

## **-: Food Bank :- (Some freelance First version thoughts)**

Food is for Nutrition and Security. It has connotation of Energy and proteins and Micronutrients are much needed for Vitamins/Minerals.

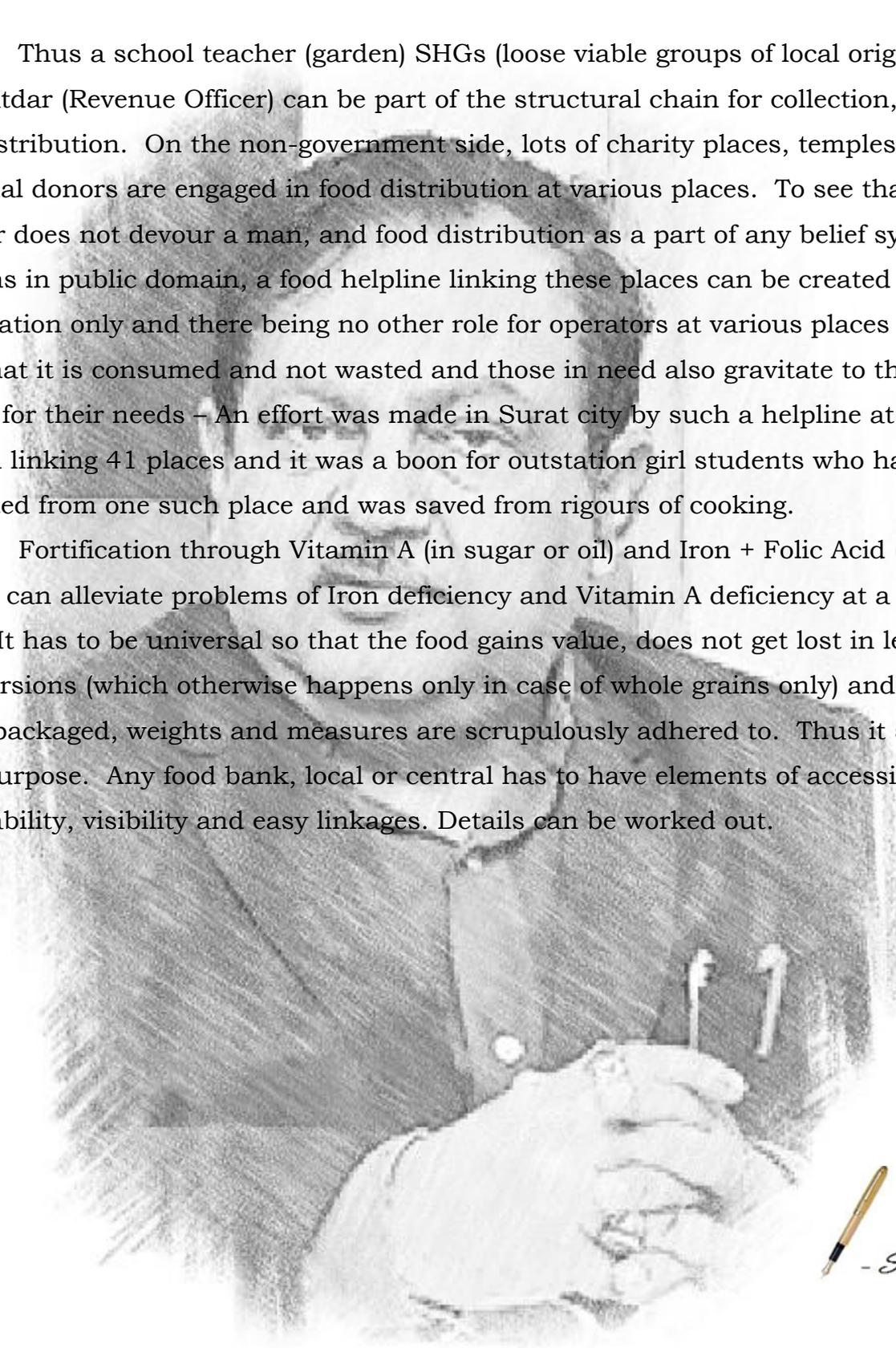
Major cereal crops fitting all areas for consumption is an absurdity and leading to leakages and wastages Rather minor millets production and improvement and collection through SHG's can be a panacea for people particularly vulnerable groups in areas of production. No faith in village level political system to manage this since they give priority to politics than Nutrition.

As regards Major cereal crops – More local procurement with more local godowns and more interactions through APMC's can work as a buffer stock in times of need. But transportation of cereals can be done to those states which are not surplus but deficient.

The procurement can not be a shoddy affair. The brand name or protein value of the cereal has to be governing principle to pay the producer better value – whether it is Basumati or Dawdi wheat or Bavla wheat, they are having elements of own identity like aroma, protein value, overseas demand – one can't therefore mix up peter with paul on same platter.

The school campuses can be the spring boards in some corner for growing Nutritional varieties of vegetable that can add succour to MDM food and give them adequate nutrition. This is the safest safety valve for children who don't have problems of hidden hunger, meaning vitamin deficient food.

The local administrators must have the inventory of 10% food needs of the villages as a reserve buffer with him for exchange and intervention models as and when required.



Thus a school teacher (garden) SHGs (loose viable groups of local origin) and Mamlatdar (Revenue Officer) can be part of the structural chain for collection, storage and distribution. On the non-government side, lots of charity places, temples, trusts, personal donors are engaged in food distribution at various places. To see that hunger does not devour a man, and food distribution as a part of any belief system remains in public domain, a food helpline linking these places can be created with information only and there being no other role for operators at various places to know only that it is consumed and not wasted and those in need also gravitate to these places for their needs – An effort was made in Surat city by such a helpline at Railway station linking 41 places and it was a boon for outstation girl students who had benefited from one such place and was saved from rigours of cooking.

Fortification through Vitamin A (in sugar or oil) and Iron + Folic Acid (in wheat) can alleviate problems of Iron deficiency and Vitamin A deficiency at a Central level. It has to be universal so that the food gains value, does not get lost in leakages or diversions (which otherwise happens only in case of whole grains only) and the food being packaged, weights and measures are scrupulously adhered to. Thus it serves a dual purpose. Any food bank, local or central has to have elements of accessibility, affordability, visibility and easy linkages. Details can be worked out.

 - SK Manda