

the same. This is often not the case today, when grievances are channeled through village or local administration.

- iv. Pre-empting grievances in food delivery: The PDS has typically been highly reactive in responding to challenges in delivering food, and weaknesses are addressed once complaints and problems reach a threshold. An Aadhaar-enabled MIS however, creates new opportunities for governments to identify and address problems in real-time.

6.3.6 Other Measures

- i. FPS to use STQC (Directorate under DeitY) certified Point of Sale (PoS) devices.
- ii. Andriod App to be developed for easy use of Aadhar based MIS
- iii. The use of social media to influence public involvement in food issue .The government agencies can make e use of Social media to create awareness of the governments schemes for ensuring Food Security will promote transparency and provide vital feedback leading to improvement in service delivery and plugging of loopholes.
- iv. State Governments to set up a PDS Portal: The digitized list of beneficiaries made available in the public domain on State Governments' PDS portals will ensure transparency in the identification of beneficiaries and enable them to check their status. Through the State PDS portal, beneficiaries would also be able to check status of foodgrains allocated for their Fair Price Shop (FPS) each month including quantity delivered at the FPS.
- v. State PDS Portal and toll-free helpline numbers to be set up to provide the facility for registration of grievances and tracking their status

6.4 Conclusions

Aadhaar can be a potent tool for the government, in making the PDS more effective , an Aadhaar based authentication across PDS would enable the government to guarantee food delivery to the poor. In addition to powerfully streamlining PDS processes, an Aadhaar-enabled MIS would make possible a more transparent, flexible system, and enable the government to fulfill the objective of food security in times of

crises. Aadhaar would thus be a tool, albeit, a powerful one, in fulfilling the government's overall objectives for the PDS and in ensuring food security for the poor.

Aadhaar can help the PDS ensure food delivery to beneficiaries without losses and leakage. The number offers benefits in identification of beneficiaries, confirmation in delivering entitlements, and accountability across the delivery infrastructure. Aadhaar would also make it possible to implement an **online food account** through which entitlements could be delivered to the poor. The Aadhaar-enabled MIS system can host online food accounts on the cloud, which are linked to Aadhaar numbers of FPS owners as well as each individual beneficiary. The online account of the beneficiary would be updated monthly with the details of their entitlements – which foodgrains, how much, and at what price. When the beneficiary authenticates themselves with their Aadhaar at the FPS to collect the benefit, the authentication confirmation appears against the FPS owner's food account. The government can thus track offtakes of foodgrain in real-time. If the subsidized good was provided to the FPS at market price, the FPS owner can then claim their reimbursement from the government. The system, on receiving the Aadhaar linked confirmation that the entitlement was delivered, would electronically issue a cheque to the FPS owner, or transfer money to the FPS owner's bank account.

The online food account would have none of the disadvantages of offline food coupons/vouchers. FPS owners would not be able to collude with officials to accept photocopies of food coupons or fake coupons, since reimbursements would be carried out electronically. This approach could streamline benefit transfers and give both governments and residents flexibility in food delivery and access. The government could for instance, immediately tailor entitlements in response to local shortages, such as temporarily providing higher allocations of rice when wheat is unavailable. It would also help improve state responses to crises and disasters, as governments can provide higher allocations, as well as temporarily increase the number of outlets within a particular area from where subsidized grain can be claimed.

6.5 The Way Forward

In order to make effective use of Information Technology for plugging leakages and bringing more transparency it is important to study the use of e-governance in other