

Nutrition program benefits over 36 mln students

More than 36 million students from 134,000 primary and junior high schools in impoverished rural regions have benefited from China's nutrition improvement program since its implementation in 2011, the Ministry of Education (MOE) said recently.

The program was initially launched by the MOE, the Ministry of Finance, and 13 other departments on a pilot basis in a bid to address malnutrition of rural students receiving compulsory education.

It has so far reached 1,590 counties in 29 provinces, according to the progress report released by the MOE. Thanks to five years of efforts, the students have been freed from hunger malnutrition.

The Chinese Center For Disease Control And Prevention, after tracking the students in piloted areas, found that children who benefited from the program are taller and heavier than the rural average.

Data shows that from 2012 to 2015, male students on average increased in height and weight by 1.2 cm and 0.7 kg respectively while female students increased by 1.4 cm and 0.8 kg.

In the given period, anaemia rates dropped to 7.8 percent from 17 percent. Better nutrition has also aided their efficiency and enthusiasm for their studies.

Since the plan was launched in 2011, nearly 160 billion yuan in subsidies were allocated to support the national plan, reward piloted areas, improve students' meals and subsidize impoverished children.