



Community kitchens – Pros & Challenges

Description

Theme:

- In November 2021, the government of India started working on drafting a national policy to set up community kitchens throughout the country.
- The step was taken in response to the public interest litigation (PIL) filed in the Supreme court by a few social activists claiming that every day many children under the age of five are dying due to hunger.

What is a community kitchen:

- Community kitchens provide food to hungry people for free or for a nominal charge.

Community kitchens in India:

- Several state governments and a few NGOs have already set up community kitchens to feed the poor people. According to the government estimates, there are more than 10,000 community kitchens in India by the year 2020.
- Amma's canteens of Tamil Nadu, Langar at the Golden Temple are a few examples of community kitchens.
- Even though several states have community kitchens, there is no national policy on this and as a result, people in only some places have access to free food but not everyone.

Pros of community kitchens:

- India ranked 101 out of 116 countries in the Global Hunger Index, 2021. Many people in India are undernourished and are sleeping on an empty stomach. As the supreme court mentioned, it is the duty of the welfare state to ensure that all the citizens have food to eat. By establishing community kitchens throughout the country, we can ensure that everyone

has access to nutritious food.

- Due to the pandemic, many people lost jobs especially those who are working in the informal sector. So, now community kitchens are more needed than ever.
- Tonnes of food grains rot every year at the Food Corporation of India (FCI). By supplying the food grains to the community kitchen, the wastage of food grains can be prevented and instead that can be used to feed hungry people. –
- These community kitchens can tie up with farmers directly. Many times, farmers are forced to dump produce due to several reasons such as delay in procurement by the government, exploitation by middlemen etc. So, community kitchens can help in fixing this issue.
- In general, women of the family are spending a good amount of time daily preparing food for the family. Household responsibilities are keeping many women away from the workforce. So, removing the cooking work from household responsibilities by establishing community kitchens will help them in joining the workforce.
- Many people, especially youngsters are willing to volunteer. But not many have access to volunteer options nearby. Once community kitchens are set up, many people will happily volunteer and will donate supplies too.

Challenges:

- Cooked food may get wasted in case of the wrong estimation of hungry people in the area.
- Implementation of community kitchens requires continuous efforts from the government. Many such initiatives from the government are neglected after a few months.

Conclusion:

Community kitchens are very essentials to ensure that everyone has access to food. Covid pandemic left many people jobless and as a result, the number of poor people has increased. So, community kitchens should be established throughout the country as soon as possible. Moreover, there should be a continuous effort from the government to maintain them.

Your Turn...

What are your thoughts on the community kitchen? Express your point of view through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

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References:

- [“We Have Doubt”: Supreme Court Slams Centre On Community Kitchens](#)
 - [Eenaadu newspaper dated 19th November 2021](#)
 - [Community kitchens: An idea whose time has come](#)
 - [Community Kitchens run by SHG Women provide food to the most poor and vulnerable in Rural Areas during the COVID-19 lockdown](#)
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