

Functioning of the Public Distribution System in Haryana

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Abstract

Using secondary government sources and the district-level data, this study investigates the operational mechanism of PDS in Haryana focusing on the allocation, distribution, and accessibility of food to households. The paper also evaluates the extent of coverage and inclusion of beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act in Haryana. The findings shows that areas with the most cardholders are Hisar and Faridabad, whilst the areas with the lowest coverage are Panchkula and Charkhi Dadri. According to data on wheat allocation and offtake from 2014–2024, offtake increased from 68.42% in 2018–19 to 86.16% in 2023–24; nevertheless, the compound growth rate is still somewhat negative at -0.65%. These findings highlight a mixed picture of progress, while offtake rates have improved but issues such as regional disparities in coverage and a declining growth trend suggest persistent inefficiencies. In order to fulfill the constitutional commitments of the NFSA and provide fair access to food security, there is a need for targeted policy reforms, enhanced monitoring, and region-specific strategies to strengthen the efficiency, equity, and overall impact of the PDS in Haryana.

Keywords: Public Distribution System (PDS), Food Security, National Food Security Act (NFSA), Fair Price Shops (FPS)

Introduction

Subsidized rice, wheat, sugar, and kerosene are made available to economically disadvantaged parts of the population through the Public Distribution System (PDS), one of the biggest food security and poverty reduction programmes in India. From its humble beginnings as a pre-independence rationing scheme, the PDS has grown into an essential part of India's welfare system. In response to the Planning Commission's suggestions and the pressing need for budgetary rationalization, the system underwent a major overhaul in the 1990s, becoming the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). With the enactment of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, the right to food was further solidified and 75% of India's rural population and 50% of the urban population were entitled to get subsidized foodgrain.

The PDS has been instrumental in helping low-income residents overcome food insecurity. The state of Haryana has a double identity: as a food-surplus state and as an area still struggling with pockets of undernourishment and poverty, thanks to its significant contribution to the central food grain pool. Recent state figures show that approximately 70% of Haryana's population (around 1.98 crore people) falls under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category—a sharp rise from 44% (near about 1.24 crore) in December 2022 (The Tribune, 2024). In Haryana, ration card users, Fair Price Shops (FPS), local government agencies, and digital monitoring systems are all interconnected in the PDS implementation network. Inadequate grievance redressal systems, corruption, political interference, and inclusion/exclusion errors continue to be difficulties all over India, despite improvements in infrastructure.



Given its significance for nutritional outcomes, poverty reduction, and the efficacy of governance, studying the operation of PDS in Haryana is crucial. Achieving food and nutritional security relies on the PDS working properly, which also acts as a gauge for the state's administrative openness and social welfare outreach. Further, in order to propose evidence-based policy changes, it is essential to examine the coverage and difficulties of the PDS system in Haryana in light of the state's rural-urban divide, diverse socioeconomic conditions, and changing demographic trends. By delving into these dynamics, we may achieve more inclusive targeting, boost beneficiary satisfaction, and make the program more accountable and effective in meeting its developmental and constitutional requirements. Despite having a large number of FPS, contributing significantly to the central food grain pool, and living in a food surplus, the state of Haryana nevertheless faces significant obstacles when it comes to fair food distribution. So, it is critical to assess the efficacy of Haryana's PDS system in terms of policy execution and real ground coverage immediately. By analyzing the system's design and how well it reaches its target audience, the following research goals hope to deconstruct these interactions.

Background of PDS in India and Haryana

Subsidized food grains and other necessities have been made available to economically disadvantaged groups in India through the PDS, a government-run food security program that has developed over many decades. Food rationing was originated after independence to regulate prices, guarantee availability, and prevent famine-like situations; it had its origins as a wartime program in the 1940s. Following the recommendations of the Ramamurti Committee (1991) and the Abhijit Sen Committee (2002), which highlighted the need for better targeting of the poor and improved efficiency, the system shifted from a universal model to a TPDS in the 1990s and beyond. In 2000, AAY (Antyodaya Anna Yojana) was introduced to provide highly subsidized food grains to the poorest segment of the population, thereby enhancing the precision of the TPDS. This initiative played a key role in strengthening food security by prioritizing the most vulnerable households. Over time, the system underwent further reforms, leading to the introduction of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) in 2013. The NFSA, 2013, which established a right to subsidized food grains for more than two-thirds of India's population, greatly strengthened the legal basis for food entitlement. Because the Act mandates coverage for up to 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population, the PDS is one of the largest welfare schemes in the world in terms of reach and money.

Haryana is a significant player in securing India's food security as it stands as one of the leading foodgrain-producing states in the country. Notably, it holds the position of the 4th largest wheat-producing state. Because of its large wheat and rice surplus, Haryana became an important supplier to the Food Corporation of India's (FCI) central pool. Agricultural surpluses and demand in rural areas both increased at this time, which led to a fast expansion of the PDS network.

The PDS in Haryana has been operational since the state's formation. The Haryana Department of Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs oversees the PDS, which is administered through an FPS system. In rural areas, the Department of Rural Development is responsible for identifying families below the poverty line, while in urban regions, this task is handled by the Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana Department. For those who are eligible through the AAY or Priority Households (PHH) programs, these establishments supply ration card holders with wheat, rice, sugar, and kerosene. The Haryana State Federation of Consumers Co-operative Stores Limited (CONFED) serves as the primary wholesale agency for the PDS, overseeing the procurement and distribution of food grains.

Advancements in digitization, biometric verification through Aadhaar-linked ration cards, and real-time monitoring systems such as the ePDS have significantly improved the efficiency and transparency of the Public Distribution System in Haryana. These measures were adopted to minimize leakages, enhance accountability, and ensure more transparent delivery of food grains. But in areas where wages are more volatile or where more people work informally, the omission of APL households caused a disparity. In spite of technology developments, the Haryana PDS has been criticized for systemic flaws. These include failing biometric authentication, under-weighting at FPS outlets, and delays in grievance redressal. State audits and current real-time data from AePDS Haryana have brought attention to these problems.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the structure and functioning of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in Haryana.



- To assess the extent of coverage and inclusion of beneficiaries under the NFSA in Haryana.

Literature Review

Khumaan and Dhiman (2013) studied organization and working of PDS in the state of Punjab. PDS has become an integral part of India's economy. The study reveals that Punjab has a relatively well-established Public Distribution System, with over 14,000 FPSs in operation by 2011. However, the system is marred by various operational challenges such as irregular food grain supply, fake entries in ration cards, and diversion of subsidized commodities to the open market. Particularly in rural areas, FPSs often struggle with low profitability, which discourages their efficient functioning. Despite efforts like the Atta Dal Scheme and vehicle tracking systems to prevent leakage and improve monitoring, only a small fraction of food grains actually reaches the intended BPL beneficiaries. For instance, of the total food grains allocated, just 10.5% were effectively delivered to BPL families, while the remainder was either wasted or diverted to non-targeted groups. The state has implemented reforms, including the formation of monitoring committees and use of tracking technology, but systemic inefficiencies still persist. The findings emphasize the need for further restructuring and adoption of technology to improve transparency and effectiveness of PDS in Punjab.

Kumar et. al. (2015) investigated the impact of PDS on poverty and food security in India using NSSO data from 1993-94 to 2011-12. By estimating the subsidy transfer through PDS and its indirect benefits, the study provided a window of opportunity for the poor to escape poverty and enhance food security. The fiscal transfer approach was utilized for this purpose. Using the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) method, it is verified that the findings were robust. It is found that household access to PDS generally increased from 1993-94 to 2011-12, there was a decline in 2004-05, attributed to the shift from universal to targeted PDS in 1997. Bihar has demonstrated substantial progress in expanding PDS access. It contributed to a 3.5 per cent reduction in poverty from 1993-94 to 2011-12, along with an enhancement in the nutritional intake of PDS beneficiaries. According to the research, PDS has become a more successful tool in the fight against poverty and undernourishment in the nation, and its efficacy has been steadily rising over the years.

Ram (2015) studied Public Distribution System in Haryana. At the ward or village level, there is a provision for a Monitoring Committee to ensure that customers are regularly supplied and distributed essential commodities. In the event that the committee notices any discrepancy in the depot holder's supply and distribution practices, they will inform the relevant departmental official. The current research has shown that there are issues with the operation and execution of PDS. There can be no success for PDS unless these flaws are eliminated. Only those who truly deserve them should be able to use the BPL and AAY cards that are distributed by the Public Distribution System. There ought to be zero tolerance for political meddling. The food and supply department is experiencing a high level of corruption. Therefore, the dishonest workers and officers who took bribes should face consequences, while the truthful ones should get praise.

Overbeck (2016) studied Leakage and Corruption in India's Public Distribution System. The PDS has come under fire for grain waste and corruption since the program's start. Specifically, it is widely believed that a significant portion of the grain that is given to the System is taken by employees and officials instead of reaching the intended recipients. The growing APL allocations since 2000 have exacerbated PDS embezzlement, according to recent research. This is because these households are less likely to demand the modest-quality grains, are less likely to be aware of their entitlement, and bureaucrats and employees are less likely to be held accountable for the embezzlement of APL allotments. Leakage in the PDS, which is defined as the amount of grain that goes into the system but does not end up in recipients' hands, is studied econometrically in this article and how it changes in response to changes in the distribution of grains to APL families. I compile administrative data on grains provided to the PDS by state and year from 2004 to 2012 for twenty major states. I also calculate state and year-wise consumption of PDS grains from six waves of India's National Sample Survey. A major predictor of leakage, according to my findings using panel data estimate approaches, is the APL quota on the supply side. A third of the overall leakage, or over 10 percentage points, has occurred as a result of the 25 percentage point rise in the APL share of the total grains supplied by the central government, according to my point calculations. I also try to account for grains given by individual states instead of



the center, which is a limitation of other studies. This makes it so that, contrary to popular belief, leakage in the PDS has actually increased since 2004, not diminished.

Satyanarayana and Babu (2019) studied “Working of Public Distribution System in India - An Analysis”. A system of fair price stores, sometimes called ration shops, was set up in phases around the nation to distribute major goods. These included sugar, kerosene, rice, wheat, and other key foods. In a nation like India, where a significant portion of the population continues to endure malnutrition, PDS has been instrumental. Vitamin 'A' insufficiency symptoms are also reported by a sizeable percentage of Indian children (0.8%), along with iodine deficiency (4%), and anemia (67%). “National Institute of Nutrition” reports from 2003 and 2006. To provide food security for Indian households, PDS is highly sought after in this context.

Sini (2022) studied the public distribution system in India working as a pillar for food security and social equity. As a means of improving openness and inclusion, this article examines the PDS's effects on decreasing hunger and malnutrition, especially among disadvantaged populations, as well as its function in fostering social equity. It also discusses the system's problems, including leakage and ineffective targeting, as well as its continuous reforms and innovations, such as digitization, Aadhaar linking, and the launch of the One Nation, One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme. Additionally, certain recommendations are made to strengthen and prolong PDS, which would further enhance its ability to help create a fair and food-secure India.

Devi and Siwach (2023) analysed the public distribution system in rural Haryana, India. This paper's overarching goal is to examine the coverage and operation of rural India's public distribution system. The analysis relied on secondary data sourced from various source. Descriptive statistics were employed for the analysis. The outcomes are that in rural Haryana, 51.45 percent of the population relies on the PDS, according to the survey. States are required to provide food assistance to 75% of rural residents through the public distribution system in accordance with the NFSA of 2013. The State's public distribution system is well organized and runs on a huge network of FPS. According to the research, Haryana's PDS-to-FPS beneficiary ratio is satisfactory and satisfies the standards set by India's Food and Supply Department. In sum, NFSA, 2013 does not apply to the Indian state of Haryana. The exclusion of APLs from PDS benefits following the NFSA, 2013 implementation is a major factor. A big portion of the population falls into this group. The State's FPSs are doing an excellent job, as shown by the beneficiary-to-FPS ratio.

Methodology

The study is based on secondary sources, including:

- Official documents and reports issued by the Indian government's consumer affairs, food, and public distribution ministry.
- This is the Haryana Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department's annual report with statistical abstracts.
- Statistics from the Indian Census, reports on the NFSA's implementation, and pertinent information gleaned from Haryana's Economic Survey.

Data Sources

Data Source	Year(s)	Key Variables Used	Relevance to Study
NSSO 61st & 68th Rounds	2004–05, 2011–12	Household PDS access, consumption, expenditure	Baseline for household-level analysis
AePDS Haryana Portal	2023–24	Real-time FPS transactions, Aadhaar seeding, ePoS	Operational and technological tracking
FCI Allocation/Offtake Reports	2020–2024	Monthly allocation & lifting data per district	Supply-demand analysis
Civil Supplies Dept. Reports	2019–2024	FPS numbers, coverage by district, grievances	Administrative performance & coverage

Results and Discussion

a) Structure and Functioning of PDS in Haryana



Administrative Structure

The PDS in Haryana operates as a joint venture between the Central and State governments, aimed at ensuring food security to vulnerable sections of society by distributing essential commodities at subsidized rates. The PDS in Haryana operates through a multi-tiered administrative structure, with distinct roles at each level of governance:

- **Central Government:** It manages the procurement, storage, and nationwide allocation of food grains through the FCI. It also sets the Central Issue Price (CIP) and distributes state-wise quotas under the provisions of the NFSA.
- **State Government:** At the state level, the PDS is administered by the Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Haryana. This department is tasked with distributing food grains to FPS, identifying eligible beneficiaries, issuing ration cards, supervising delivery mechanisms, and addressing grievances.
- **District Administration:** Within each district, the Public Distribution System is overseen by a District Food and Supplies Officer (DFS), who is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the scheme, monitoring the functioning of FPS outlets, and enforcing compliance with operational guidelines.

Beneficiary Coverage and Ration Cards

In accordance with the National Food Security Act (NFSA), the state of Haryana categorizes beneficiaries into two key groups:

- **Priority Households (PHH):** Individuals under this category are entitled to receive 5 kilograms of subsidized food grains per person each month.
- **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY):** This classification includes the most economically vulnerable families, who are provided with 35 kilograms of food grains per household on a monthly basis.

Food Grain Allocation and Supply Chain

The Centre communicates monthly and annual allocation quantities to the state, along with the applicable CIP. Once allocations are issued, the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Haryana (often in coordination with state agencies such as HAFED or the Haryana State Warehousing Corporation) places liftment indents with the FCI. Lifting typically occurs from FCI godowns located within or near the state.

For a focused analysis of PDS operations, four districts: Hisar, Faridabad, Panchkula, and Charkhi Dadri have been selected. Hisar and Faridabad were chosen due to their relatively high number of NFSA cardholders, while Panchkula and Charkhi Dadri represent districts with lower coverage. Together, these districts offer a useful contrast in terms of scale, administrative performance, and geographic diversity—providing a balanced view of PDS functioning across different contexts in the state.

Table 1: Wheat Allocation and Sale to AAY & PHH under PDS in Haryana (as of Dec 2024)

District	AAY Wheat Allotted (Kg)	AAY Wheat Sale (Kg)	PHH Wheat Allotted (Kg)	PHH Wheat Sale (Kg)
Faridabad	68,255.00	110,604.00	2,835,122.00	2,472,280.00
Hisar	256,256.00	256,931.00	2,558,842.00	2,333,553.00
Charkhi Dadri	61,072.00	57,273.00	697,976.00	619,138.00
Panchkula	36,949.00	59,643.00	725,004.00	695,440.00
State Total	3,221,317.00	3,384,870.00	37,919,072.00	34,789,676.00

Source: Food & Supplies Department, Haryana

This table compares the amount of wheat allotted versus wheat actually sold (lifted by beneficiaries) under the PDS in different districts. The wheat allotment and sale data under the AAY and PHH schemes in Haryana present a significant insight into the operational efficiency and utilization of the PDS. This dataset covers four districts—Faridabad, Hisar, Charkhi Dadri, and Panchkula—along with the cumulative figures at the state level. The AAY scheme targets the poorest of the poor, while PHH includes the broader BPL category.



In Faridabad, 68,255 kg of wheat was allotted under the AAY category, but the sale exceeded the allotment at 110,604 kg, suggesting either a carryover from previous stock or adjustments in distribution reporting. For PHH, 2,835,122 kg was allotted, while 2,472,280 kg was sold, indicating a shortfall in actual distribution against planned disbursement. In Hisar, the AAY wheat allotment was 256,256 kg with a closely matching sale of 256,931 kg, reflecting efficient utilization. Under PHH, 2,558,842 kg was allotted while 2,333,553 kg was sold, suggesting a distribution gap, possibly due to beneficiary non-collection or logistical constraints.

Charkhi Dadri received 61,072 kg of AAY wheat but sold only 57,273 kg, showing a moderate underutilization. Similarly, in the PHH category, 697,976 kg was allotted, but 619,138 kg was sold, reflecting a consistent shortfall in both categories. In Panchkula, the AAY sale (59,643 kg) exceeded the allotment (36,949 kg), a pattern similar to Faridabad, which might indicate reallocation of stocks or delay in updating allotment records. For PHH households, the allotment was 725,004 kg, while the sale reached 695,440 kg, showing better distribution efficiency compared to other districts.

At the state level, a total of 3,221,317 kg of AAY wheat was allotted, and 3,384,870 kg was sold—again indicating a surplus sale over the allotted quantity. For PHH, 37,919,072 kg was allotted, and 34,789,676 kg was sold, marking a significant shortfall of over 3 million kilograms in wheat distribution to priority households. This discrepancy may be attributed to a combination of operational inefficiencies, logistical delays, inventory management issues, or beneficiary absenteeism.

Overall, while the AAY wheat distribution shows high or even excess levels of sales compared to allotments in some districts, the PHH category consistently records lower sale figures than allotments. These patterns reveal systemic issues that may require administrative attention such as improved tracking, better stock reconciliation, and beneficiary-level auditing. Such analysis is essential for improving food security outcomes, optimizing inventory usage, and ensuring that the intended benefits of PDS reach the targeted population segments effectively.

Table 2- Allotment and Offtake of Wheat under TPDS in Haryana from 2014-15 to 2023-24 (Qty. in thousand tone)

Year	ALLOCATION	OFFTAKE	AGR of offtake	% OFFTAKE
2014-15	795	732.473	-	92.1
2015-16	795	780.211	6.52	98.1
2016-17	795	756.152	-3.08	95.1
2017-18	795	641.095	-15.22	80.64
2018-19	795	543.946	-15.15	68.42
2019-20	795	598.623	10.05	75.3
2020-21	795	619.657	3.51	77.94
2021-22	795	640.43	3.35	80.56
2022-23	795	651.067	1.66	81.9
2023-24	795	690.53	6.06	86.86
CGR	0	-0.65%		

Source- Data access from Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Govt. of India, Foodgrains Bulletin

This table shows a 10-year trend of how much wheat was allotted to Haryana under TPDS and how much was actually distributed (offtake). It shows that the wheat allocation under the PDS remained constant at 795 thousand metric tonnes each year from 2014–15 to 2023–24, reflecting a stable allotment policy. However, the actual offtake (i.e., the quantity lifted by states for distribution) has varied significantly, indicating fluctuations in demand, distribution efficiency, and possibly external factors like policy changes or disruptions. The percentage of offtake dropped significantly from 92.1% in 2014–15 to a low of 68.42% in 2018–19, indicating major inefficiencies or reduced beneficiary access during that period. A gradual recovery is observed in subsequent years, with offtake improving steadily to reach 86.86% by 2023–24.



Despite fluctuations, the overall Compound Growth Rate (CGR) for offtake over the decade stands at -0.65%, indicating a slight long-term decline in wheat distribution performance through PDS, despite consistent allocation. The lowest performance years were 2017–18 and 2018–19, which may have been influenced by systemic inefficiencies, demand-side reductions, or external disruptions. Recent improvements suggest efforts to restore PDS efficiency are yielding results.

Technological Interventions in Haryana's PDS

In recent years, Haryana has implemented a range of digital technologies to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of its PDS. These initiatives aim to reduce pilferage, enhance beneficiary identification, and ensure the timely and accurate delivery of subsidized food grains (Government of Haryana, 2023). A major technological advancement is the deployment of **electronic Point of Sale (ePoS)** devices at FPS, which authenticate beneficiaries using **Aadhaar-linked biometric systems**. This has significantly minimized errors of inclusion and exclusion by eliminating duplicate and ghost entries (Department of Food & Supplies, Haryana, 2022).

The **AePDS Haryana portal** supports real-time tracking of transactions, stock levels, and delivery status at FPS outlets. It is accessible to both administrators and the public, thereby improving accountability and visibility across the supply chain. To further strengthen logistics, the state has introduced **GPS-enabled tracking systems** for monitoring the transportation of food grains from godowns to FPS outlets. This has helped address transit-related leakages and improved traceability. For direct communication with beneficiaries, the system sends **SMS notifications** about ration dispatches and entitlements.

b) Coverage and Inclusion under NFSA

The development of national welfare policies and the specific socioeconomic features of Haryana are both reflected in the PDS's historical trajectory in the state. Over the years, Haryana's PDS has evolved from a basic food rationing program into an integral part of the lives of millions of people there, ensuring that they have access to nutritious food.

As mentioned earlier, the selected districts: Hisar, Faridabad, Panchkula, and Charkhi Dadri offer a useful contrast in NFSA coverage. As per December 2024 data, Hisar and Faridabad have the highest number of NFSA cardholders, while Panchkula and Charkhi Dadri are among the lowest. This variation helps assess the reach and inclusiveness of the scheme across different regions.

The development of the AePDS Haryana portal allowed for real-time monitoring of transactions, stock availability, and beneficiary authentication. This digital infrastructure marked a significant technological leap, helping detect anomalies like under-weighting, fake transactions, and absentee FPS operations. Despite these advancements, Haryana's PDS still struggles with issues such as biometric mismatch errors (especially affecting the elderly), weak grievance redressal systems, and persistent exclusion of eligible households due to outdated records or lack of awareness.

Table 3: Districts with Highest and Lowest NFSA Coverage in Haryana (Dec 2024)

District	AAY Cards (% of HH)	BPL Cards (% of HH)	Total Households
Faridabad	6,205 (1.66%)	3,67,417 (98.34%)	3,73,622
Hisar	23,296 (6.39%)	3,41,454 (93.61%)	3,64,750
Charkhi Dadri	5,552 (5.60%)	93,660 (94.40%)	99,212
Panchkula	3,359 (3.57%)	90,618 (96.43%)	93,977
State Total	2,92,847 (5.63%)	49,08,069 (94.37%)	52,00,916

Source: Food & Supplies Department, Haryana

This table shows how many households in selected districts of Haryana are receiving food grain benefits under the NFSA. The data on AAY and BPL card distribution across selected districts of Haryana provides valuable insights into regional poverty patterns. These welfare cards serve as crucial tools for



targeting the PDS, which provides subsidized food grains and other essentials to economically weaker households. The analysis covers the districts of Faridabad, Hisar, Charkhi Dadri, and Panchkula, along with a state-level summary.

In urban districts like Faridabad and Panchkula, the proportion of AAY cardholders is relatively low—1.66% and 3.57% respectively, indicating limited extreme poverty and a higher concentration of beneficiaries under the broader BPL category. Conversely, districts like Hisar and Charkhi Dadri show higher AAY shares (6.39% and 5.60%), suggesting deeper economic vulnerability in semi-urban and rural areas. These variations reflect the socio-economic diversity across Haryana, with rural districts showing a greater need for targeted welfare schemes. This distribution suggests relatively better socio-economic conditions in Panchkula compared to Hisar or Charkhi Dadri.

At the state level, Haryana has a total of 52,00,916 households, out of which 2,92,847 (5.63%) are AAY cardholders and 49,08,069 (94.37%) are BPL beneficiaries. This indicates that while a significant portion of the population is economically disadvantaged, the share of those in extreme poverty remains limited but critical. The data reflects a clear urban-rural divide in the distribution of poverty levels. The clear urban-rural divide in card distribution emphasizes the importance of tailored policy interventions. While BPL coverage addresses broader food security needs, AAY cards are essential for reaching the most vulnerable. This information is vital for designing targeted food security initiatives, improving the efficiency of welfare schemes, and ensuring equitable development across Haryana. It also aligns with broader goals under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), by helping policymakers focus their efforts where they are needed the most.

Table 4: AAY and BPL Units in Haryana (Dec 2024)

District	AAY Units	BPL (SBPL) Units	Total Units
Faridabad	20,632	14,17,561	14,83,193
Hisar	79,275	12,79,421	13,58,696
Charkhi Dadri	18,531	3,48,988	3,67,519
Panchkula	11,879	3,62,590	3,74,381
State Total	1013672	18959486	19973158

Source: Food & Supplies Department, Haryana

The data reflects the distribution of AAY and BPL or SBPL ration units across the selected four districts of Haryana along with a state-level summary. These units represent the number of beneficiaries receiving subsidized food grains and essential commodities under the PDS. In Faridabad, there are 20,632 AAY units and 14,17,561 BPL units, culminating in a total of 14,83,193 units. This shows that AAY units constitute a minor portion compared to the BPL coverage, which aligns with Faridabad's urban and economically better-off profile. In contrast, Hisar, a semi-urban and agrarian district, has 79,275 AAY units and 12,79,421 BPL units, totaling 13,58,696 units. The relatively higher number of AAY units here indicates deeper economic vulnerability and a significant presence of marginal households. Panchkula, another urban/peri-urban district, shows a similar trend with only 11,879 AAY units among 3.74 lakh total units. Charkhi Dadri, being predominantly rural and less populous, has 18,531 AAY units out of 3.67 lakh total units, indicating a higher proportion of extreme poverty despite lower absolute numbers. At the state level, Haryana records 10.13 lakh AAY units and 1.89 crore BPL units, covering a total of nearly 2 crore ration units under the PDS.

This distribution pattern reveals a notable urban-rural divide, where rural and agrarian districts like Hisar and Charkhi Dadri exhibit a higher share of AAY beneficiaries, while urban districts like Faridabad and Panchkula show a lower concentration. The data also suggests that while the majority of food security support is extended through the BPL category, a targeted and critical segment is served through the AAY scheme, aimed at addressing the needs of the most economically distressed populations. These insights are essential for state policy planners to effectively allocate resources and refine welfare delivery mechanisms in accordance with local needs and deprivation levels.

Conclusion

The functioning of Haryana's PDS, as reflected in district-wise data and trends over time, reveals both strengths and inconsistencies. The state has a well-developed PDS infrastructure with an extensive



network of FPS, computerized distribution systems, and the integration of Aadhaar-based biometric authentication, with analysis indicating that Haryana has taken significant digital reforms and supply chain improvements. However, the study reveals significant district-level disparities, where regions like Hisar and Faridabad show higher coverage, while Panchkula and Charkhi Dadri lag behind, pointing to persistent gaps in beneficiary identification and inclusion. With nearly two crore residents dependent on the PDS, ensuring equitable access remains a pressing responsibility. Although wheat offtake has improved from 68.42% in 2018–19 to 86.86% in 2023–24 but irregularities such as negative compound growth and mismatches between allocation and sales at the district level suggest inefficiencies in monitoring and distribution. To strengthen the PDS in Haryana, further steps are needed to ensure accurate identification of beneficiaries, reduce leakages, and improve monitoring.

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