

**A micro study on the
Governance Impact on Nutritional Security
of Rural Children
through the Noon Meal scheme
in Coimbatore District**

March 2022



Shanti Ashram

Gandhian center for development, learning and collaboration. 30th year initiative of Shanti Ashram

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School closures

between March 11, 2020 and February 2, 2021

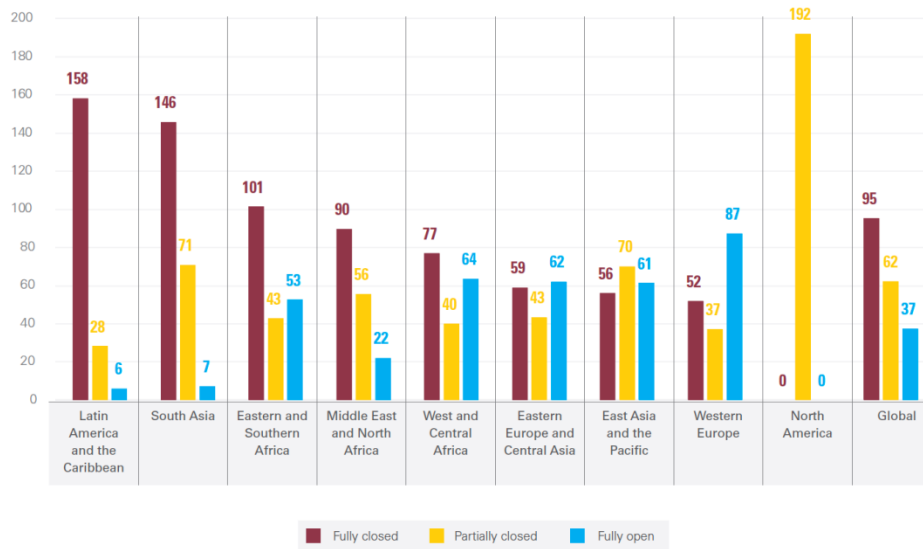
Global average

96 days

South Asia average

146 days

Number of students (in million) impacted in countries with fully closed schools as of February 2, 2021



Source: UNESCO Global monitoring of school closures caused by COVID-19

Note: Estimates are weighted by the number of students in pre-primary to upper secondary education in each country.

Change in Government Spending on Education during COVID-19

Education budgets declined after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 65% of low- and lower-middle-income countries compared to only 33% of high- and upper-middle-income countries

	All countries		High- and upper-middle-income		Low- and lower-middle-income	
	Pre-Covid	Post-Covid	Pre-Covid	Post-Covid	Pre-Covid	Post-Covid
<i>Total education budget</i>						
Change in education budget	1.1	4.0	2.2	6.7	0.3	2.0
Share of countries decreasing education budget	44.8	51.7	41.7	33.3	47.1	64.7
Average decrease in countries that decreased their budget	-8.3	-4.6	-6.9	-7.4	-9.1	-3.6
Average increase in countries that increased their budget	8.7	13.2	8.8	13.8	8.7	12.4
<i>Education's share of the total budget</i>						
Average change in percentage points	-0.5	0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.6	0.2
Average share	13.4	13.5	13.7	13.6	13.2	13.4

Goals of the micro study include :

- **Analyzing** the pattern of reverse migration of children to government schools as evidenced by school enrollment and precipitated by the COVID 19 Pandemic
- **Assessing** the increase or decrease in total numbers of children taking noon meals in government schools currently after pro-longed school closures pandemic precipitated school closures
- **Studying** the impact of governance measures on the noon meal scheme after school re-opening.

KEY MAP



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Study Details

Time frame

- The study was conceptualized and designed post our discussion with our District Collector, Dr.G. Sameeran. The focus was the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the nutritional security of children.
- The present micro-study was undertaken in 10 Government and 2 reference Government-aided schools in Perur and Madukkarai blocks of Coimbatore District
- It was conducted in March 2022 by a study team led by an experts team at the **COVID 19 Research & Response Desk at ICPH**
- 7257 children currently study in the 12 schools identified for the study.
- 90% + of the children studying come from families below the poverty line
- The data was collected for this cross-sectional study in the field by direct interview method with the help of a pre-tested interview schedule.
- Data collection and analysis was done by a team of led by Dr.S.R.Subramanian



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Change in School Enrollment – Rural India

The projection

There has been a clear shift from private to government schools between 2018 and 2020, in all grades and among both boys and girls. Reasons may include financial distress in households and/or permanent school shutdowns among the private schools.

Table 2: % Children enrolled in school. By grade, sex and school type. 2018 and 2020*

Std	ASER 2018						ASER 2020					
	Boys			Girls			Boys			Girls		
	Govt	Pvt	Total	Govt	Pvt	Total	Govt	Pvt	Total	Govt	Pvt	Total
Std I-II	57.9	42.1	100	65.1	34.9	100	61.1	38.9	100	66.7	33.4	100
Std III-V	62.7	37.3	100	71.2	28.8	100	65.6	34.4	100	73.3	26.7	100
Std VI-VIII	65.8	34.3	100	73.3	26.7	100	68.3	31.7	100	77.0	23.0	100
Std IX & above	64.6	35.4	100	68.9	31.2	100	69.7	30.4	100	72.7	27.3	100
All	62.8	37.2	100	70.0	30.0	100	66.4	33.6	100	73.0	27.0	100

Our Study Observations

- There is a **definite increase in reverse migration of children** as evidenced by school enrollment.
- **The average increase is 18%. The national projection on November 2021 was 8%.** The range being 13% to 65%.
- This indicates migration from private schools to government schools. The percentage varied from The increase in enrollment was marginally higher in boys (19%) than girls (17%) therefore not showing a gender gap.
- **Corresponding to the increase in enrollment there was an even more pronounced & significant increase of children taking noon meal scheme**
- **The average increase is 31% .** The range being 10% -158%
- The boys taking noon meal scheme (39%) is more than the girls (24%)
- **A reminder :** Through the noon meal scheme, a child gets 655 kcal/day. This is almost one-third **1/3** of the total calorie requirement of the child



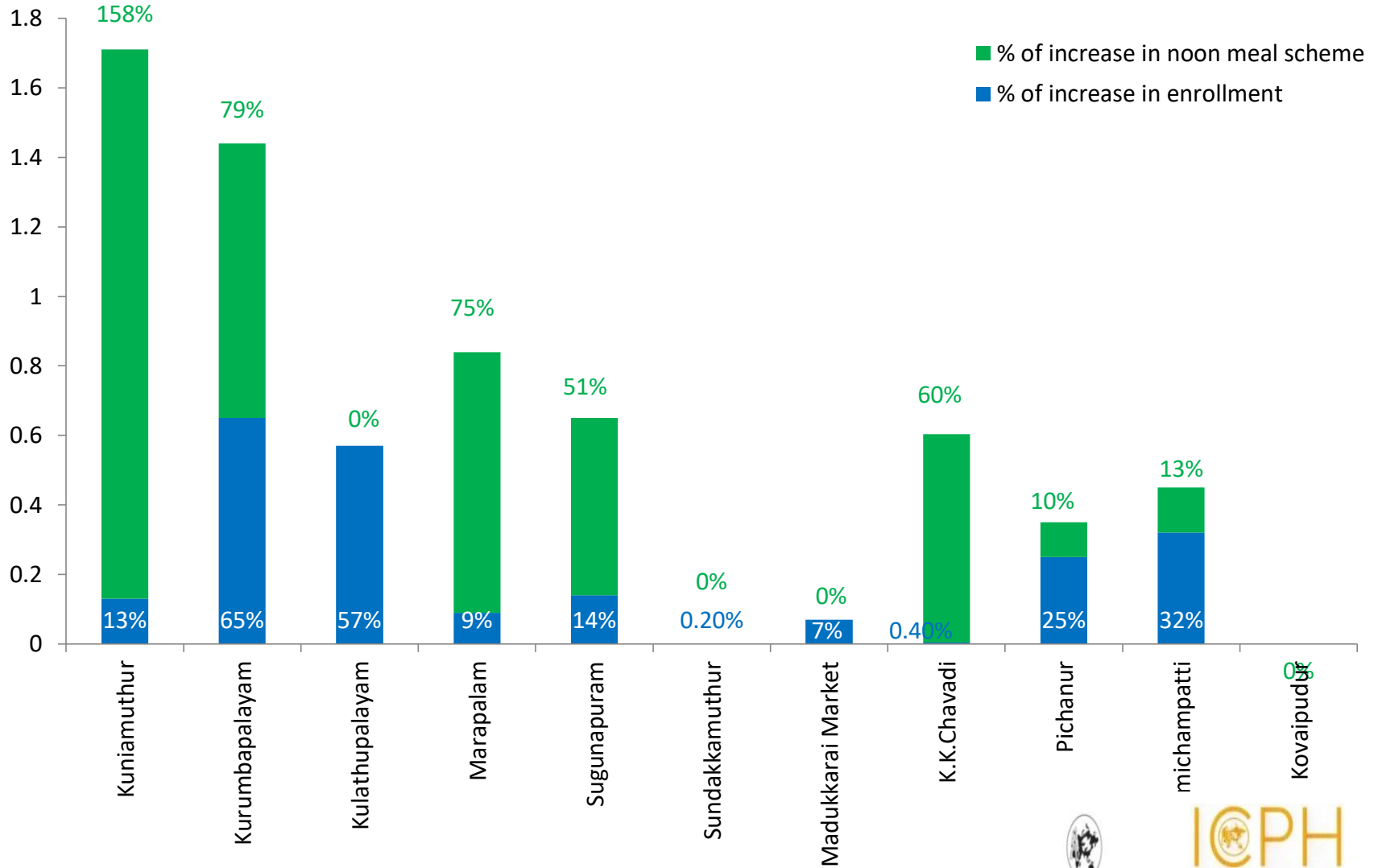
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Governance Impact on Nutritional Security of Rural Children

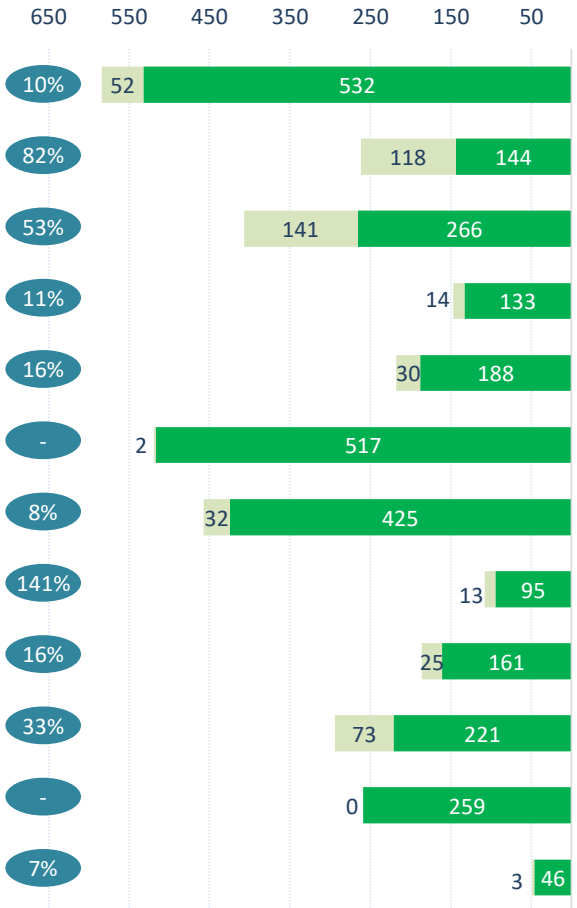


Governance Impact on Nutritional Security of Rural Children

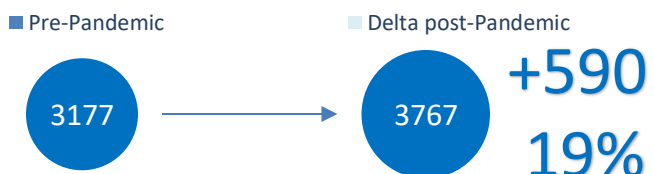
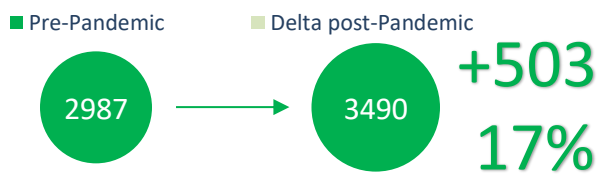
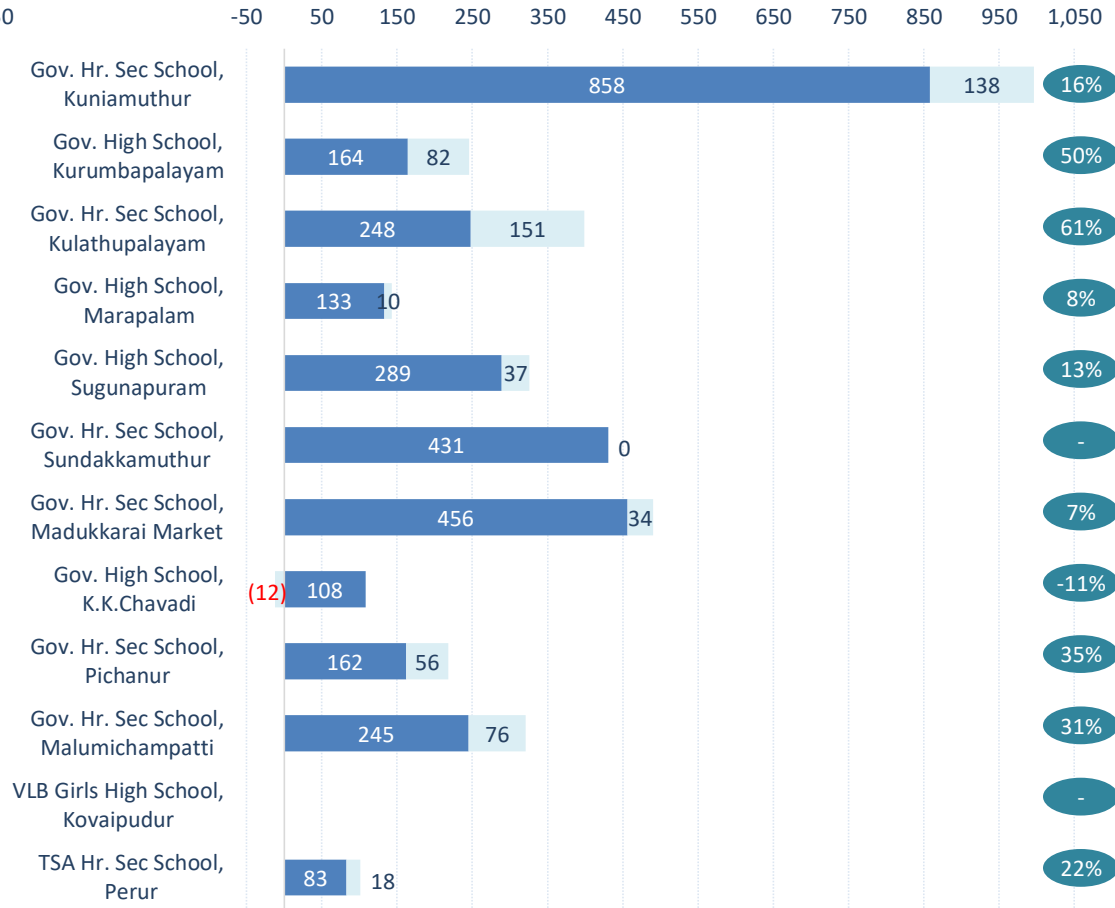
Enrolment has seen secular growth



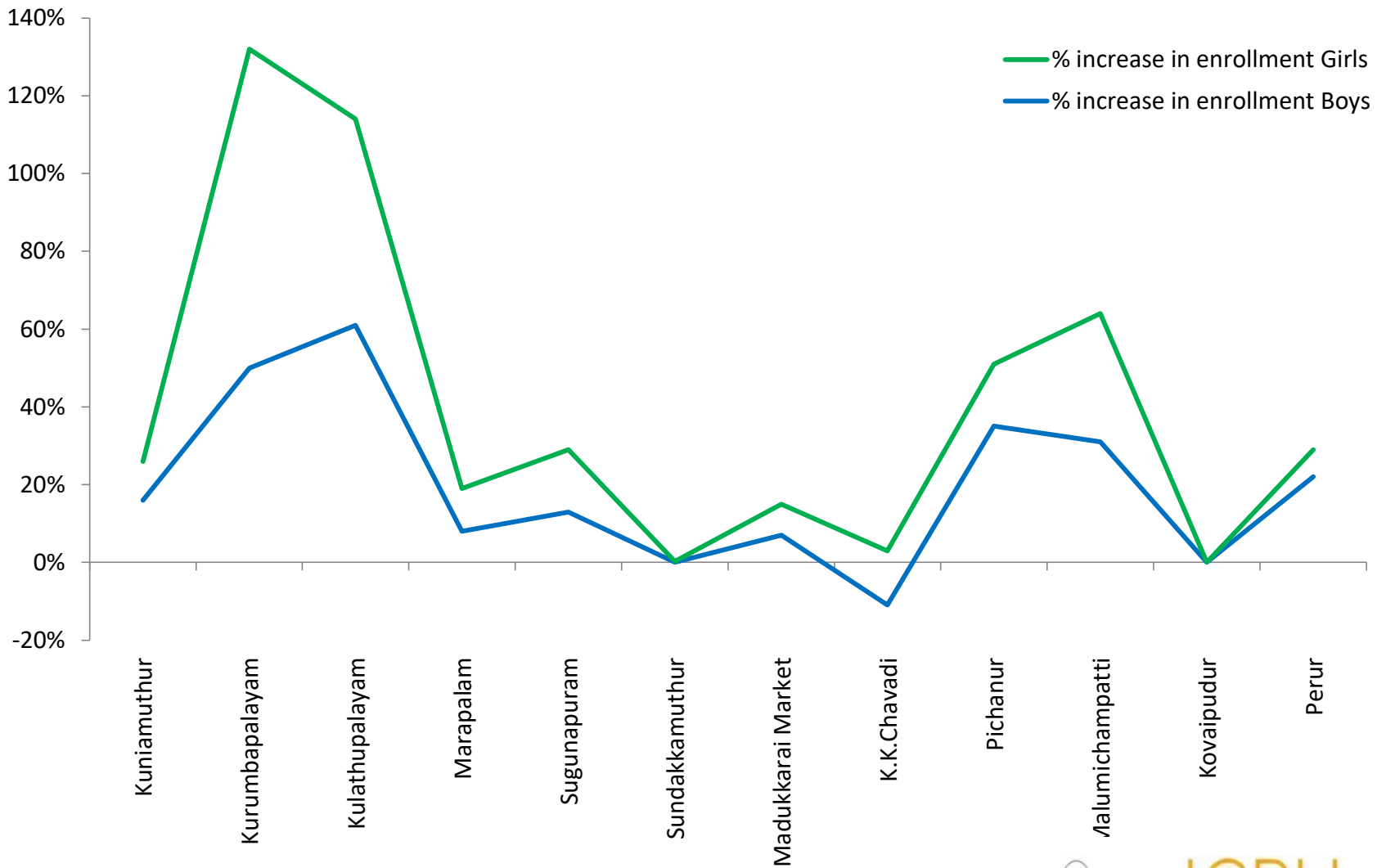
Girls Count



Boys Count



Children Enrollment in Schools



Noon meal enrollment at Government Schools

Significant (60%+) increase



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Recommendations

- **For Policy follow-up:**
 - A scaled up study to further substantiate the findings as this is the first micro-study in the state post school opening
 - Increase in Noon meal scheme allocation in general and evidenced by need
 - Policy supported budget allocation for next academic year for noon meal scheme
- **For Practice at the school level:**
- Increased allocation
 - Increased protein
 - (The provision of green gram and Bengal gram twice a month can be given daily
 - Provision of Pulse Sundal everyday in the afternoon
 - If possible Fruit may be added
 - A possible snack
- The monetary provision/ per day/ per child towards vegetables and groceries may be increased due to the increase in the prices of commodities
- Currently the noon meal scheme is upto the 10th standard since 1984. This may please be increased to the children of 11th and 12th also.



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