

CHAPTER - 4

FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA

Let's Discuss Pg-43

Q. 1. Study the following table and answer the questions given at the end of the table:

Year	Production (Lakh tonnes)	Imports (Lakh tonnes)	Export (Lakh tonnes)	Total availability(Lakh tonnes)
1938	85	-	-	85
1939	79	04	-	83
1940	82	03	-	85
1941	68	02	-	70
1942	93	-	01	92
1943	76	03	-	79

Table: Production of Rice in the Province of Bengal

1. Some people say that the Bengal famine happened because there was a shortage of rice. Study the table and find out whether you agree with the statement.

2. Which year shows a drastic decline in food availability?

Answer : 1. After studying the table, we come to know that there was sufficient availability of rice in the year of famine so I don't agree with the statement, which says that the Bengal famine happened because there was a shortage of rice.

2. There was a drastic downfall in food availability in the year of 1941. This was basically because the major portion of the production was being sent abroad to support the British war effort in the Second World War, which was ongoing at that time.

Let's Discuss Pg-45

Q. 1. Read the following descriptions and answer the questions that follow:

Story of Ramu

Ramu is a casual labourer in agriculture in Raipur village. He has a son named Somu who is 10 years old and he is the eldest one who also works as a pali to look after the cattle of the Sarpanch of the village Satpal Singh. Somu is paid Rs. 1000 per year for this work which is decided by the Sarpanch. Ramu has three more sons and two daughters but they can't work because they are too young to work in a field. His wife Sunhari is also a part time worker who works as a cleaner for the livestock, removing and managing cow dung. There she gets 1/2 liter milk and some cooked food along with vegetables for her daily work. Sometimes she also helps his husband in field work to supplement his earnings. As we all know agriculture is a seasonal activity, so Ramu is employed during times of sowing, transplanting and harvesting but he remains unemployed for about 4 months during the time period of plant consolidation and maturing in a year. He looks for other works during this period to earn the livelihood. Sometimes he gets employed for construction work so somehow he is able to earn his livelihood which can meet his basic needs, to buy essentials and two square meals for his family. But during the days when he is unemployed he had to face a lot of complexities and even sometimes his kids have to sleep without food. Because of low income of the family milk and vegetables is luxury for them. He remains unemployed because of the seasonal nature of work.

- 1. Why is agriculture a seasonal activity?**
- 2. Why is Ramu unemployed for about four months in a year?**
- 3. What does Ramu do when he is unemployed?**
- 4. What are supplementing income in Ramu's family?**
- 5. Why does Ramu face difficulty when he is unable to have work?**
- 6. When is Ramu food insecure?**

Answer : 1. Agriculture is considered a seasonal activity because it is highly dependent on the weather conditions. Each crop requires some mandatory climatic conditions for consolidation and thus it is generally not possible to grow them in unfavorable weather. Also as the crops once sowed needs time to mature and ready for harvest, thus it provides only seasonal employment.

2. Ramu remains unemployed for about four months because agriculture is a seasonal activity, and he didn't have much land to grow different kind of crops. Being a poor farmer he didn't have money to invest in other works as well so he has no other options rather than sitting idle or doing some petty jobs during four months period.
3. Ramu looks for other works like brick laying or construction when he is unemployed for 4 months. These jobs allow him to earn just enough to keep his family fed and clothed.
4. Ramu's eldest son Somu and Ramu's wife Sunhari bring the supplementing incomes in the family. His son Somu works as a help in the field. Sunhari works as a house help and occasionally also works in the fields to earn something extra in cash or kind.
5. Ramu faces difficulty when he is unable to find work because during the time of unemployment it becomes very difficult to arrange money for food and other necessities of the family. Also being poor, they don't have any savings to rely upon.
6. Ramu is food insecure at the times when he is unemployed. This situation makes it difficult for him and his family to arrange for food, as unemployment is followed by lack of monetary resources.

Q. 2. Read the following descriptions and answer the questions that follow:

Story of Ahmad

Ahmad is a rickshaw-puller in Bangalore. He has shifted from Jhumri Taliah along with his 3 brothers, 2 sisters and old parents. He stays in a jhuggi. The survival of all members of his family depends on his daily earnings from pulling rickshaw. However, he does not have a secured employment and his earnings fluctuate every day. During some days he gets enough earning for him to save some amount after buying all his day-to-day necessities. On other days, he barely earns enough to buy his daily necessities. However, fortunately, Ahmad has a yellow card, which is PDS Card for below poverty line people. With this card, Ahmad gets sufficient quantity of wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene oil for his daily use. He gets these essentials at half of the market price. He purchases his monthly stock during a particular day when the ration shop is opened for below poverty people. In this way, Ahmad is able to eke out his survival with less than sufficient earnings for his big family where he is the only earning member.

1. Does Ahmad have a regular income from rickshaw-pulling?
2. How does the yellow card help Ahmad run his family even with small earnings from rickshaw pulling?

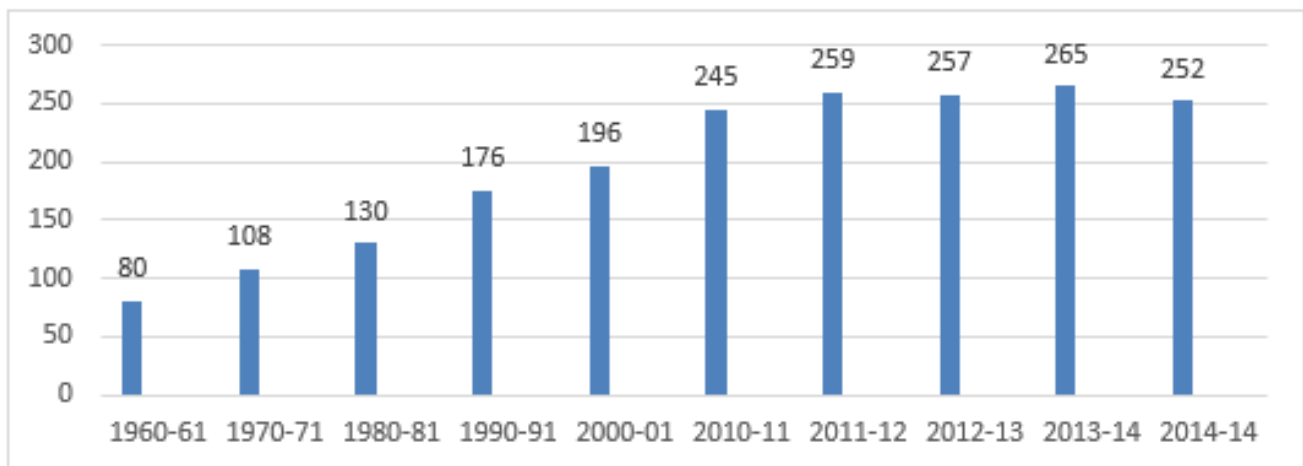
Answer : 1. No, Ahmad does not have a regular income from rickshaw pulling. His wages fluctuate daily because of the variable number of commuters, climatic conditions, holidays etc. He can have a good day at work with a lot of customers and the next day might get really bad as well.

2. With yellow card, he gets sufficient quantity of wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene oil for his daily use at half rate in comparison to the market price. This yellow card is a public distribution system card for people living below poverty line. People who have low income can use this card to buy ration items from the government shops at subsidized rates.

Let's Discuss Pg-47

Q. 1. Study the graph and answer the following questions:

Production of Food grains in India (Million Tonnes)



(a) In which year did our country cross the 200 million tonnes per year mark in food grain production?

(b) In which decade did India experience the highest decadal increase in food grain production?

(c) Is production increase consistent in India since 2000-2001?

Answer : (a) Our country crossed the 200 million tonnes per year mark in food-grains production in the decade of 2000-2010. The production rose from 196 million tons in 2000-01 to 245 million tons in 2010-11.

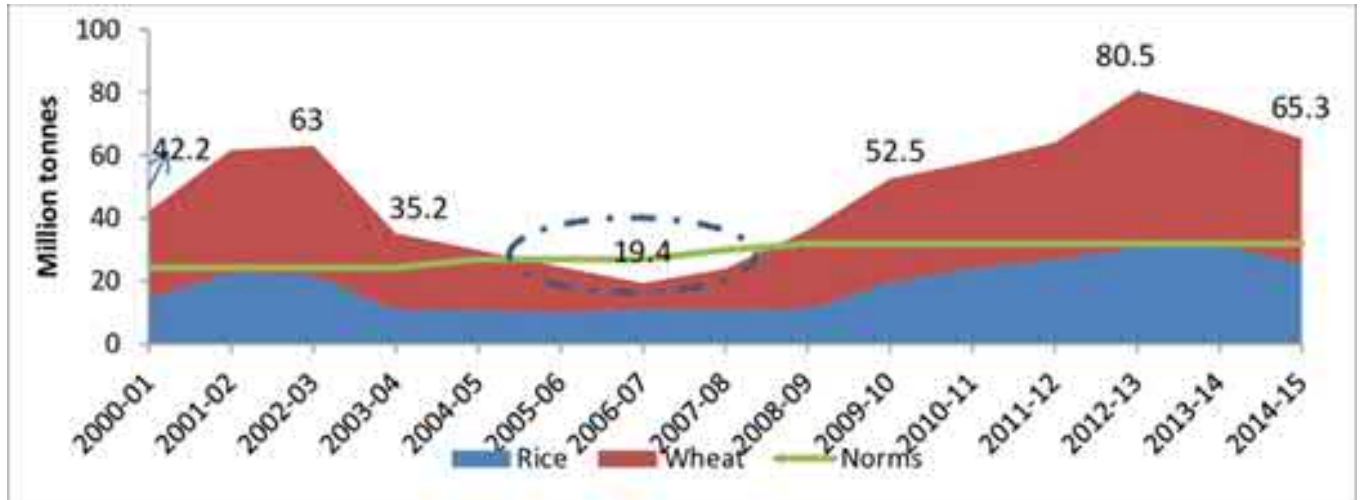
(b) The decade of 2000 to 2010 saw the highest decadal increment in the production tonnage. The decade of 1980 to 1990 saw the highest rate of growth in terms of percentage growth.

(c) Production increase has not been consistent since 2000-01. The first decade after 2000 saw exemplary increase but later to that the growth has somewhat stagnated and it even saw a downfall in the years 2012-13 and 2014-15.

Let's Discuss Pg-51

Q. 1. Study the Graph given below and answer the following questions:

Central Food grains (Wheat + Rice) Stock and Minimum Buffer Norm (Million Tonnes)



Study the graph above and answer the following questions:

- 1. In which recent year food grains stock with the government was maximum?**
- 2. What is the minimum buffer stock norm for the FCI?**
- 3. Why were the FCI granaries overflowing with food grains?**

Answer : 1. 2012-13 saw the maximum collection of grains with the government. This was because of the high production and better buying strategies of the government. This led to more of the grain being deposited with the government as the farmers were getting good price for their yield.

2. The minimum buffer stock norms for FCI (Food corporation of India) are 24.3 million tonnes upto July. Buffer stock is the stock of food grains, namely wheat and rice procured by the government through Food Corporation of India (FCI). It purchases wheat and rice from the farmers in states where there is surplus production, and for this they are paid a pre-determined price which is called minimum support price.

3. The Minimum support price is declared by the government every year before the sowing season to provide incentives to the farmers for raising production of the crops. As the market prices for the buying from the farmers is usually lower than MSP and the chances of cheating or malpractices are high, thus the farmers usually prefer to sell the grain to the government. This grain has to be used for supplying to the PDS system and during calamities. The distribution network is not as competent as it should be and thus there is excess grains in the granaries.

Exercise

Q. 1. How is food security secured in India?

Answer : Measures of food security in India:

1. Buffer stock: It is created to distribute food-grains in deficit area among the poor section of the society at low prices. It helps in solving the issues of scarcity of food to an extent during adverse weather and other calamities. This stock is refreshed every year by buying the grains from the farmers.

2. Public Distribution System: It was introduced for the distribution of food stored in buffer stock among the poor. Fair shops have been opened which are known as government regulated ration shops. Now ration shops are present in most localities, villages, towns and cities. These ration shops keep stock of food grains, sugar, kerosene oil for cooking, and these items are sold at a price lower than the market price.

3. Other Programmes: Integrated Child Development Services, Food for work, Mid-day meals etc. have been launched for ensuring food security. In Maharashtra, Academy of Development Science has facilitated a network of NGOs for setting up grain banks in different regions. Grain banks are now slowly taking shape in different parts of Maharashtra. This ADS Grain Bank programme is acknowledged as a successful and innovative food security intervention.

Q. 2. Which are the people more prone to food insecurity?

Answer : People who are prone to food security:

1. Landless people with small piece of land or no land at all.
2. Traditional artisans.
3. Self-employed workers.
4. Impoverished people including beggars.
5. Other than the economic division, the women and elders are more prone to food insecurity.

Q. 3. Which states are more food insecure in India?

Answer : Uttar Pradesh, Bihar Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Maharashtra are the few states which are more food insecure in India. A large section of people suffer from food and nutrition insecurity in India, the worst affected groups are landless people with little or no land to depend upon, traditional artisans, providers of traditional services, petty self-employed workers and destitute including beggars. The above mentioned states have the largest number of people from these economic and vocational categories and thus are the most food insecure.

Q. 4. Do you believe that green revolution has made India self-sufficient in food grains?

Answer : Yes, I believe that Green Revolution has played a crucial role in making India self-sufficient in food grains by raising the production of wheat and rice.

1. India has hardly faced famine like situation and has largely become self-sufficient in food grains since the advent of the Green Revolution.
2. The import bills for the food grains have greatly went down and that money is used in other economic activities.
3. Less dependence on food grain import has helped us attain some diplomatic independence as well.
4. Increase in the production of food grains has also helped in increasing the export earnings over the years.

Q. 5. A section of people in India is still without food. Explain.

Answer : A section of people in India is still without food and the main cause of this is that many poor families don't have enough money to buy required food items for self and their families. Food items are generally available in the market but as the incomes of the poor are very less, thus they are not able to buy those grains at the market rates. Many a times, the families have insufficient resources to even buy necessary food items and thus the idea of buying nutritious food is a heresy.

Q. 6. What happens to the supply of food when there is a disaster or a calamity?

Answer : When there is a disaster or a calamity like earthquake, flood, drought, tsunami, wide-spread failure of crops that causes famine, then:

1. Food supply declines because of the less availability of grain.
2. Food requirement increases because many people are ailing or hurt owing to the calamities.
3. To supply the food grains buffer stocks are used.
4. The victims have to rely on government support and relief programs to make the ends meet.

Q. 7. Differentiate between seasonal hunger and chronic hunger.

Answer : Difference between seasonal hunger and chronic hunger

Base of difference	Seasonal hunger	Chronic hunger
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1. Cause	It is caused due to cycles of food growing and harvesting.	It is caused due to persistently inadequate diet in terms of quantity and quality.
2. Why people suffer	When people are unable to find the job then they suffer from seasonal hunger.	People suffer from chronic hunger due to irregular income and low paid wages.

Q. 8. What has our government done to provide food security to the poor? Discuss any two schemes launched by the government.

Answer : Provision of food security to the poor by our government: Availability of food grains at the security system has been ensured by the government through the establishment of fair price shops and also the subsidy distribution through the PDS card system.

There are two schemes launched by the government:

(i) Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS): Under this system in 1700 blocks of a country, it was targeted to provide the benefits of PDS to remote and backward areas. The price which was determined for wheat and rice was Rs. 2.80 and Rs. 3.77 per kg respectively. This was introduced in 1992.

(ii) Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY): The scheme was introduced in 2000, and is meant for the poorest section. It was decided to give 35 kg of food grains every month to this section of society. The price of wheat and rice was Rs. 2.00 and Rs. 3.00 per kg. respectively. The scheme has been further expanded twice to additional 50 lakh BPL families in June 2003 and in August 2004. With this increase, 2 crore families have been covered under this scheme.

Q. 9. Why is buffer stock created by the government?

Answer : Buffer stock is the stock of grains that is stored by the government in the granaries of Food Corporation of India. This stocking is done by buying grains directly from the farmers and even from the market in case of any emergencies. The stock is used for distribution of grains to the poor at subsidized rates through the public distribution system. This grain is also used in case of any calamities like flood, drought, war etc.

Q. 10. Write notes on:

(a) Minimum support price

(b) Buffer stock

(c) Issue price

(d) Fair price shops

Answer : (a) Minimum Support Price: It refers to the price at which the government secures food grains (wheat and rice) through FCI from the farmers in states where there is surplus in production. The farmers are paid a pre-announced price for their crops. The minimum support price is declared by the government every year before the sowing season. The purchased grain forms the part of the buffer stock and is stored in FCI granaries.

(b) Buffer Stock: It refers to the stock of food grains namely wheat and rice secured by the government through Food Corporation of India. The FCI purchases wheat and rice from the farmers in states where there is surplus production. The farmers are paid a pre-announced price for their crops. Which is called minimum support price.

(c) Issue Price: It refers to the price at which the government sells the food grains in poor sections of society through several welfare schemes to ensure food security. This price is essentially kept lower than the market rates so that all the economic sections have access to the food grains.

(d) Fair Price Shops: It refers to the ration shops which are regulated by the government and through which the food grains secured by the government through FCI is distributed under various welfare schemes. This is called the public distribution system. Ration shops are now present in most localities, villages, towns and cities. There are about 5.5 lakh ration shops all over the country. Ration shops are known as fair price shops.

Q. 11. What are the problems of the functioning of the ration shops?

Answer : Problems of the functioning of the Ration Shops:

1. Poor quality of items because of some malpractices and incompetency shown at the time of procurement.
2. To get better margin the shop owners divert the subsidized grain to open market which renders the supply highly irregular.
3. Cheating the illiterate customers by measuring less using fraud weights and measures.
4. Three types of ration card distribution also cause some issues.
5. The opening schedule of the ration shops is highly irregular which causes issues.
6. There is very little interest showed by the families above poverty line because they don't get much discount and the quality too is questionable.

Q. 12. Write a note on the role of cooperatives in providing food and related items.

Answer : The cooperatives play a vital role in providing food and other related items, and have proved to be effective especially in the southern and western parts of India.

(i) It has been found that around 94% of the ration shops are run by the cooperatives in Tamil Nadu.

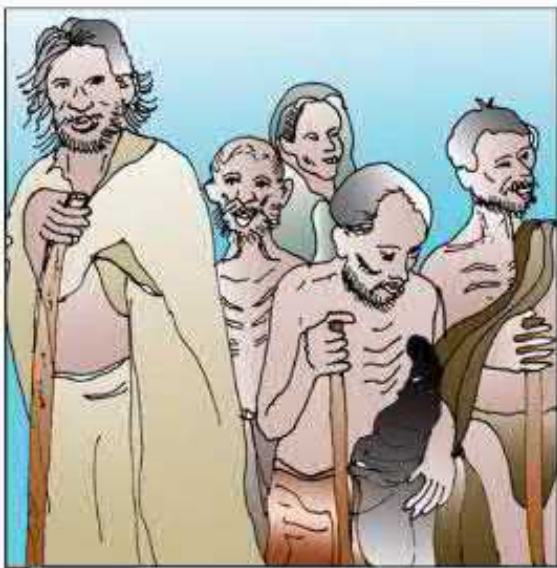
(ii) The mother dairy is supplying milk and other milky products like butter, ghee, curd etc. to the people at much subsidized rates in Delhi.

(iii) Amul is doing the same job of supplying milk and milk products to people at much cheaper rates in Gujarat. In a way these dairies have brought White Revolution in country.

(iv) The academy of development science (ADS) has facilitated many NGOs to set their own grain banks in various parts of the state, which have proved a great asset in providing food security to people, especially the poor section in Maharashtra.

Suggested Activity Pg-44

Q. 1.



Picture 4.1 Starvation victims arriving at a relief centre, 1945.



Picture 4.2 During the Bengal Famine of 1943, a family leaves its village in Chittagong district in Bengal.

(a) What do you see in picture 4.1?

(b) Which age group is seen in the first picture?

(c) Can you say that the family shown in the picture 4.2 is a poor family? Why?

(d) Can you imagine the source of livelihood of the people, (shown in two pictures) before the occurrence of famine? (In the context of a village)

(e) Find out what type of help is given to the victims of natural calamity at a relief camp.

(f) Have you ever helped such victims (in the form of money, food, clothes, medicines etc.)?

Answer : (a) In the picture we can see that the starvation victims are arriving at relief centre in 1945. Because of the hunger people were dying and then these centres were opened for them.

(b) In the first picture we can see the old age group. They seem like victims of malnutrition; their appearance is very weak and they are to die without food availability. They are even unable to walk without support and their bones are visible through their thin flesh.

(c) In the picture 4.2 the family seems poor because they are leaving the village due to scarcity of food, and the poor are the first affected due to the food scarcity. They are not able to buy food on high rates and thus move to other places to find better livelihood chances.

(d) Before the famine, the source of livelihood of the people could be agriculture and allied activities. Until there was famine people were totally dependent on agriculture, each and every farmer used to cultivate its land and grow grains for personal consumption and some sale but as the famine struck, they were not able to produce enough to feed themselves.

(e) Food, clothes, medicines etc. are given to the victims of a natural calamity at a relief camp. Calamities like flood and cyclone are very devastating so food, clothes and medicines are provided to them to keep them safe till it stops.

(f) Yes, I have helped such victims in the form of money. Last year there was a flood in the state of Assam and people were suffering a lot. We saw the news about it and were very worried. My father suggested to donate some of our savings to the victims through the Prime Minister Relief Fund which funds the relief work of those stranded in calamities.

Suggested Activity Pg-48

Q. 1. Visit your area's ration shop and get the following details:

1. When does the ration shop open?

2. What are the items sold at the ration shop?

3. Compare the prices of rice and sugar from the ration shop with the prices at any other grocery shop. (For families below poverty line)

4. Find out

(a) Do you have a ration card?

(b) What has your family recently bought with this card from the ration shop?

(c) Are there any problems that they face?

(d) Why are ration shops necessary?

Answer : 1. The ration shop opens at 10 a.m. but there is no daily crowd outside the shop. There is crowd usually on the days when the grain is being distributed to the PDS yellow card holders.

2. Wheat, rice, sugar, pulse and other eatables are sold at the ration shop. Kerosene oil is also sold at the shop because the poor usually don't have gas-cylinders to cook food and rather prefer stoves which are available in the market at very low rate.

3. Comparison of the prices of rice and sugar from the ration shop and with the price at any other grocery shop (For families below poverty line)

Items	Price per kg. at ration shop (Rs.)	Price per kg. at any other grocery shop
1. Wheat	15	36
2. Rice	15	35

4. (a) Yes, we have the ration card. We have PDS card issued for the families having income higher than the poverty line. We usually don't use the card for the purchases because we can afford to buy from the markets and also buying from these shops is really cumbersome and time taking.

(b) Our family generally doesn't buy anything from the ration shop because of several issues like quality of the commodities, cumbersome procedure, irregular supplies etc. We have kept the card for the emergency situations and moreover as an identity proof.

(c) Yes, people face several problems at the ration shops; these include low quality of rationed articles, opening of ration shops irregularly, cheating by the shopkeepers in terms of weighing, low supply of necessary items etc. As the profits for the ration shop owners is less thus they usually not very enthusiastic towards their job and are involved in corrupt practices and improper management of the shop.

(d) Ration shops are necessary because it is usually very difficult for the poor to get enough food for self and the family owing to the rising prices of food items in the open market. These ration shops allow them to buy the food grains even in their limited financial resources. These ration shops assist the government in distributing the subsidies to the poor in a proper way.