

# One hot meal.

What can that do for India?



The largest section of India's population  
is under the age of 25.  
With education we can become one of the  
world's most empowered nations.

One hot meal helps bring a child to school.  
This meal enables the child to get an education





**World's Largest School Lunch Programme**  
Cumulatively served  
**2 Billion Meals** since its inception  
in 2000.

Serving fresh cooked food,  
nutritious meals to  
**1.6 Million children** everyday  
**1,689,871 children** in  
**26 locations** across  
**11 states** in India.

# Our Reach



# The Akshaya Patra Foundation

In February 2016, Akshaya Patra served its cumulative 2 billionth meal as a part of the Government of India's ambitious Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS). Metaphorically speaking, that's like feeding the entire country twice.

The Akshaya Patra Foundation since its genesis in 2000 has dynamically strived to address escalating issues of 'classroom hunger' and 'education' in India – matters of national priority. Its journey began with feeding 1,500 school children in five schools of Bangalore. It was a matter of time before the humble beginnings of Akshaya Patra transformed into a fairy tale for children across the country with good management, innovative technology, and smart engineering making its Mid-Day Meal Programme the world's largest school lunch programme. Today, Akshaya Patra operates in 26 locations across 11 states, feeding over 1.6 million children, and taking rapid strides towards the mission to reach 5 million children by 2020.

Having completed the 16 years anniversary, on November 11, 2016 Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation said "It provides a great satisfaction to see the positive change, one meal can make in the children's lives. 39% of our population are children and we would want them to be transformed as assets of our country. My heartfelt thanks to the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, all the State Governments, corporate and individual donors, who have constantly and whole heartedly contributed in upholding the philosophy of 'unlimited food for education.'

With its vision of 'No child in India shall be deprived of education because of hunger', Akshaya Patra has galvanised a strategic partnership with the Government of India and the various State Governments to implement its school meal programme. Under this unique Public Private Partnership, Akshaya Patra acts as a diligent implementing arm of the Government's Mid-Day Meal Programme.

Apart from making concerted efforts to nourish children with wholesome nutritious meals, Akshaya Patra through its school meal programme concurrently endeavours at achieving the two most critical United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, 1: Zero Hunger and 2: Quality Education.

# The Power of One Hot Meal

According to UNESCO's Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2000-2015, the number of children aged 6-11 out of school in India stands at a whopping 1.4 million. This gives India the dubious distinction of being one of the top five nations with highest number of out-of-school children. Being out-of-school means these children are deprived of their right to education and right to aspire.

Akshaya Patra seeks to change this. In providing one hot meal every school day, The Foundation doesn't just uphold their right to food, but also seeks to address their right to education and having aspirations. As nutritional meals ensure full cognitive development of children, due importance is given to the nutritional profile of meals served.

Mid-day meals serve as incentives for children to attend school and for parents to send their children to school — instead of sending them to work to support the family. This improves enrolment rate, attendance, performance, and nutritional profile of the children and reduces the dropout rate, thus contributing to their right to education. The arrangement also serves as a source of economic support for the family as their child's one meal of the day is taken care of.

Nutrition and education enhance the physical and psychological development of child. Additionally, the Programme also promotes socialisation by fostering the habit of eating together, in children. In the long run, this intermingling improves unity among them.

One hot meal puts children on the path to a brighter future.



# Technology at work for a hot meal

Vegetable Cutting



Mechanised  
Vegetable Cutting



Vegetables waiting  
to be cooked



Rice Weighing



Rice Preparation





Sambar Preparation



Sambar Filled into Containers



Rice Filled into Containers



Food Loaded into Delivery Vans



Delivery and Distribution



# BEYOND THE FEEDING PROGRAMME



Other social initiatives of Akshaya Patra involve health check-up camps, life skills programme, scholarships among other initiatives. The organisation's life skills programme is based on WHO recommendations of 10 life skills. The aim is to empower children to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of every day life; sessions are facilitated by means of interactive games, real life examples, role play, theatre, debate and discussions.

In 2015, the Foundation started a mentorship programme called Giving Every Dream a Chance. The idea behind it was that now that these children have overcome the limitations of hunger, they can focus on their dreams. As a part of this initiative, three beneficiary children were selected and mentored by stalwarts from their field of choosing. In essence, Akshaya Patra tried to give their dreams a chance by putting wings on them.

In Baran, Rajasthan, and Nayagarh, Odisha, Akshaya Patra has a decentralised model in place because the terrain makes it difficult to establish and operate centralised kitchens in these regions. As a part of this system, women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) undertake the cooking process under the guidance and supervision of The Foundation. These women are trained in cooking, nutrition, and hygiene. Taking these women onboard, Akshaya Patra has provided them a path to decent livelihood and boosted their self-esteem.

# Feeding Hand during Disaster Relief

That Akshaya Patra can play a bigger role when it comes to social commitment — especially during crisis — has been proven time and again. There have been several instances where The Foundation has actively participated in disaster relief work — two of these instances occurred last year.

■ In April 2015, in the aftermath of Nepal earthquake, a relief kitchen was set up in collaboration with the Tata Trusts and Sipradian Sahayata Sanstha (SSS) in Bhaktapur. Around 1.4 million meals were served in the affected area over the period of 88 days.

■ In December 2015, when floods ravaged the state of Tamil Nadu, Akshaya Patra served a cumulative 89,600 meals as a part of relief effort.

■ In 2010, Akshaya Patra kitchens were functioning year round to provide food to children in drought-affected areas of Rajasthan.

■ In 2009-10, when northern Karnataka was affected by floods, The Foundation responded by supplying food to more than 350,000 affected people over the period of 18 days.



# An Apt Example of PPP Model

**A**kshaya Patra's partnership with the Government of India to implement the MDMS is one of the best examples of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model in general and by far the best example related to the education sector. This admired partnership with the Central and State Governments has helped The Foundation expand and enhance its meal programme, enabling it to reach millions of children in the country with nutritious meals.

Each department has been playing a crucial role in helping Akshaya Patra scale up and sustain.

■ The Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Food and Civil Supplies Corporations have ensured that quality grains are delivered on time.

■ The Central Government has given permission to seek donations from within the country u/s 35AC and 80G and from overseas under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 1976. While the Finance Ministry looks into donations from within the country, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) monitors overseas donations.

Akshaya Patra is proud to enjoy the support of the Governments and has reciprocated positively every time the Government has approached the organisation for any assistance.

■ For instance, in the aftermath of floods in Karnataka in 2009, the Government of Karnataka approached The Foundation for help in relief operations. Akshaya Patra supplied food to more than 350,000 people affected by this tragedy.

■ The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has collaborated with Akshaya Patra to organise training sessions for cook-cum-helpers.

■ The Foundation is a member of the National Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee (NSMC) set up to monitor the mid-day meal programme.

## Corporates and Individual Donors

As a not-for-profit organisation, Akshaya Patra has to rely on donations from individuals and corporates to run a mammoth initiative that the Mid-day Meal Programme is. While donations from both groups have been flowing in since the inception of the Programme, corporates have become all the more proactive of late, primarily because of two things.

■ The Foundation has scaled the popularity charts and also scores high on credibility aspect because of its adherence to transparency and accountability.

■ With the 2013 CSR Act coming into play, it has become mandatory for companies of certain size to spend 2% of their net average profits for the last three years on social development.

While some corporates offer monetary help, others propose in-kind donation – such as donating vehicles or kitchen equipment. These donations help the organisation take care of capital costs and recurring costs, thus helping in sustaining the programme. Additionally, there have been instances where corporates have pitched in with Pro bono consulting services to provide a major boost for operations.



# Monitoring and Evaluation of the Programme

The food provided by Akshaya Patra translates into hope for millions of children and therefore, several measures are taken to reduce the margin of error and ensure that food is prepared hygienically. These measures include 100% adherence to the recipes, periodic checks on cooking temperature, batch-wise quality checks of the food prepared, the use of Total Quality Management (TQM) tools to comply with ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety and Management System Standards, etc.

Direct feedback is collected from beneficiaries, i.e., the children, as well as school authorities. Based on their feedback proactive steps are taken to improve the feeding programme. If these meals work as an incentive to bring children to school (i.e., improve enrolment) and keep them in school (i.e., improve attendance), then there is no scope to err when it comes to this aspect.

Akshaya Patra is open to reviews and audits by Governments, donors, community members, etc., as it's the firm belief of the organisation that the positive findings of these reviews and audits can help repose their faith in its feeding programme.



“The [Akshaya Patra] Programme has exhibited how compassion of the people combined with support from the Government can bring a wonderful and meaningful impact.”

- His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama Of Tibet

“Your example of using advanced technologies in central kitchens to reach children in 5,700 schools is an imaginative approach that has the potential to serve as a model for other countries.”

- Barack Obama in his Letter of Appreciation dated September 2008



# Go Green Initiatives

In order to utilize the available resources in a cost-effective manner while ensuring that the environment is not harmed; all the kitchens are designed in an energy efficient manner.

■ **Biogas Plant:** Biogas plants use the organic waste produced in kitchens to generate energy, so it doesn't just help in reducing dependency on LPG but also helps in eco-friendly handling of food wastages.

■ **Solar Power:** Yet another source of alternative energy that is used at Akshaya Patra's Vasanthpura kitchen is solar energy. In this case, photovoltaic (PV) cells are used to convert sunlight into energy, which is then used as a power source.

■ **Optimized Delivery Routes:** With The Foundation's delivery vehicles clocking hundreds of miles every day, the meal delivery routes have been optimized to reduce carbon emissions.

■ **Rainwater Harvesting:** In Hubballi, where rainfall is optimum every year, the kitchen opts for rainwater harvesting as a part of which rainwater which otherwise goes waste, is diverted towards a pond. This water then recharges bore wells and reduces the dependency on corporation water.

■ **Thermite Briquette Boiler:** The Foundation's kitchens prefer to use briquette boilers as a means to reduce carbon emission and curb air pollution. These briquettes are made of agri-waste, i.e., compressed groundnut shell and grain husk.

These and other similar green initiatives will be put to use in kitchens across the country in near future.



“ I have been very impressed by the scale and effectiveness of the school feeding programme. ”

- Edward De Bono, Guru of Lateral Thinking

# Impact Studies

Akshaya Patra has time and again collaborated with reputed survey firms to measure the impact of its Mid-day Meal Programme. In 2014, a study titled 'Assessment of Mid-day Meal Programme in 8 States' was conducted by Sigma Research and Consulting Pvt. Ltd., to determine the need, impact, and continuance of the school feeding programme.

■ All states showed attendance rates of above 90 percent. Gujarat ranked highest with 99.6 percent.

■ All the states showed above 85% daily adequacy and availability of food. Gujarat ranked highest with 99 percent.

In a similar impact study conducted by AC Nielsen in 2006, a significant increase in enrolment was recorded from the centres that were surveyed. The said study also showed that the overall attendance in these centres had increased by 11.67 percent.

“ I love this programme...this is one of the finest commitments ever made in the 10-year history of Clinton Global Initiative.”  
- Bill Clinton, Former US President



“ We were very much impressed... We pay our respects to the founders.”  
- Lee Hsien Loong, Singapore Prime Minister



# Stories of Hope

## Madan (Beneficiary)

While most children are drawn by the glitz of popular professions, Madan — a student of class V in the Government Higher Primary School, Jyothipura, wants to become an IAS officer to serve the country. A son of a farmer, Madan says that Akshaya Patra meals fuel his love for education. “I like all the meals served by Akshaya Patra, but Bisibelebhath (a rice based dish with vegetables) is my favourite. After having the food, I concentrate better and easily comprehend my lessons in class.” He is fond of English and Social Sciences, while his extracurricular interests include sports ... cricket in particular.

Madan takes inspiration from the late IAS Officer D.K. Ravi, whom he had once seen on television. He has been his ardent admirer ever since, finding the late officer’s personality, dedication, and intelligence quite impressive. Madan was greatly pained and aggrieved when he heard the news of the untimely death of D.K. Ravi. However, the silver lining in this cloud is that this unfortunate event strengthened his resolve to join administrative services.

## SUBRAMANI (Employee)

At 02:30 am, when almost all of us are in deep sleep, Subramani walks his way to the boiler room to start his day. As a boiler operator, he is supposed to look after boiler operation and maintenance, but he is much more than your regular boiler operator. Over 15 years with Akshaya Patra means he knows the whole process at the back of his hand. Even though his official work hours are from 02:30 AM to 09:30 AM, he is a guy who is just a call away — literally.

Ask him about the risks involved in his job and he shrugs it off, but the blackened nails of his fingers which were exposed to steam have a different story to tell. Subramani says he doesn’t want to leave Akshaya Patra because he feels really close to the staff and everyone at the temple. His co-workers are all praises for him. They say he has bonded well with everyone and further add that his attitude and hardworking nature makes everyone like him. He is their go-to person ... rather he is our go to person!

# Awards & Recognitions

Akshaya Patra has always adhered to financial transparency and operational excellence, and testimony to this fact is the impressive list of awards. The Foundation has won several awards on various platforms over the course of 16 years.

In recognition of the distinguished service rendered by Akshaya Patra for the children of India, The Foundation's chairman, Madhu Pandit Dasa was honoured with the prestigious Padma Shri — one of the highest civilian awards in the country.



The Akshaya Patra Foundation was awarded the Nikkei Asia Prize for its significant achievements in the 'Economic and Business Innovation' category.



Akshaya Patra has the distinction of being the only not-for-profit organisation to be inducted into the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India's (ICAI) Hall of Fame — an honour that is bestowed upon an organisation when it wins ICAI's Gold Shield for Excellence in Financial Reporting for five consecutive years.



Another award in the impressive list of awards The Foundation has won is the South Asian Federation of Accountants' (SAFA) Best Presented Accounts Award.

Additionally, Akshaya Patra has been honoured with ABP News Positive Award 2015 for being an emblem of positive change in society, Quality Mark Award for Achievement and Excellence in the NGO segment, Best NGO at the 14th Mother Teresa Award 2014, Asian MAKE (Most Admired Knowledge Enterprise) award by CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), among others.

Even individual units across the country have been honoured for excellence time and again.

■ The Akshaya Patra's Vadodara unit won in the NGO category at the True Impact Awards 2016

■ At the CII National Award for Food Safety 2014, Vasanthpura unit bagged the highest position of Outstanding Performance for Food Safety.



Akshaya Patra has also had the distinction of being featured in renowned TV shows, such as National Geographic Channel's Mega Kitchens, CNN's 'On the Road' Series, Rocky and Mayur's Food Xpress on Living Foodz, and a special show on NDTV Prime.

**I**t's the unwavering support of all its stakeholders: the Government, corporates, individual donors, employees, school authorities and our friends; that have helped Akshaya Patra become the largest not-for-profit school feeding programme in the world. With all the stakeholders on-board and an experience of 16 years, the Foundation's mission to feed 5 million children every school day by 2020 seems well within the reach.

For Further Details Contact

**Dhanashree B.M**

Deputy Manager- Media Relations

The Akshaya Patra Foundation

Email : [Dhanashree.bm@akshayapatra.org](mailto:Dhanashree.bm@akshayapatra.org)

Mobile : +91-98457-19441

Landline: 080- 30143400 Ext: 346

**The Akshaya Patra Foundation**

#72, 3rd Floor, 3rd Main Road

1st & 2nd Stage, Yeshwantpur Industrial Suburb

Rajajinagar Ward No. 10

Bengaluru – 560022

India