we feed our children well, we nourish their dreams.

Let us all take collective action to fix our food and secure a healthier future!!

Report Submitted By:

Vidhi Oberoi
Health & Wellness Club I/C