

**ICMR**INDIAN COUNCIL OF
MEDICAL RESEARCH**NIN**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
NUTRITION**RESOLVE
TO SAVE LIVES****Global Health
Advocacy Incubator****unicef**
for every child

Nutrition Literacy and Improvement of Food Environments (NULIFE)

Let's Fix Our Food

4th E- Dialogue Series

Date: 25 Feb 2026

Time: 10:30 am-12:30 pm IST

From Knowledge to Action: Advancing Food Literacy, Media Awareness, and Healthy School Food Environments for Adolescents

Welcome Address
(10.30 to 10.35 am)**Dr. G. Bhanuprakash Reddy**
Scientist G & Head, Biochemistry Division
ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition**Opening Remarks**
(10.35 to 10.40 am)**Dr. SubbaRao M Gavaravarapu**

Scientist F & Head, NICHE Division, ICMR-NIN, India

Overview of LFOF-NULIFE
(10.40 to 10.45 am)**Ms. Preetu Mishra**
Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF, India**Speakers (10.45 to 11.30 am)****Scaling Up Healthier School Food Environments: Global Lessons from NEAT-S Toolkit Implementation**(15 mins)
(10.45-11.00 am)**Dr. Alison Feeley**

UNICEF, Centre of Excellence for Children and Climate Resilience, Bangkok

**Food, Media, and Truth: Building Literacy in the Age of Misinformation**(10 mins)
(11.00-11.10 am)**Reputed Science Journalist****INFOLIT: A Tool to Measure Nutrition and Food Literacy in Adolescents**(10 mins)
(11.10- 11.20 am)**Ms. Simran Yadav**

Indian Researcher

**The Role of Schools in the Development of Food Literacy in Adolescents: Qualitative evidence from Urban and Rural India**(10 mins)
(11.20- 11.30 am)**Dr. Neha Rathi**

Bagchi School of Public Health, Ahmedabad University, India

Panel Discussion (11.30 am - 12.15 pm)**School Food Environments and Food Literacy: Exploring Possibilities for Policy, Programmes, and Practice****Education Officer****Dr. Nayani Dharmakeerthi**
Health & Nutrition Officer
UNICEF, Sri Lanka**Dr. Tina Rawal**
Senior Research Scientist, PHFI**Ms. Archana Rangi**
Dean at COGNIBOT & SLATE Group of Schools**Ms. Anupriya Kumari**
Std. 9 Student**Q & A session (12.15 - 12.30 pm)****5 Key take away points****Dr. SubbaRao M Gavaravarapu**
ICMR - National Institute of Nutrition**Zoom Link****Youtube Link**

भारतीय जनस्वास्थ्य प्रतिष्ठान

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ICMR- National Institute of Nutrition

Let's Fix Our Food Nutrition Literacy and Improvement of Food Environments (NULIFE)

E- Dialogue No. 4

E- Dialogue Series



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From Knowledge to Action: Advancing Food Literacy, Media Awareness, and Healthy School Food Environments for Adolescents

TOPIC

BACKGROUND

In today's rapidly changing food landscape, where supermarket shelves and digital platforms are dominated by ultra-processed and packaged foods, the ability to make informed choices has become a critical life skill. While India's literacy rate has risen impressively over the past decades, the country now faces a new challenge: the gap between being literate and being food literate. The paradox is striking: individuals can read, write, and access more information than ever before, yet remain vulnerable to misleading health claims, persuasive marketing, and confusing food labels.

India's evolving food system, characterised by the rapid expansion of ultra-processed foods, aggressive marketing, and digital advertising, has created a complex environment for adolescents to navigate. Although many young people may be familiar with basic nutrition messages, they often lack food literacy. Food literacy is inherently skill-based. It enables adolescents to read and interpret food labels, critically evaluate health and nutrition claims, recognise marketing tactics, make informed choices in school canteens and surrounding food environments, and translate knowledge into daily practice. Without such skills, nutrition education remains abstract, limiting its impact on actual behaviour. At the same time, adolescents are heavily exposed to food advertising. In the absence of media literacy, young people remain especially susceptible to aspirational food messaging, misleading claims, and persuasive marketing that undermines healthy choices. Building food literacy must therefore be closely linked with strengthening adolescents' capacity to critically engage with media and marketing influences.

Schools, where adolescents spend nearly 6-8 hours each day, play a pivotal role in shaping food choices. Strengthening food literacy within schools offers a unique opportunity to integrate skill-based nutrition education with supportive food environments that enable and reinforce healthy choices. At a time when unhealthy diets are major drivers of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), advancing food literacy alongside healthier school food environments and media awareness is not merely an educational intervention, but a preventive public health strategy. For India, empowering adolescents with these practical and critical skills is a timely investment in future health capital, transforming knowledge into action and awareness into lifelong well-being.

ABOUT THE E-DIALOGUE

Reaffirming its commitment to adolescent health and well-being, and in the lead-up to the global observance of International School Meals Day, which highlights the importance of healthy school food environments, the ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), under the LFOF-NULIFE initiative, will host its 4th e-dialogue. By fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, the e-dialogue aims to identify actionable strategies that support healthier school food environments and empower adolescents not only to learn about healthy eating but also to practice, sustain, and advocate for more nutritious food choices in their daily lives.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Enhanced understanding of adolescent food literacy and skill-based nutrition education
- Awareness of media and marketing influences on adolescent food choices and approaches to strengthen media literacy
- Insights into the role of school food environments in shaping healthy dietary behaviours and opportunities for improvement.