

School Kitchen Garden - Collective Action for Holistic Development in Schools



A joint report by the Central and State Governments highlighted significant nutritional deficiencies in the mid-day meals provided at schools. The Centre conducted its own analysis during the baseline survey of the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan in mid-2022, based on the ICMR recommendations, and confirmed that the standardised menu lacks several essential nutrients, which can adversely impact the mental and physical development of children.

To address these gaps, a nutrition garden initiative was launched in partnership with the Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR), Hesaraghatta. By supplementing the mid-day meal with freshly grown vegetables from these gardens, improved nutritional content and increased satisfaction among both teachers and students were observed.

In April 2023, the Centre, through Navsahyog Foundation, conducted training on setting up and taking care of the School Nutrition Garden for the students and the Coordinators at the Schools in Tiptur and Madhugiri.

A total of nine nutrition gardens have been established—three in Tiptur taluk and six in Madhugiri taluk schools—growing vegetables such as beans, radish, brinjal, greens, tomatoes, and chilli. Akshayakalpa, a dairy company with its plant in Tiptur, has supported the Nonavinakere school's garden with manure and technical expertise. Navsahyog Foundation supports the efforts to develop nutrition gardens and engage the students in sports and activities to build strong life skills programs in 20 villages in Tiptur.

This activity has been scaled up to 15 schools in both blocks as of July 2025, with more schools interested in adopting the model. This model demonstrates that activity-based learning through school nutrition gardens can effectively address deficiencies in the mid-day meal scheme, build life skills in young students and can be scaled as a replicable solution across more schools.

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