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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global Child Nutrition Forum  
Scaling Up Sustainability:  
Linking School Feeding with  
Agriculture Development to Maximize Food Security

May 3-7, 2011 | Nairobi, Kenya



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**ZAMBIA**



## **Executive Summary**

### **Scaling Up Sustainability: Linking School Feeding with Agriculture Development to Maximize Food Security**

May 3–7, 2011 Nairobi, Kenya

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## 2011 GLOBAL CHILD NUTRITION FORUM

### The Need for School Feeding

Over one billion people worldwide are undernourished according to the United Nations, outnumbering the combined populations of the United States, Canada and the European Union. Hunger and undernutrition obstruct a child's ability to learn and remain in school, and the consequences can have adverse effects on the economy. School feeding programs have emerged as a social safety net to combat these obstacles so that hunger can be mollified, school enrollment improved, and a community's local agricultural and economic systems improved.

As developing countries advance economically, there is an opportunity to transition their school feeding programs from foreign food aid and financial support to being funded and administered by their own governments. Part of this transition is to establish a link to local agricultural production, which may stimulate local economies and contribute to a country's overall economic growth while also improving the health and well-being of area school children.

### 2011 Global Child Nutrition Forum

The Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) helps developing and transitional countries create and implement sustainable school feeding programs so that school children have the opportunity to learn and achieve their full potential. Together, GCNF and the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) hosted the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Global Child Nutrition Forum in Nairobi, Kenya. This year's Forum, held May 3-7, 2011, convened school feeding experts and advocates from 22 countries. With the theme of *Scaling Up Sustainability: Linking School Feeding with Agriculture Development to Maximize Food Security*, the 2011 Forum aimed to encourage the exchange of knowledge, lessons learned and best practices to strengthen the coordination of school feeding, student health and local agriculture development.

The critical importance of achieving long-term food and nutrition security by linking school feeding to agriculture development was emphasized by Forum speakers from national governments, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and the research community. Keynote presentations and interactive breakout sessions were complemented by a daylong field trip to various schools in neighboring districts. In addition, attendees participated in a *Market Place* exhibition, which brought the school feeding supply chain to life by providing a visual representation of the processes food commodities go through, from the farm to the plate. Nearly 30 organizations participated in the *Market Place*, which demonstrated how participating Forum organizations fit into the home grown school feeding model.

At the heart of the Forum is a hands-on tutorial session that allows country delegates to create or improve plans specific to the conditions of their school feeding programs using GCNF's *School Feeding Toolkit: A Resource for Assessing Needs and Planning Sustainable School Feeding Programs*. This half-day workshop offers practical guidance in forming a sustainable school feeding program via the *Toolkit's* five steps: (1) Country Goals and Objectives, (2) Diagnostic Information, (3) Needs Assessment, (4) Country Plan, and (5) Country Plan Revision and Feedback.

The Forum concluded with the release of the *School Feeding Call to Action*, which was supported by the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Union and urged African nations to immediately focus on establishing and expanding home grown school feeding programs through legislation and national policies. To date, nearly 300 delegates from more than 85 countries have participated in the Forum and continue to be involved in the global information network.

The Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF), the international arm of the School Nutrition Association, and the Partnership for Child Development (PCD), based at the Imperial College London and supported in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, are pleased to present the 2011 Executive Summary.



## The 2011 Global Forum was made possible through GCNF's and PCD's partnering organizations:

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

American Peanut Council, Inc.

Government of Kenya

Land O'Lakes, Inc.

New Partnership for Africa's Development

School-Link Technologies

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United Nations World Food Programme

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U.S. Potato Board

Winston Industries

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# Welcome and Opening Remarks by the Government of Kenya

- Speakers: **Gene White**, Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)  
**Dr. Lesley Drake**, The Partnership for Child Development (PCD)  
**Professor George Godia**, Ministry of Education, Republic of Kenya  
**Hon. Dr. James Gesami**, Assistant Minister of Public Health and Sanitation, Republic of Kenya  
**Hon. Samuel Ofori Ampofo**, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Republic of Ghana  
**Hon. Professor Sam Onger**, Minister of Education, Republic of Kenya

## Overview

Well-designed school feeding programs increase access to education and improve children's health. As a result, they are widely recognized as significant contributors to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All.

During the Global Child Nutrition Forum, delegates were invited to explore ways that food security could be enhanced, by linking school feeding programs and the agriculture sector. Government officials from Kenya and Ghana set the stage, describing lessons learned from their home grown school feeding initiatives. Programs with robust management systems are most likely to deliver measurable benefits to children, families, and society at large.

## Context

The speakers welcomed the Forum delegates and discussed the Kenyan and Ghanaian school feeding programs.

## Key Points

### ■ The Global Child Nutrition Forum seeks to link agricultural development to school feeding.

The central theme of the 2011 Global Child Nutrition Forum was attaining long-term food and nutrition security by linking school feeding to agricultural development. The meeting goals included:

- Strengthening coordination of school feeding, school health, and small-holder agriculture development.
- Identifying barriers and remedial actions that may be taken to link small-holder agriculture development and school feeding.
- Facilitating knowledge exchange between stakeholders in national government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the research community.
- Assisting country leaders in developing plans to link school feeding to small-holder agricultural production in their countries.

To explore these issues in more depth, the Forum structured discussions around four central pillars:

1. Policy frameworks
2. Financing, institutional capacity, and coordination
3. Design
4. Implementation and community participation

These pillars reflect standards that were developed as part of the "Rethinking School Feeding" analysis undertaken by the World Bank, World Food Programme (WFP) and Partnership for Child Development (PCD).

### ■ Quality education and access to food go hand in hand.

The Kenyan government views education as a social equalizer. It recognizes, however, that quality education is impossible without quality food. In the past year, Kenya fed 538,000 children through home grown school feeding programs. Kenya's experiences illustrate the benefits and challenges associated with these programs.

#### — *Feeding programs are a way to attract poor children to school.*

In 2003, 5.7 million children participated in Kenya's free primary education system. That number has grown to 8.6 million due, in part, to school feeding programs. These initiatives attract poor and hard-to-reach children, especially girls, to schools.

#### — *School feeding programs provide a safety net to families.*

Large numbers of nomadic people live in North Kenya's arid and semi-arid regions. In these locations, low-cost mobile schools have been established with feeding programs. Children are also given food rations to take home. In this way, children provide families with access to food, resulting in a broader social safety net. WFP has been particularly active in this area.

#### — *Education and food can combat violence.* In recent armed conflicts, African children have been recruited as soldiers. School-based feeding programs are a way to bring children back to the classroom and keep them there.

*"Peace can only come about when the stomach is full. We must start there."*

— Hon. Professor Sam Onger, Minister of Education, Kenya

#### — *Transporting food is expensive.* Transporting food to food-deficient areas is costly. Work is needed to improve supply chain efficiency. Families must be empowered to grow food.

### ■ School feeding programs enhance children's health.

Childhood health is a significant concern in Kenya. A 2008-2009 demographic survey showed that many children are stunted and hungry. Poor children suffer from iodine, vitamin, and protein deficiencies.

Kenya's Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation believes that school feeding programs can play a major role in improving health for children. Combining school feeding programs with complementary programs such as fortification, supplements, and deworming has the potential to enhance child survival, growth, and development.

The key to successful and sustainable school feeding programs is cooperation between the education and health sectors.

Kenya's Ministries of Health, Agriculture, and Education recently signed an agreement that acknowledges the role of proper nutrition in children's growth and cognitive development.

*"Our interest in school feeding programs goes beyond the direct education benefits and looks at school feeding programs as part of a holistic school health initiative."*

— Hon. Dr. James Gesami, Assistant Minister of Public Health and Sanitation, Kenya

▪ **These programs can also improve health habits in the broader community.**

Schools are at the heart of many communities. As a result, they provide entry points to educate the broader community about good health practices.

When school feeding programs provide a variety of nutritious foods, they transform children's eating habits. These habits are then transferred to parents and other family members.

Direct community involvement in school feeding programs is also very important. When community members engage in food production, preparation, and serving, they become educated on good health and sanitation practices.

▪ **The Ghana School Feeding Program has demonstrated important lessons about management and accountability.**

In 2005, the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) was launched to enhance food security and reduce income variability for farmers. Each school day, 700,000 children in selected public primary schools are given one hot, nutritious meal prepared from locally grown foods. The objective is to spend 80% of the feeding costs in the local economy.

The first phase of the GSFP has been extended to December 2011 to conduct program evaluation and to design Phase Two of the program. Important lessons learned from Phase One include:

— *Robust management and accountability systems are essential.* The program's rapid growth was not accompanied by establishment of management and accountability systems. As a result, information sharing was inadequate between different levels of government. District and school decision makers were often unaware of program objectives and strategies. The program also did not adequately serve marginalized and deprived communities.

— *Linkages between school feeding and agriculture development can be maximized.* Baseline data from 69 districts shows that 66.9% of service providers procure food from local farmers. The concentration of schools in Ghana's two largest cities is one reason for this low percentage. The Minister of Local Government and Rural Development is encouraged, however, by government intervention which can maximize the use of local agricultural products in school feeding programs.

To address these challenges, a Social Accountability Project (SAP) was established in 2009. This project is funded by the Dutch Embassy, the Government of Ghana, SNV, and SIGN (Schoolfeeding Initiative Ghana Netherlands). The goal is to improve program transparency, efficiency, and reach. A management system will be used to disseminate program information including policies, objectives, targets, financial resources, and results.

In the GSFP's second phase, further attention will be given to local food procurement, targeting criteria, and improved agricultural production. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development will recommend a national policy to govern the program.

*"We have realized at great cost, the importance of efficient and effective management and administrative systems, particularly for monitoring and evaluation aspects."*

— Hon. Samuel Ofose Ampofo, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana



Global Child Nutrition Foundation

# The Multi-Sectoral Approach and the Transition to Sustainability: Strengthening Linkages Between Agriculture and School Feeding

- Speakers: **Professor George Godia (Chair)**, Ministry of Education, Republic of Kenya  
**Bibi Giyose**, NEPAD/CAADP  
**Dr. Namanga Ngongi**, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)  
**Professor Ruth Oniang'o**, African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Development  
**Professor Donald Bundy**, World Bank  
**Manuel Aranda Da Silva**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

## Overview

Each night, over 400 million children go to bed hungry. Steps must be taken to change this situation and transform children into productive adults. One confirmed approach that is used worldwide is school feeding programs. While these programs have clear health and education benefits, implementation challenges exist in lower-income countries.

To develop sustainable school feeding programs, robust local food production is required. Programs to improve agricultural productivity are essential. In addition, partnerships with governments and NGOs are proving to be important ways to address issues related to nutrition and hunger relief.

## Context

The panelists discussed the benefits of school feeding programs and the supporting role that agriculture must play.

## Key Points

- **Although all countries want school feeding programs, unique challenges face lower-income nations.**

The World Bank, the World Food Program (WFP) and the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) recently co-authored a report called "Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector". This research revealed that all countries, regardless of economic prosperity, want to provide school feeding programs. The most important reasons that nations pursue school feeding agendas are social welfare and improved education.

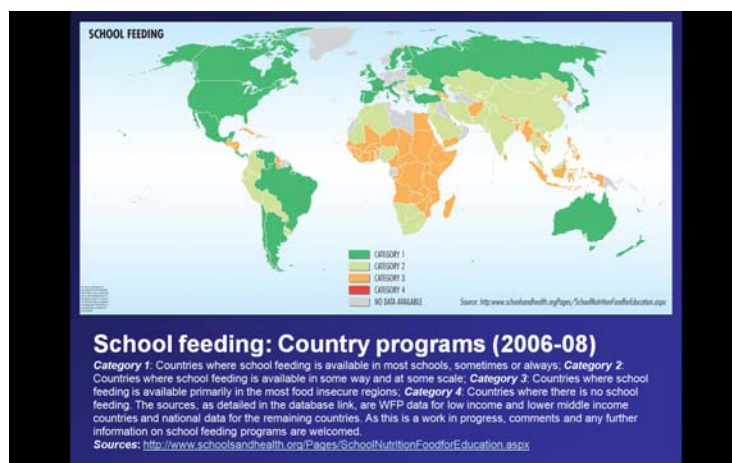
*"An important observation is that school feeding is not a minority activity; it is a universal activity."*

— Professor Donald Bundy, World Bank

Several challenges to school feeding programs exist in lower-income countries.

- *In areas of greatest need, program coverage is low or non-existent.* School feeding programs are lacking in countries with the highest levels of poverty and hunger. These nations are primarily in Africa.
- *School Feeding programs in low-income countries exhibit large variation in cost suggesting opportunities for cost containment.* As countries get richer school feeding costs become a smaller proportion of the investment in education.
- *Local food production is key to program sustainability.* More than 30 countries have developed sustainable school feeding

programs and transitioned off external support. Local food production was essential for this transition.



Source: Donald Bundy, World Bank – Rethinking School Feeding Presentation

- **Society must commit to providing nutritional food to children.**

School feeding programs may be the only meal that a child receives all day. As a result, good nutrition must form the core of these programs. Society at large must also take responsibility for the content of children's diets. This can only occur when diverse stakeholders collaborate. Key stakeholders include:

- *The agricultural community.* Africa's indigenous foods are healthy and nutritious. It is time to refocus on their benefits and encourage farmers to sell excess crops to schools. This is a win-win situation.
- *The government.* The government must understand what good nutrition is and serve as a facilitator.
- *The private sector.* Private sector organizations must act responsibly when marketing modern foods that have limited nutritional value.
- *Parents.* Both mothers and fathers must get involved and take responsibility for their children's diets.

- **School feeding programs have clear health and education benefits.**

Organizations like the WFP have supported and implemented school feeding programs for many years in Africa. Experience has shown involving the community in these programs leads to better health and learning outcomes.

- *Improving education.* The child is the center of the education system. If the child is hungry, malnourished or sick, he cannot learn. Education for All recently commissioned a study called



“Rethinking School Health” that examined the impact of health and hunger on education. The report concluded that when countries educate children, health and hunger must be given the same level of consideration as teacher quality and school facilities.

- *Reaching girls and addressing early pregnancy.* There is ample evidence that school feeding increases enrollment in school, particularly for girls. This is especially important in the teenage years where the pregnancy rate for girls who do not go to school is two to three times higher than for those in school. School feeding can help reverse trends of teenage pregnancies. In addition, school feeding programs prevent malnutrition for mothers and unborn children.

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*“School is the best way to address early pregnancy. The mothers are well protected and get better food.”*

— Manuel Aranda Da Silva, WFP

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#### ▪ **Partnerships are needed to improve the quality and the sustainability of school feeding in Africa.**

We know what makes school feeding programs more sustainable. First and foremost, these programs should be incorporated into national policies. In addition, program designers must have a vision for the financial sustainability of school feeding initiatives. Institutions are needed that can manage, integrate, and deliver school feeding programs. Complex issues arise, for example, when sourcing local food. Connecting with farmers is essential, but can be complicated.

Community involvement and partnerships are also important. Local organizations must work hand in hand with national and global organizations. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), for example, has formed several key partnerships:

- *Memorandum of Understanding with Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).* The goal of this MoU is to develop a five-year joint program that fully integrates nutrition security into the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP). Of particular interest are the policy and program issues surrounding child and maternal nutrition.
- *Memorandum of Understanding with Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).* This partnership is focused on increasing agricultural capacity and ending hunger.
- *Memorandum of Understanding with the UN World Food Programme (WFP).* The WFP has been one of NEPAD's committed partners, focusing on home grown school feeding programs.

#### ▪ **CAADP signatory nations have pledged to increase agricultural productivity.**

Africa is the only continent that has experienced declines in food security. Over 200 million Africans go hungry each year and

approximately 40% of children have stunted growth due to malnutrition. To combat these issues, the CAADP was created in 2003. This program, which is administered by NEPAD, is designed to improve and promote agriculture across Africa.

CAADP operates around four main pillars:

1. *Land and water management.* The goal of this pillar is to extend the area under sustainable land management and reliable water control systems.
2. *Market access.* This pillar's focus is increasing market access through improved rural infrastructure and other trade-related interventions.
3. *Food supply and hunger.* The goal of this pillar is to increase food supply and reduce hunger by raising agricultural productivity. An important program in this area is home grown school feeding systems, because children aged 6 to 12 are often overlooked by malnutrition programs.
4. *Agricultural research.* This pillar strives to improve agricultural research and systems through new technologies. Food fortification is an area of interest, since most African diets are not balanced.

As of April 2011, 25 countries had signed up to CAADP. They have committed to increase public investment in agriculture by a minimum of 10% of their national budgets and to raise agricultural productivity by at least 6%. Of the 25 signatories, 21 have reviewed their development plans to ensure food security.

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*“Africa is the only continent that has seen a decline in food productivity and security.”*

— Bibi Giyose, NEPAD/CAADP

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#### ▪ **AGRA is transforming Africa's agricultural systems.**

The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) was created in 2006 through a partnership between the Rockefeller Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. AGRA uses community-based systems to stimulate agricultural production. It gives farmers improved seeds, improves the soil, builds warehouses, and improves market systems for farmers to sell their products.

Like the other panel members, Dr. Namanga Ngongi emphasized the importance of partnerships. AGRA works with governments, farmers' groups, the private sector, the science community, and international organizations. With widespread childhood malnutrition in Africa, AGRA's greatest beneficiary is children who need food at school and at home.

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*“It is a green revolution that can stimulate food production and ensure food security for most African countries.”*

— Dr. Namanga Ngongi, AGRA

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# Kenya Experience in Linking School Feeding to Small-Holder Agriculture

- Speakers: **Bibi Giyose (Chair)**, NEPAD/CAADP  
**Wairimu Muita**, The Partnership for Child Development (PCD)  
**Dr. Moses Ikiara**, Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis  
**Professor George Godia**, Ministry of Education, Republic of Kenya  
**Dr. Wilson Songa**, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Kenya  
**Terry Wefwafwa**, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Republic of Kenya  
**Martin Kabaluapa**, Purchase for Progress, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

## Overview

Kenya has developed two different home grown school feeding models, namely Njaa Marufuku Kenya – NMK (“Eradicate Hunger in Kenya”), and Home Grown School Meals – HGSM. Both programs showcase the benefits of a multi-sectoral collaborative approach to school feeding that links agricultural development to health and educational goals. A partnership of three Kenyan ministries (Agriculture, Education, and Public Health and Sanitation), these programs advance the intertwined objectives of each. They also promote the dual national objectives of increasing food production and ensuring that children stay in school, both of which are critical for Kenya’s economic progress.

A study conducted by PCD highlights the effectiveness of the school feeding programs in bringing health, educational, and economic benefits to impoverished Kenyan communities. An important partner is the World Food Programme’s P4P project. It works to improve the productive capacity of smallholder farmers in regions that experience extreme food shortages, boosting local food supplies for schools to tap.

## Context

Panelists discussed how Kenya’s home grown school feeding program advances multiple government policy objectives, and they identified program benefits and challenges.

## Key Points

### ■ Kenya has two home grown school feeding programs.

The Government of Kenya has developed two different HGSM models, namely Njaa Marufuku Kenya – NMK (“Eradicate Hunger in Kenya”), and Home Grown School Meals – HGSM, aimed at supporting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Kenya.

The Ministry of Agriculture-led Eradicate Hunger in Kenya, started in 2005, targets high-poverty areas of Kenya that have the potential to grow food. These are communities where children know long-term hunger, which affects their ability to learn and their school attendance.

The Eradicate Hunger in Kenya program has benefitted more than 37,000 children in 56 schools since its inception in 2006. The government took full control of the program from the WFP in 2009.

In the same year the Ministry of Education launched the Home Grown School Meal program. The HGSM targets primary schools situated in semi-arid lands that experience low enrollment, high

drop-out and low completion rates, where pupils experience short-term hunger and subsequent difficulty concentrating on what is taught.

The HGSM currently reaches around 538,000 children in 1,700 schools in 66 semi-arid districts.

By providing children with meals at school, both of these programs have reduced dropout rates, improved school performance, and alleviated malnutrition in entire communities as children often bring food home to share with family members.

### ■ Kenya’s home grown school feeding programs are designed for self-sustainability.

The Eradicate Hunger in Kenya program works by sending cash grants directly to schools to procure food. Schools typically buy their food locally if possible. Local farmers are supported with training in agricultural technologies to increase their productive capacity. Technologies most suited for the area are demonstrated in school gardens managed by young farmers groups called 4K clubs. School committees are sensitized to the importance of participating in the home grown school feeding program and encouraged to take ownership of its activities.

These educational efforts are important to ensuring the sustainability of the home grown school feeding program after it is handed over to the community. The government fully funds the program in its first year. Thereafter, a community’s contribution rises each year: from 25% in the second year to 50% in the third and 100% in the fourth.

Targeted communities also benefit from health and nutrition interventions. Nutritional supplements are provided to pregnant and nursing mothers. Children’s growth is monitored from birth, with special focus on the critical first two years of life. These policies are effective at reducing stunting, a national challenge of huge proportions that afflicted 35% of Kenya’s children in 2009.

### ■ Kenya’s school feeding program exemplifies how multi-sectoral collaboration can achieve intertwined goals.

Kenya’s government views home grown school feeding as a means to achieving the dual national objectives of increasing food production and ensuring that children go to school. Both are critical goals for the nation’s economic development.

Eradicate Hunger in Kenya advances the intertwined objectives of three government ministries: Education, Agriculture, and Public Health and Sanitation. Each supports the program with different initiatives and program activities to advance the policy goals of each ministry. For instance:



- *The Ministry of Agriculture has programs to improve farmers' capacity so that schools have less difficulty accessing rations. Schools represent additional markets for farmers, which helps develop Kenya's agricultural sector.*
- *The Ministry of Public Health's interventions improve the health of children before they enter the school system, so they arrive ready to learn. The school feeding program helps raise the profile of nutrition as a cornerstone of health and development—a critical Ministry policy objective.*
- *The Ministry of Education's policy goals are to improve education access, equity, and quality. The school feeding program keeps children in school, improving access; better nourishment allows for better concentration and learning retention, improving quality.*

■ **Kenya's home grown school feeding programs are improving health, educational, and economic conditions in the impoverished communities served.**

The Partnership for Child Development (PCD) conducted a case study and comparative analysis of Eradicating Hunger in Kenya using robust analytical methodology. Primary data was collected from surveys of community members, school officials, 4K club members, farmers, and others affected by the program; secondary data sources were used as well.

Documented benefits of the program include:

- Increased school enrollment.
- Better nourished children.
- Parents who are more knowledgeable and educated about nutrition.
- Community empowerment, improved nutrition, higher household incomes.
- Community learning about food production and supply chain processes, including agricultural technology, food storage, and food distribution.
- Program sustainability. Schools and farmers are able to raise funds to continue the program when outside funding tapers off.
- Increased community awareness of nutritional indigenous foods that had been abandoned.

The program faces challenges, however. Notably, Kenya experiences severe food supply shortages in regions with frequent droughts.

The study also noted the need for improved coordination of procurement and distribution processes and that this problem requires more government support. Another challenge noted was the lack of funding for scaling up the beneficial program.

Among the best practices observed: Some farmers are joining together to sell their produce through one distributor. This allows schools to procure a variety of foods at less effort and expense.

■ **P4P is advancing the school feeding program's success by helping to overcome food supply challenges.**

Purchase for Progress (P4P) is a five-year pilot project of the World Food Programme (WFP) that works to raise the proportion of food that WFP buys from smallholder farmers.

By creating additional markets for smallholder farmers and by enabling them to get the training they need to solve business problems, P4P helps alleviate the food shortages that pose problems for Kenyan schools trying to procure local food. P4P was called "a strong partner of the government" in the Eradicate Hunger in Kenya effort. P4P has been operating in Kenya since 2009.

P4P's model has three components:

- 1) Using WFP's purchasing power to promote economic development by helping farmers;
- 2) Forming supply-side partnerships to ensure sufficient food supplies for WFP programs; and
- 3) Sharing knowledge and training farmers in the agricultural and business skills they need to meet their challenges.

Like PCD, P4P has identified challenges in the Kenya school feeding program, including:

- Lack of adequate food storage facilities.
- Climatic conditions that impede farmers' ability to supply all of the food that WFP desires to buy.
- WFP's procurement processes, which deter the participation of farmers who need immediate cash payment.
- Farmers who tend not to respect contracts for future delivery during times of rapidly rising food prices.
- Illiteracy, which prevents some farmers from reaping the P4P-enabled opportunities.

# New Perspectives on Financing for School Feeding

- Speakers: **Amicoleh Mbaye (Chair)**, Ministry of Education, Gambia  
**Professor Donald Bundy**, World Bank  
**Manuel Aranda Da Silva**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)  
**Arlene Mitchell**, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

## Overview

How to ensure the financial sustainability of school feeding programs is a challenge for many African nations. Sustainable programs are often dependant on government support. This support requires that the government recognize the value of prioritizing and funding school feeding. In the absence of adequate government support, school feeding programs require donor support, which can be uncertain. Challenges related to the high cost of food and transportation exacerbate the funding insecurities.

There are, however, best practices to help ensure consistent funding streams. The most successful programs are integrated with national objectives and funded jointly by multiple government departments. How nations around the world manage school feeding funding is instructive. So is a new model used by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, “structured demand,” with the potential to drive economic transformation.

## Context

Participants discussed the most effective ways to fund and manage school food programs.

## Key Points

- **School feeding programs are ideally funded at the national level by multiple government ministries.**

Of all the funding that goes to school feeding programs across the world, 97%-98% comes from governments. For rich and middle-income nations, government funding of school feeding programs represents a small percentage of their GDP; for example, school feeding in Brazil, with one of the leading programs in the world, is just 0.4% of GDP. However, African nations have much more difficulty and must rely to varying extents on external donor support to fund school feeding programs.

The sustainability of school feeding programs is most secure when programs are funded from national budgets and are not subject to uncertain and varying support from charitable organizations. Transitioning from donor support to gradually rising proportions of government support should be a goal that nations work toward to ensure their school feeding programs' long-term sustainability.

Moreover, transition plans encourage donors to remain involved while needed. Ms. Mitchell observed that donors are more willing to provide temporary support for school feeding programs when they see that governments have plans to gradually assume full financial responsibility for programs. Conversely, a government that is oil-rich yet relies on donor support for school feeding programs is less likely to obtain this support.

In many African nations, government leadership changes hands every four or five years, and national priorities shift due to these changes. This presents a risk to school feeding program sustainability. In India, public demand for school feeding programs resulted in the Supreme Court directing state governments to introduce school feeding in all government primary schools. This is the best way to ensure that school feeding programs outlast the current political leaders.

Advocacy is key to generating the strong public support for school feeding that is needed to influence lawmakers. Advocacy efforts should be more than propaganda, however. There is plenty of evidence to build a case that home grown school feeding programs support national economic development and other priorities. Evidence-based arguments are the best ways to engage the supply chain and other stakeholders and turn them into advocates.

Evidence-based arguments can change the thinking of governments that believe that it is parents', not the government's, responsibility to feed children. Thinking needs to shift to the conviction that when parents are unable to meet this responsibility, it is the role of government to help. Moreover, governments should be made aware of how school feeding programs can help them meet the UN's Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

School feeding programs benefit most when funding comes from multiple government department budgets. That is fitting, since school feeding programs—particularly home grown programs that are linked to agriculture—serve multiple objectives besides education. These include health and nutrition, the protection of children, promoting agriculture, and economic development. Recognition of school feeding programs' full value usually results in the sharing of financial support among Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Health, and Nutrition. When school feeding programs' objectives are limited to education, however, funding comes just from a single source: the education budget. There is less money and increased vulnerability to budget cuts.

But Ms. Mitchell pointed out that once a school feeding program is started in a country, it is extremely rare for it to be discontinued. Despite financial hardships, countries invariably find a way to sustain these valuable programs.

- **The most successful school feeding programs reflect national priorities.**

Mr. Da Silva cited the following as important elements for school meal program funding:

- *Clear, multi-sectoral objectives* for the school feeding program that are linked to national objectives.
- *National policy priorities of strengthening education, nutrition, and social protections.* School feeding programs are least vulnerable when linked to national priorities.

- *Affordable program scope.* Targeting is always a politically sensitive issue. However, in contexts of scarce resources, countries need to make sure that the program goes to the most vulnerable in the country.
- *Pilot programs funded by government.* Piloting is a good way for governments to learn and adjust programs. This way, only the right models can be expanded.

▪ **How various countries most effectively manage school feeding is instructive.**

Other best practices for school feeding programs emerged from examples of how various countries manage their programs. Among these:

- *School feeding programs can provide farmers with predictable income and access to new markets.* In rural Chile, farmers' output is coordinated with schools' food requirements. Farmers know what to produce and how much they will be paid in advance. In rural Malawi, the school feeding program is financed from the government's social protection budget. Schools have become new markets for local smallholder farmers.
- *Privatization and taxes can provide government funds.* El Salvador set up a transition fund to help wean its school feeding program from external WFP administration and financial support. The country's government found funds to support the program by privatizing its telecommunications operations and taxing mobile communications.
- *Voucher programs can promote entrepreneurship.* One of the cheapest ways to start a school feeding program, said Professor Bundy, is via a voucher scheme. Children get vouchers paid for by the state or a charitable organization that are used to buy meals from local women, who prepare them per government standards.
- *Centralization can drive down costs.* In urban India, large centralized kitchens distribute meals to many schools. Economies of scale significantly drive down costs. This model could be an option for areas with high population densities.

▪ **Funders' new models leverage the predictable demand of programs like school feeding to transform local economies.**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is investing in models that connect predictable sources of demand to supply from small-holder farmers, with the dual purpose of increasing farmers' income and reducing poverty. The Gates Foundation calls this "structured demand". The model involves multiple interventions that promote farmers' success by expanding their access to inputs, training, and financing. As farmers' productivity rises, the beneficial effects are felt along the value chain as banks and markets respond.

The effects can be economically and socially transformative. They include private-sector strengthening, job and profit creation, policy shifts, and long-term infrastructure improvements. But two elements are essential for success: predictability and scale.

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*"An effective, structured demand program must operate at scale and be predictable to generate job creation and private-sector growth."*

— Arlene Mitchell, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

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The structured demand model is being used to support home grown school feeding programs in Africa. It also supports other food-related programs such as work-for-food and emergency feeding programs.

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## Other Important Points

- **Need for school feeding in high-income countries.** The United States has a government-funded school feeding program in which only those children who cannot afford the meals receive them for free. The meals are identical; children do not know who pays and who doesn't. In the capital of the United States, Washington, D.C., 58% of school children receive free meals.

# Financing, Institutional Capacity, and Coordination

■ Speaker: **Carmen Burbano de Lara**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

## Overview

As countries gain experience of school feeding, they often want to transition to nationally funded and implemented programs. Governments that have succeeded with this transition create a policy framework and then consider the financial and management implications. Effective national programs dedicate resources to all aspects of school feeding, from policy and planning to implementation and evaluation.

## Context

Carmen Burbano de Lara discussed best practices for developing a nationally owned school feeding program.

## Key Points

### ■ Issues related to the management of school feeding to keep in mind when implementing a nationally owned program.

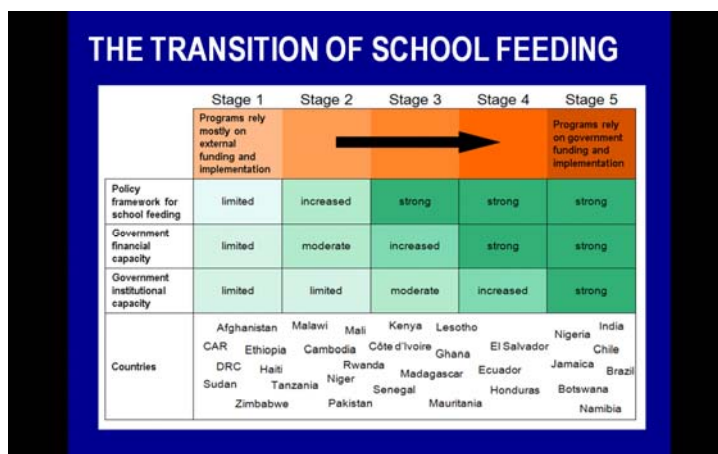
Transitioning from externally supported school feeding to a nationally owned program is a multi-stage process that can take 15 to 20 years. We know that three issues are particularly important, which have been touched upon in other sessions: the policy framework, financial capacity and management capacity.

Too often management capacity is overlooked and governments go straight from policy development to program implementation. This has occurred in African countries that are experiencing decentralization. Now these nations are revisiting management structures because they lacked the national capacity needed to implement programs. From recent studies in countries we have found there are three critical issues:

1. **Identifying an institutional home for school feeding:** Having an institution responsible for the management of school feeding is critical. In some countries it's the Ministry of Education, others place it within the Ministries of Local Government and in the most consolidated programs, independent institutions are created to manage the programs. Regardless of where the program is situated, clear roles and responsibilities need to be defined.
2. **Ensuring harmonization and standards:** In countries going through the transition, multiple programs are common. These may be run by the government, NGOs, or the WFP/World Bank. The government needs to start consolidating these programs through nationwide nutritional and quality standards.
3. **Strengthening accountability mechanisms and monitoring:** Especially for decentralized programs, having robust control and accountability mechanisms is key to secure donor and partner support and to maintain the political support of the program.

*"The importance of a policy framework can't be overstated when we think about transitioning to a nationally owned program."*

— Carmen Burbano de Lara, WFP



Source: *Management and Service Delivery of School Feeding*, Carmen Burbano de Lara, WFP

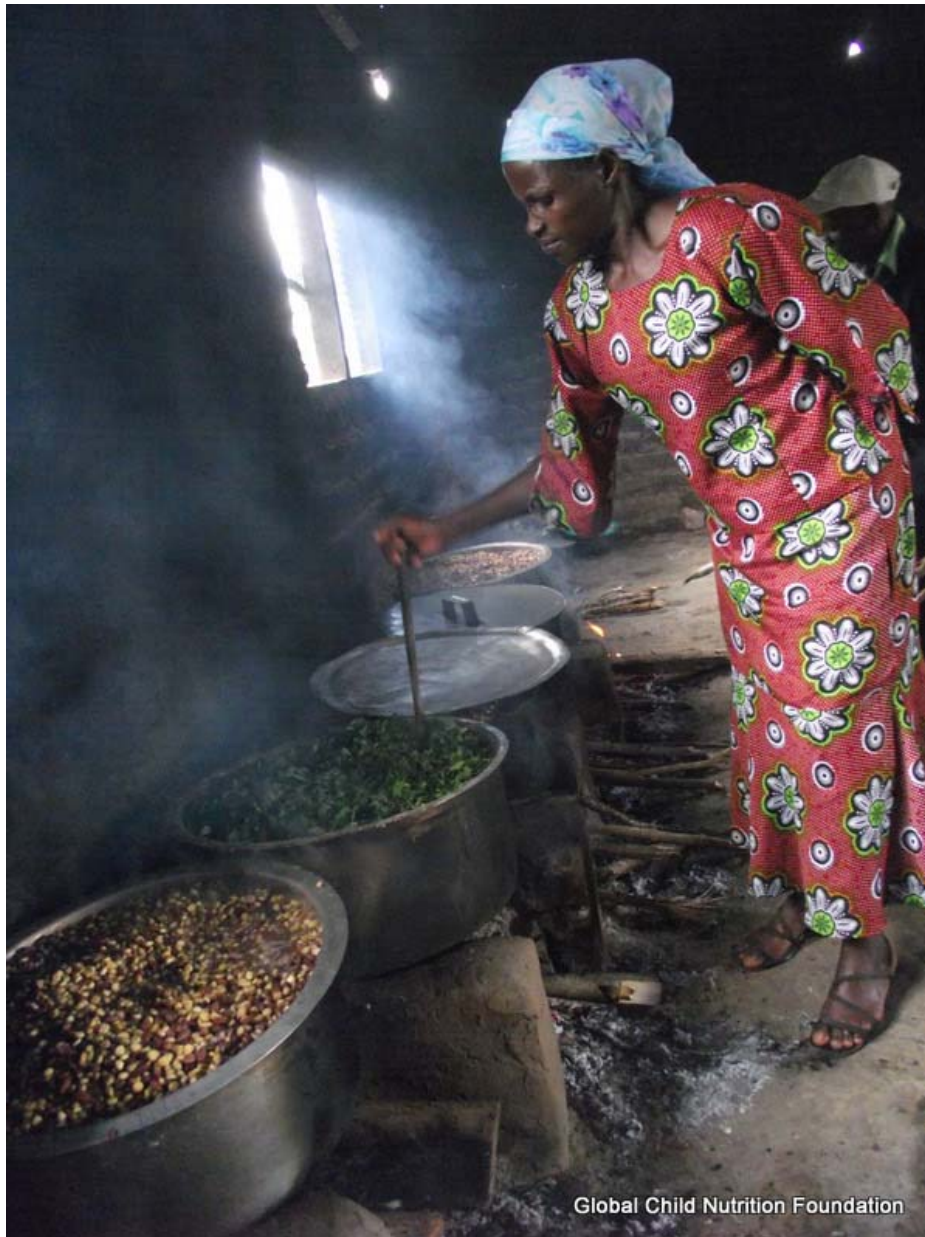
### ■ Successful national school feeding initiatives address every aspect of the program lifecycle.

The school feeding program lifecycle can be divided into seven functions. The most effective national programs address each function:

1. **Policy and standard setting.** National policy, objectives, and nutritional standards should be defined before a program is implemented. This is especially important when many players are involved in implementation.
2. **Planning.** Targets must be set, such as the geographies and numbers of children that will be served, the food basket composition, and school selection criteria.
3. **Financial management.** The financial management function determines who disburses program funds. This may be the Ministry of Finance or a line ministry. Accountability mechanisms and resource tracking are extremely important, especially if programs are decentralized. As countries transition to a national program, accountability mechanisms are a precondition for donor support.
4. **Procurement.** This function relates to purchasing food, coordinating with local farmers, and performing quality control. Procurement may be done at the school level, the district level, or a combination of the two.
5. **Logistics.** Once purchased, food must be transported to distribution points or schools.
6. **On-site preparation and feeding.** At the schools, inventories are managed, food is cooked, and meals are distributed to children.



7. *Monitoring and evaluation.* This function relates to program outcome, output, and process monitoring. Key metrics may include the number of students served, food basket composition, frequency of meals, and results. Since monitoring allows for broader coordination, national oversight offices must strengthen program monitoring and evaluation systems.





# Nutrition: Pillar for School Feeding Design

■ Speaker: **Ronald Kleinman, M.D.**, Massachusetts General Hospital for Children, Harvard Medical School

## Overview

Food insecurity and hunger are more common in developing countries, yet even people in resource-rich countries suffer. The impact on children is particularly acute. Children who frequently experience food insecurity are more likely to experience hunger, malnutrition, wasting, and stunting. They have a greater risk of reduced academic achievement and increased behavioral problems. School feeding programs are part of the solution as they have a measurable impact on children's health and well-being. Increased global advocacy is needed to promote school feeding.

— *After*: More than two thirds of the children increased breakfast consumption—either at home or at school. Those who did, improved their nutrient intake, earned better math scores, had fewer school absences and tardiness, and reported decreased emotional and behavioral problems.

*"[Positive findings from this school feeding study] were in a resource-rich country. Results are likely to be even more remarkable in a resource-constrained country."*

— Ronald Kleinman, M.D.

## Context

Dr. Kleinman explained the impact of food insecurity on children and cited studies proving the efficacy of school feeding programs.

## Key Points

### ■ **Worldwide, many children live in food-insecure houses.**

Even in fully developed countries, food insecurity is a serious problem. For example, in the United States, 25% of families live with food insecurity and among households with incomes below the poverty line, this percentage rises to 40%. Of course, the situation is much worse in many developing countries. In fact, 65% of the world's hungry live in only seven countries: India, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia.

### ■ **Hunger can be invisible, but with severe consequences.**

Unlike a malnourished child, a hungry child can appear perfectly healthy. Recognizing this reality, agencies have participated in defining the problem as follows: Food security is the ability to obtain safe, nutritious food in socially acceptable and sustainable ways.

Food insecurity leads to hunger, which leads to malnutrition, wasting, and stunting. Globally, almost 10 million children under the age of five die each year in resource-constrained countries, malnutrition contributes to half of these deaths.

*"Half of children suffering from vitamin and mineral deficiencies are suffering from multiple deficiencies. There is no one single vitamin or mineral that we can supply; the answer to the problem is food."*

— Ronald Kleinman, M.D.

### ■ **School feeding programs are a highly effective solution.**

One U.S. study established nutritional, academic, and behavioral baselines for children—the majority from low-income families—at the beginning of the school year. After offering access to a school breakfast daily for six months, the study found that:

— *Before*: More than one third of students were hungry or at risk for hunger. The hungry students had lower grades and more behavioral and emotional problems. They were also more likely to have low intake of two or more critical nutrients.

A review of 18 randomized studies confirmed those findings: School feeding programs significantly reduce the risk of food insecurity. According to this review, children fed at school:

- Gained more weight, moving from low to normal weight in 11 to 19 months
- Grew in height
- Attended school 4 to 6 days more per year
- Had improved math scores
- Improved at performing short-term cognitive tasks

### ■ **Global advocacy will help overcome barriers to ending hunger.**

Barriers to ending hunger exist on a global, national, and local level. Global increases in food prices and conflicting government and health priorities among those who provide financial support for school feeding are some of those challenges.

Rising food prices are a particular problem. A recent report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations shows that in almost all areas food prices have risen significantly in 2011—back to the peak prices experienced in 2008.

Fortunately, we have global advocacy to help eliminate those barriers. Going forward, advocates must focus on:

- Improving the nutritional content of food donations
- Engaging local, small-scale farmers in hunger relief efforts
- Putting more income in the hands of women
- Creating community gardens, particularly those that support farm-to-school efforts
- Promoting school feeding programs

## Other Important Points

- **World Food Programme.** The WFP provides nutritious, daily school meals to 17 million vulnerable children each year. It also provides take-home rations for girls to encourage families to send their daughters to school.
- **Window of intervention.** The idea that it is futile to intervene after age two—because efforts to prevent stunting are most effective between zero and two—is wrong. Much evidence suggests that height can be positively affected until children reach puberty, and brain development occurs until age 22.
- **Optimum calories.** The Institute of Medicine in the U.S. recently issued a new set of recommendations for minimum and maximum caloric input. Those standards depend on a child's age.

# Agriculture and Nutrition Linkages

- Speakers: **Arvind Kumar (Chair)**, Government of India  
**Valeria Menza**, Food and Agriculture Organization of The United Nations (FAO)  
**Martin Kabaluapa**, Purchase for Progress, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

## Overview

Two UN organizations are tackling the issue of school feeding and nutrition from different perspectives. The FAO is developing curricular programs that encourage the use of school gardens as learning laboratories, not production facilities. P4P is helping confederations of smallholder farmers to streamline and stabilize the procurement of school meals.

## Context

Ms. Menza discussed what the FAO has learned about the appropriate role for school gardens, and Mr. Kabaluapa described a large African pilot program to optimize school food procurement from smallholder farmers.

## Key Points

### ■ Schools are a key for nutrition assistance and education.

A school meal program can be about much more than simply providing nutritious food for children, as critical as that is. It is also potentially a way to:

- *Instill lifelong habits.* At a young age, children can be introduced to specific personal hygiene, food safety, and nutritional diversity practices.
- *Impart knowledge and skills.* Particularly in “garden-based learning,” students have the opportunity to acquire and practice small-scale agriculture competencies.
- *Reach the community at large.* Children are the most direct route to educating families and the wider community about food safety, nutrition, and security issues. Homework assignments can be used to engage parents in food issues.
- *Impact future economic and nutritional health.* If students are better nourished, they learn better in the classroom, improve their attendance and retention, obtain better jobs that pay more, and improve their lifelong diets.
- *Connect with other programs.* School feeding programs can link with ongoing programs such as growth monitoring to provide a fuller picture of local community health.

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*“Good program design ensures the long-term objective that school feeding programs improve both child and family nutrition and food security.”*

— Valeria Menza, FAO

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The FAO, founded 65 years ago and best known for its agriculture programs, is focusing on raising the nutrition levels of the entire population. The organization has active partnerships with the WFP, the FRESH Initiative, WHO Global Strategy, Nutrition-Friendly Schools, and UNESCO. The FAO has also produced curriculum-planning, teacher-training, and child-oriented guides to school gardens.

Under development now, a new FAO Brazil program called “Connecting Family Agriculture to School Feeding and Food Assistance” will operate in five African nations.

### ■ School gardens are for teaching and learning, not feeding.

Some earlier school gardens encountered abuse, in that the gardens were put into production mode, not only to supply school meals, but to sell the excess. Children were at times forced into long hours of planting, cultivating, and harvesting, which is a clear violation of child-labor laws.

Today the FAO's view is that school gardens should not be expected to produce all or most of the school's food or improve the institution's nutritional level. Instead, these gardens should be considered practical laboratories and teaching tools where students learn about nutrition and gain basic skills.

Thought of this way, “garden-based learning” is one component in a comprehensive approach that includes school feeding and nutritional education. The school garden may supply snacks or parts of meals, but cannot be the primary source of food.

### ■ Providing schools with food requires an approach that engages cooperatives of smallholder farmers.

No matter how local they are, small-scale farms are often not equipped to provide food directly to schools. They lack transportation, infrastructure, storage facilities, and market-price discovery. However, groups of farmers—cooperatives, confederations, and other networks—can aggregate their harvests, deal with traders and exchanges, and in doing so engage the broader food market.

Recognizing this, the WFP has launched a Purchase for Progress (P4P) pilot program to determine which procurement approach best supports farmers, and how to balance risks and costs in optimizing and transforming local procurement practices. The WFP has identified 960 organizations representing 860,000 farmers and is working with 210 groups. The WFP supplies infrastructure, quality-control assistance, financial credit, research, advocacy, and training in management and best-practice farming techniques.

To date, P4P has helped source school meals in 21 countries, where 60% of the food sourced is procured locally. Among the pilot's challenges are inconsistent supply and quality, variable contract performance, and unrealistic expectations about market prices. In weaker farm organizations, middlemen can skim off most of the benefits, leaving farmers unhappy.

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*“By 2013, P4P should have comprehensive lessons to recommend about procurement.”*

— Martin Kabaluapa, P4P

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Launched in 2009, the pilot is active throughout sub-Saharan Africa and will conclude in 2013.

## Presenting HGSF Experience in India

- Speakers: **Professor Donald Bundy (Chair)**, World Bank  
**Arvind Kumar**, Government of India  
**Dr. R Rukmani**, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation  
**CP Das**, Akshaya Patra Foundation

### Overview

The Indian government has taken aggressive steps to raise its schoolchildren's nutritional status, and thereby their educational attainment and employment potential. The National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, adopted as policy in 1995, funds the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, which makes hot, fresh, and scientifically nutritious meals available to more than 110 million schoolchildren across the subcontinent. In partnership with the government and private companies, the Akshaya Patra Foundation develops new ways to cook and deliver millions of meals a day.

### Context

India's projected population of 1.5 billion people in 2020 will match 1910's global population. With that in mind, these speakers presented details and statistics regarding India's ambitious school feeding program.

### Key Points

- **Massive government intervention in India's food supply has enabled a broad array of subsidies.**

School feeding in India is to a large extent funded and run by the government. The government provides more than 95% of the funds and the private sector provides less than 5% of all funding.

India's Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), serving 113 million children a day, is by far the largest school feeding program in the world. (By comparison, Brazil's is less than half that size.) Faced with a growing and diverse population, and committed to food security as a fundamental human right, the Indian government has become the country's dominant buyer of wheat and rice.

Farmers can choose to sell to the government at a guaranteed minimum selling price (MSP), or they can sell on the open market. Total government procurement now accounts for 31% of all wheat and rice production, after hovering around 25% since 1999. During the 2007-2008 drought, both production and the government's share increased, demonstrating the system's resiliency.

With the purchased food stocks, the government in turn provides subsidies ranging from 60% to 87% to various categories of citizens, including poor families, schoolchildren, hospital patients, the elderly, and adolescent girls. Currently, 243 million families in the Public Distribution System account for 48 million of the 55 million tons distributed last year. Because MDMS, at three million tons sent to a million schools, is minor in comparison, India is not following the broader school feeding trend toward local procurement.

- **MDMS's steady nationalization shows how India supports basic nutrition for every child.**

Started in 1925 in the state of Madras, MDMS spread to a dozen states by 1990, each drawing on its own resources. In 1995, however, the federal government launched its National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE), which was extended to additional beneficiaries in 2003 and 2008. At launch, NP-NSPE's objectives included:

- *General nourishment:* Improving the nutritional status of children in grades 1–8 in government, local-body, and government-aided schools.
- *Attendance:* Encouraging disadvantaged children to attend school more regularly and helping them concentrate on classroom activities.
- *Drought aid:* Providing nutritional support to primary-aged children during summer vacation in drought-affected areas.

In addition to the milled grains, MDMS reimburses schools for food transportation costs; provides kitchen appliances and utensils; and offers management, monitoring, and evaluation services.

The government spends US\$4.00 per month for each lower-primary child's mid-day meal, and US\$5.13 per month for each upper-primary child's, because of the latter's higher caloric needs. In all, India expends US\$5.8 billion per year on the program.

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*"Over its first decade, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme has come to stay—and this is thanks to government interventions and initiatives, judicial directives, and social movements."*

— Dr. R. Rukmani, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation

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MDMS brings uniform national standards and an assured, sustainable food supply to all schools. It is also extremely popular politically. Perhaps most important from a long-term perspective is the recognition that spending money on child nutrition now will save Indian families and the government much more on health-care costs in the future.

- **Despite MDMS' successful growth, problems remain.**

Even though MDMS has brought basic nutrition to children attending schools throughout the country, as many as 15% or approximately 20 million of 6–14 year olds were not in school. According to the official right-to-food policy, these street children, homeless children, child workers, and children of migrant laborers should be covered as well.

Additionally, undernourishment of those under the age of three continues to be a problem in India, as these children are not reached by MDMS. In 2005–06, 46% of India's infants and



toddlers were underweight. About one third of the world's 146 million undernourished children live in India, a country whose GDP growth will push its economy past Great Britain's in 2020 and Japan's in 2030.

Finally, the MDMS program must address breakfast requirements, strengthen the links between the government's nutrition and health sectors, work on food-absorption issues such as safe drinking water and clean toilets and improve levels of community participation.

▪ **Public-private partnerships offer innovative models for the government to scale up.**

The Akshaya Patra Foundation's vision statement—"No child in India shall be deprived of education because of hunger"—explicitly links malnutrition to educational failure. This NGO considers educational attainment the key both to an improved personal standard of living that breaks the poverty cycle and to broader national competitive goals.

Complementing the Indian government's efforts in school feeding, Akshaya Patra has developed innovative ways to prepare fresh food in volume for schoolchildren. For example, in one of its commercial-scale kitchens, a giant steamer can cook rice for 1,000 children in 15 minutes, and an automated maker can turn out 40,000 chapatis an hour. These hot foods are then delivered throughout an eight-state region by a fleet of trucks.

Its award-winning kitchens feature a creative "three-stage gravity-flow mechanism" to take raw delivered grains and process them into transportable meals.

*"In Jaipur, 18% of the children said they would not have attended school if there were no meals."*  
— C.P. Das, Akshaya Patra Foundation

Akshaya Patra, which means "inexhaustible vessel" in Sanskrit, funds its operations through a mix of government per-child subsidies and contributions from a broad network of partner firms operating in the country, from Mysore Minerals and Infosys Technologies to Citigroup and Cisco.

KPMG audits its finances, and A.C. Nielsen tracks its performance against metrics such as school attendance, classroom performance, and student nutritional status. Some before-and-after results:

Location	Metric	Result
Bangalore	1 <sup>st</sup> grade enrollment	↑ 21%
Bangalore	Drop-out rate	↓ 8% to 18%
Hubli	5 <sup>th</sup> grade enrollment	↑ 31%
Vrindavan	Underweight population	↓ 26% to 38%

Although it now feeds almost 1.3 million children in India, Akshaya Patra's efforts are dwarfed by the centralized federal program for 113 million students. Nonetheless, its innovations in infrastructure, kitchen construction, and distribution provide prototypes the national government can exploit on a larger scale.



# Community Participation: Governance and Social Accountability and the Ghana-Netherlands Model

■ Speakers: **Bibi Giyose (Chair)**, NEPAD/CAADP  
**Adama Jehanfo**, Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (SNV), Ghana  
**Rutger Schilpzand**, School feeding Initiative Ghana-Netherlands (SIGN)

## Overview

Successful school feeding programs rely on high levels of community involvement. This guarantees that stakeholder interests are met in a transparent and accountable way. SNV and SIGN have demonstrated in Ghana how social accountability, platforms, and partnerships can strengthen school feeding programs. Their experiences emphasize the importance of government buy-in, open communication, and soft power. While community participation can be time and labor intensive, the benefits outweigh the costs.

## Context

The panelists discussed how community participation and social accountability have improved the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP).

## Key Points

### ■ Platforms create a common vision and enable partnerships.

Platforms must be developed before successful community partnerships can occur. Platforms are created when groups of stakeholders build a framework to realize shared ambitions. Once a set of unified goals and objectives is established, partnerships can move ahead.

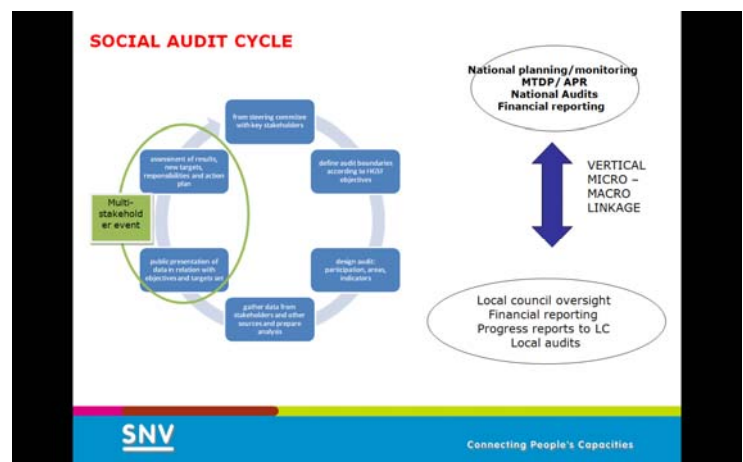
Both SNV (Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers) and SIGN (School feeding Initiative Ghana Netherlands) have established platforms to support the GSFP.

- **Civil Society Platform.** SNV formed this platform in Northern Ghana to promote and enhance community participation in school feeding programs in this area. Through workshops and research activities including pilot studies, the platform continues to support the implementation of the GSFP. The platform now educates stakeholders through quarterly meetings, provides basic cooking facilities for schools, and trains cooks on health and hygiene. As part of its advocacy efforts, the platform is pushing for the re-targeting of the program to ensure that more rural and needy areas are covered by the GSFP.
- **SIGN.** SIGN's mission is to meet the Millennium Development Goals related to hunger. To fulfill this mission, SIGN supported Ghana's development of a home grown school feeding program. Ghana's government plays a leading role in the organization's governance, while the Netherlands provides investments and partnership support. SIGN built a multi-stakeholder platform based on four pillars of society: business, NGOs, science, and government. The foundation has a board representing the four pillars, a small full-time secretariat and a 16-member platform.

### ■ Without local ownership and social accountability, school feeding programs will not succeed.

When the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) began to expand, little attention was paid to stakeholder concerns. Inadequate information sharing and weak community involvement led to negative public outcry. Transparency and program accountability had to be improved.

To remedy these problems, SNV launched the GSFP Social Accountability Program. Social accountability is a process that enables stakeholders to charter development programs and contribute to their realization. Many of the program activities utilize the "social audit cycle". This is an approach in which local stakeholders gather and analyze data, present the findings publicly, and then assess results and set new targets.



Source: *Community Participation: Governance and Social Accountability – A Case from Ghana and SNV*, Adama Jehanfo, SNV

For example, the Independent Civil Society Monitoring and Evaluation initiative hopes to incorporate social accountability throughout the GSFP. This one-year program is comprised of three phases:

- **Phase 1: Baseline.** The focus of this phase is data collection. SNV has selected and trained 14 civil society organizations to gather basic data from the community about the GSFP. Information has been collected about the program objectives, funding, successes, and challenges. This phase is now complete.
- **Phase 2: Consolidation.** The second phase is focused on aggregating the data and analyzing it.
- **Phase 3: Final.** In the last phase of the project, the civil society organizations submit a report with their findings to the government. This report includes advice about how the school feeding program should be improved. At this time, the data analysis and report writing are nearly complete.



▪ **Synergistic community partnerships strengthen school feeding programs.**

The most effective community partnerships focus on execution and have clear, concrete goals. SIGN has generated more than 20 partnerships between its platform members and organizations in Ghana. The most important have been governmental partnerships that established the GSFP. Other significant partnerships include GSFP monitoring programs, school garden initiatives, microcredits for organic farmers, food fortification and social accountability programs.

A common feature shared by successful partnerships is the synergy created among different stakeholders. SNV is hoping to forge partnerships between local farmers and school feeding programs in Ghana, Kenya and Mali. It has submitted a proposal to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for a procurement governance project. Since no clear guidelines exist at the local level related to food procurement, SNV plans to pilot procurement mechanisms that will improve access to locally grown foods.

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*“One big theory of change in the SNV program is to bring smallholder farmers to the forefront and empower them to deliver food for school feeding programs.”*

— Adama Jehanfo, SNV

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▪ **The community participation process can be challenging, but the payoffs are great.**

Gamering community participation can be challenging. Gaining stakeholder buy-in is time consuming, but it is essential to guarantee accountability and open communication. Ms. Jehanfo and Mr. Schilpzand described lessons learned through the GSFP:

- *Government acceptance is critical.* School feeding programs cannot succeed without government buy-in and acceptance. The responsible government institutions must be involved in all processes. To legitimize mandates, it can be helpful to sign agreements with the government.
- *Transparency builds trust.* When multiple stakeholders and public support are involved with a school feeding program, transparency is essential.

- *Communication is necessary among partners and with the larger environment.* Beneficiary demands and donor offers must be clear from the outset. Open dialogue is necessary.
- *Cultural differences must be bridged.* Cultural differences exist between countries, as well as between sectors. For example, some NGOs see their role as one of a critic. As a result, they may be unwilling to participate in community partnerships. The business sector, on the other hand, has a strong interest in the payback from their involvement.
- *Some barriers cannot be overcome.* Ms. Jehanfo noted that even when programs promote transparency, some institutional barriers and hierarchies can prevent accountability.
- *Soft power can have great influence.* SIGN has demonstrated the effect of soft power. It has effected change through networking, information, advocacy, and commitment. Mr. Schilpzand noted that having a large network that can adapt to new challenges is very important.

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*“Committed people can create leverage: think big, start small, and grow big.”*

— Rutger Schilpzand, SIGN

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## Other Important Points

- **Market queens.** In Ghana, powerful women called “market queens” purchase food from farmers and resell it in markets. Some local farmers are not willing to give up their relationships with the market queens in order to partner with the GSFP. In these cases, GSFP partners with market queens to sell food to schools. Prices are negotiated at the local level.
- **Community nutrition education.** Schools provide a vehicle for disseminating nutrition education messages to the wider community. Children can act as agents of change, bringing lessons learned home to parents and siblings and promoting consumption of a well-balanced diet.

# Integrated Planning for Comprehensive Technical Assistance

- Speakers: **Dr. Lesley Drake (Chair)**, The Partnership for Child Development (PCD)  
**Emilie Sidaner**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)  
**Carmen Burbano de Lara**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)  
**Professor Donald Bundy**, World Bank  
**Penny McConnell**, Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)

## Overview

Many African nations lack the resources and capabilities to fund and run school feeding programs without external support. Yet self-sustaining programs are the best hope for long-term success. A policy shift in 2009 expanded WFP's focus to include assisting governments in building the internal capabilities they need to create strong school feeding programs of their own and not be reliant on donor support.

Multiple agencies and NGOs offer a wealth of resources and technical assistance to help nations transition from school feeding programs that require external support to self-sustaining programs. Harmonization of this assistance is essential. Several agencies and NGOs have collaborated to create a comprehensive transition-strategy framework that integrates these organizations' toolkits. Even resource-poor nations can begin using the framework to start down the long road toward self-reliance. Doing so can attract not just donors but investors.

## Context

The panelists discussed the technical assistance and tools available to help African nations transition to self-sustaining school feeding programs.

## Key Points

- **Many African nations must build the institutional capabilities needed for self-sustaining school meal programs.**

In 2009, WFP approved a new policy representing a radical departure from its traditional role in supporting school feeding programs. Under the new policy, WFP seeks to actively support governments to implement their own school feeding programs as the only way to achieve sustainability. This includes time-bound implementation support, and technical assistance to increase the capacity of governments to manage these programs.

Importantly, the WFP has no intention of withdrawing its support to any nation before the government develops the internal capabilities to finance and run a self-sustaining school feeding program. The WFP: 1) Realizes that the transition process can take decades for some nations; 2) Recognizes that the transition needs to be well planned and coordinated; and 3) Is committed to continuing its support and assisting in the transition process until a nation's internal capabilities are built.

The WFP will work closely with governments to assist them during the multi-year transition, helping them build programs that are sustainable, cost-effective, and high quality. Brazil's school feeding program was funded and administered by the WFP in the 1960s. After a long transition, it is now one of the best and strongest school feeding programs in the world.

- **A comprehensive transition-planning framework integrates toolkits and resources from various sources.**

PCD, WFP and the World Bank have worked to consolidate existing guidance so that countries have access to a package that is harmonized and easy to use. This technical assistance framework is based on three principles, echoed throughout the Forum:

- *Government ownership and leadership*, with a national strategy for sustainable school feeding prioritized at the highest levels.
- *Multi-sectoral approaches to school feeding programs*, with consultation and collaboration among ministries involved.
- *One common framework*. This framework has five pillars:
  1. Policy
  2. Funding
  3. Institutional Arrangements and Coordination
  4. Design and Implementation (involving local production)
  5. Community participation

Decisions in each of these areas guide the transition strategy. The framework entails the following steps:

- *Vision and goals*. This step defines the country's rationale for school feeding and how it fits in the country's overall poverty-reduction strategy. Tools include: GCNF's School Feeding Toolkit (Step 1), and WFP's Investment Case.
- *Assessment*. This defines a country's situation, identifying capability gaps. Tools include: SABER (the World Bank's System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results), WFP's Needs and Coverage Analysis, Cost Analysis tools (in development), and GCNF Toolkit (Steps 2 and 3).
- *Strategic planning*. This involves consultative processes among government ministries and integrating agriculture with school feeding. Tools include: Technical Assistance Plan (TAP) and GCNF Toolkit (Step 4).
- *Monitoring and evaluation*, which is ongoing. The strategy should be a "living document," continually being improved upon as informed by data and feedback, monitoring, evaluating, and assessment. Tools include: technical support for monitoring and evaluation process design; SABER follow-up; GCNF Toolkit (Step 5); and impact evaluations on home grown school feeding.

The World Bank's SABER tool is part of an effort to benchmark all education sub-systems (the inclusion of school feeding in education sub-systems is a positive recent development). SABER is available on the World Bank's website.

PCD, in conjunction with the Home Grown School Feeding program's partners, supports governments to develop Technical

Assistance Plans (TAPs) as a means to strengthen national school feeding programs.

The TAP is a process driven analysis that identifies the current needs and activities required in achieving “quality” school feeding programs which are sustainable, nutritious, targeted, and cost effective, while encouraging local purchase of food and agricultural production. The analysis draws on existing processes implemented by development partners and provides a central point for information that can inform decision making and program development.

Prepared in consultation between government and development partners, the TAP process provides a neutral platform for multi-party involvement to facilitate effective government support.

WFP tools are still under development, but will be available to governments upon request. When finalized, they will be available on the WFP website.

GCNF’s toolkit is not available on its website (though other resources are), because participating in a hands-on workshop is deemed necessary for its proper utilization. Most of the toolkits are produced in several languages, including English, French and Portuguese.

▪ **Even resource-poor nations can start down the long road to self-sustaining school feeding programs.**

During a lengthy Q&A session, panelists were questioned on the practical application of theory-based tools to real-life circumstances, particularly the extreme poverty that characterizes many African nations. Several examples were provided to show how technical assistance can work:

- The WFP and PCD helped Kenya’s Ministry of Education identify capacity gaps in the school feeding program, link the program to agriculture and develop alternative models to provide school meals. This develops the local capabilities in procurement, storage, etc. that will be needed after WFP phases out its support.
- Technical assistance enabled the Government of Ghana to identify it needed help with its planning and budgeting processes. A solution was provided by the Partnership for Child Development which facilitated the Government’s partnership with business schools to analyze the school feeding supply chain.

- Ecuador and El Salvador are being supported by WFP to develop the management capabilities they need to run school feeding programs.
- In Mali, technical assistance from the WFP helped the Ministry of Education to elaborate a school feeding policy and set up a national center for school feeding.

To be used, toolkits must be kept simple, said one participant. The overly complex and not very useful toolkits he has seen could fill a library. Panelists agreed that tools without relevance are useless. The SABER tool is becoming shorter during the pilot process as redundancies are eliminated.

One participant asked what will happen when WFP “moves out” school feeding programs in nations that are too poor to continue the programs themselves. Ms. Burbano de Lara replied that the WFP will not abandon countries and won’t withdraw support for a school feeding program unless and until a country no longer needs it. To avoid confusion, the WFP no longer refers to its new policy as an “exit strategy”. It is a policy of capacity building and empowerment.

How can resource-poor nations display the “ownership and leadership” that the framework demands, asked a participant. Panelists replied that what the framework assists with strategy formulation but requires little in terms of money. The poorest nation can get started on the steps tomorrow. The steps help governments see where they stand and what they need to do. When gaps and weaknesses are identified, solutions often materialize.

Sometimes, the problem is not a matter of lacking funds, said Professor Bundy, but of how they are allocated. For example, once farming and school feeding are linked and demand from school meal programs creates new markets for smallholder farmers, government resources devoted to agriculture development can be directed into school feeding programs.

Moreover, pointed out Professor Bundy, once governments begin tracking financial flows better, improved financial management will attract foreign investors, spurring much-needed economic development.

# Country Perspectives: Policy Frameworks

■ Speakers: **Dr. Uwemedimo Esiet (Chair)**, Action Health Inc.  
**Representatives from Mali, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Rwanda, and Malawi**

## Overview

School feeding programs are proven to improve enrollment in education. Although programs often begin as decentralized initiatives, many countries seek to develop national policies. These policies reduce program duplication, enable program monitoring and link school feeding to broader national goals.

When national school feeding policies are well designed, they provide many benefits. Success depends on government buy-in and resources to handle program implementation. Sustainability is also a major challenge. Communities must play a role in the ongoing financial viability of school feeding programs.

## Context

Representatives from Mali, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Rwanda and Malawi briefly described the school feeding policy frameworks in their countries. Chairperson Uwemedimo Esiet summarized the key messages that emerged from discussions.

## Key Points

- **Sound school feeding policies have government and community backing, as well as solid implementation plans.**

As the delegates from Mali, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Rwanda and Malawi described their national school feeding policies, several common themes emerged.

- *School feeding programs are a proven way to increase school enrollment.* Many of the delegates commented that their governments are pursuing national school feeding policies because early initiatives were so effective at increasing enrollment.
- *Program expense necessitates government buy-in.* A recurring theme was how costly school feeding programs are to operate. As a result, national programs can only succeed if the government supports school feeding.
- *Community support is essential for program sustainability.* Several delegates noted that sustainability is one of the greatest challenges for school feeding programs. When outside financial support goes away, the community must be prepared to cover a significant portion of the costs. As a result, community education and engagement are critical.
- *A national policy is not enough; implementation skills are also required.* One delegate noted that there are “beautiful policy frameworks” for school feeding programs in Africa, but implementation is often overlooked. This was echoed by the delegate from Cape Verde who emphasized how important it is for governments to have the capacity to implement school feeding initiatives.

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*“National policies can serve as an anchor for school feeding programs.”*

— Uwemedimo Esiet

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## Mali

- **Mali’s school feeding program is based on government support and stakeholder engagement.**

In the 1960s, Mali established school canteens, which significantly increased enrollment levels. By 2007, Mali achieved 80% school enrollment. This prompted the country to develop a new school feeding strategy focused on novel approaches like mobile schools. It took three years to develop this new program, during which several important lessons have been learned.

- *Government support is essential.* School feeding programs are expensive and countries may be reluctant to fund them. Initially, Mali relied on WFP support to demonstrate the benefits of school feeding to the government.
- *All stakeholders must be engaged.* After developing a school feeding action plan in 2007, Mali organized a forum with all the stakeholders, ranging from government agencies to financial and technical partners. In order to create a formal reference framework for school feeding and coordinate the various interventions, a National School Feeding policy document was elaborated—with the input of all constituents—and adopted in November 2009.
- *Cooperation among ministries is needed.* Most government ministries operate independently, and school feeding was solely the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Now, Mali’s school feeding policy has clearly defined school feeding as multi-sectorial, and thus, actively promotes cooperation and coordination across ministries.
- *Sustainability is the greatest challenge.* Nationally run school feeding programs must be sustainable after financial partners leave. Funding must be mobilized at the community level.

## Madagascar

- **Madagascar discovered that national school feeding strategies cannot be created without political will.**

Issues related to child malnutrition and program coordination motivated Madagascar to develop a national school feeding policy. Before the policy was implemented, most children suffered from malnutrition. In addition, hunger relief programs lacked coherence.

Developing an institutional framework to coordinate school feeding interventions required political will. In 2005, the Ministry of Education created a school feeding strategy which is part of a National Action Plan. Madagascar also has a National Board of Nutrition and agencies that implement the school feeding program. The WFP provides financial support to the country’s school feeding program.



## Cape Verde

- **Community education and capacity building will ensure the school feeding program's sustainability.**

In 2006, Cape Verde decided to develop a national strategy for school feeding. The government established a national commission to implement the program. This commission monitors school feeding, prevents duplication of effort, and promotes coordination among the Health, Education, and Social Affairs Ministries.

Community education is an important part of the country's school feeding program. A campaign has begun that illustrates why program continuity is necessary. This community sensitization work will ensure the program's sustainability over time.

One of the major challenges highlighted was capacity. Even if a country has resources to support school feeding, it must also have the capacity to manage them. The WFP is currently providing technical assistance to Cape Verde in this area.

## Rwanda

- **A national school feeding policy is integral to achieving Rwanda's future economic goals.**

Rwanda's school feeding program, funded by the WFP, has been implemented in 300 schools and benefits 300,000 children. Now the country wants to transition to a nationally led school feeding program.

Rwanda has developed a school nutrition policy that incorporates meals, school farming and gardening, nutrition

education, and water sanitation. This policy is aligned with the government's Vision 2020, which seeks to transform Rwanda into a middle-income country.

In addition to providing strategic direction, the school feeding policy also informs planning and prevents duplication of effort by stakeholders. One of the challenges facing Rwanda, however, is school feeding program sustainability. Looking ahead, 70% of the school feeding budget must come from the community.

## Malawi

- **School feeding is well integrated into Malawi's national policies, but greater interaction is needed with local agricultural markets.**

Malawi's school feeding strategy began in 1995. Based on positive results, a Presidential Directive was issued to expand the program to rural areas.

Today, the school feeding program is guided by the National Nutrition Policy. School feeding has also been integrated into Malawi's Growth Strategy and the National Education Sector Plan. Four key areas of concern regarding the school feeding program are cost containment, sustainability, financial security, and an implementation roadmap.

Looking ahead, agricultural markets must be linked to school feeding programs. Home grown school feeding programs can provide new opportunities for smallholder farmers. Increased agricultural production is the focus of Malawi's agriculture program and its participation in the CAADP compact.





# Country Perspectives: Financing, Institutional Capacity, and Collaboration

- Speakers: **Carmen Burbano de Lara (Chair)**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)  
**Dr. Aurora Dos Santos Salvador**, Ministry of Education, Angola  
**Vanity Mafule**, Ministry of Local Government, Botswana  
**Leah Rotich**, Ministry of Education, Kenya  
**Abdoulaye Toure**, Ministry of Education, Senegal

## Overview

As countries move to nationally run school feeding programs, it is useful to reflect upon the different functions that need to be performed in a school feeding program. Each nation, however, takes a unique approach to the institutional framework for the program.

Although the government plays an important role in most nationally run school feeding programs, community involvement is still essential. Many programs require financial support from parents and private-sector organizations to survive. This support may be provided through monetary or in-kind contributions.

## Context

Representatives from Angola, Botswana, Kenya, and Senegal discussed the transition to nationally owned school feeding programs. They described the different roles that governments play with regard to finances and coordination. Chairperson Carmen Burbano de Lara summarized the key messages that emerged from discussions.

## Key Points

- **Centralized administration of program finances and functions has clear benefits, but community involvement is also essential.**

As the delegates from Angola, Botswana, Kenya, and Senegal explained their school feeding programs, it was clear that the government and communities play different roles from country to country. However, several common themes emerged.

- *Many countries handle policy and planning and program finances and evaluation in a centralized way.* Virtually all the countries on the panel have governmental organizations disburse funds for school feeding programs and handle program evaluation.
- *Government oversight of school feeding programs leads to national standards.* Both Botswana and Kenya have set standards related to kitchen hygiene and food procurement. School feeding program staff is expected to conform to these standards.
- *Nationally run school feeding programs may enjoy economies of scale.* In Botswana, the government handles aspects of school feeding that can benefit from economies of scale, such as food and fuel procurement, as well as food distribution.
- *The community must also play a role in national school feeding initiatives.* Although the government plays a vital role in coordinating national school feeding, the community must

also get involved. All the panelists described the importance of monetary and in-kind contributions from parents, the private sector, and other segments of the community.

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*"Governments can't finance school feeding programs overnight. Coalitions are one way to support a national school feeding strategy."*

— Carmen Burbano de Lara, WFP

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## Angola

- **In Angola, both monetary support and in-kind contributions support decentralized school feeding programs.**

In 1999, Angola launched a school feeding pilot program in two provinces. Five years later, with partial government funding, the program expanded to 10 provinces. In 2005, the government took over all financing and all 18 provinces are now served.

The Ministry of Education disburses program funds to local governments. The community makes in-kind contributions, such as labor, fresh bread and other resources. In addition, parents make small monetary contributions to the food basket.

From an agriculture perspective, the government has started a program to increase local food production. More donors and technical assistance are needed, however, to promote the use of locally grown foods in schools.

## Botswana

- **The Ministry of Local Government in Botswana plans, procures and distributes food to the schools.**

Botswana's school feeding program is managed by the Department of Local Government, Finance, and Procurement Services. This organization is part of the Ministry of Local Government Headquarters. The department monitors the program finances and oversees many school feeding functions such as:

- *Facilities.* The government ensures that all schools have modern and clean kitchens.
- *Staffing.* The department employs 330 cooks and staff to serve 330,000 students. It also employs 3,000 women in rural areas to grind sorghum into flour.
- *Procurement.* The department procures a wide range of food items, as well as wood and gas to fuel school kitchens.
- *Distribution.* Food is delivered to depots in 24 regions. The department works with the school health committee to monitor

the quality of food storage. Food is distributed from these depots to schools in the area.

In terms of community involvement, the parent-teacher organization is responsible for procuring minor food items that do not need to go through a tendering process.

## Kenya

- **The Kenyan Ministry of Education disburses school feeding funds, coordinates with stakeholders, and trains local staff while the schools procure and prepare the food.**

Kenya's school feeding program is coordinated by the School Health, Nutrition, and Meals Investment Program Unit. This organization is housed in the Directorate of Basic Education, which is part of the Ministry of Education. Government involvement in school feeding includes:

- *Coordination with local, international, and private sector partners.* All program activities are coordinated through the Ministry of Education. This includes identification of needy schools and working with provincial government organizations. In addition, partnerships have been created with private organizations like Unilever, Nestle and Kenya Power and Lighting Company.
- *Financial management and program evaluation.* The national government is responsible for disbursing school feeding funds to schools. It also monitors program performance.

— *Training local staff.* The national government has district field officers that train school management committees on food procurement and hygiene.

In addition to the Ministry of Education's school feeding initiative, other programs exist. The Ministry of Agriculture administers a school feeding program which involves strong community engagement.

## Senegal

- **In Senegal, more local resources are needed to augment government support of the school feeding program.**

Senegal views school feeding programs as one way to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. After the president declared his support for the program in 2007, a school cafeteria management structure was implemented. In addition, tools and information systems were developed for program management.

One challenge is that partners finance 80% of the program, with the government financing the remaining 20%. Local resources must be mobilized to increase the financing generated locally. Increased participation by the private sector and households is necessary. A dairy producer in Dakar, for example, has started contributing milk. In the agricultural sector, technology must be used to help farmers increase their productivity.



Global Child Nutrition Foundation

## Country Perspectives: Design

- Speakers: **Ambassador Chris Goldthwait**, Consultant, American Peanut Council  
**Representatives from Nigeria, Liberia, Zambia, Chad, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique**

### Overview

Each country has unique priorities for its school feeding program, which can be achieved through deliberate design decisions. Program design has a direct influence on the community and the financial impact of school feeding initiatives.

Cultural change can also be effected through school feeding programs. Take-home rations, for instance, may motivate families to send girls to school. Designing programs in a consolidated way can deliver school feeding services in a more efficient manner.

### Context

Representatives from Nigeria, Liberia, Zambia, Chad, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique briefly described the design of their school feeding programs. Chairperson Chris Goldthwait summarized the key messages that emerged from discussions.

### Key Points

- **Program design can be used to drive specific school feeding objectives.**

Delegates from Nigeria, Liberia, Zambia, Chad, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique emphasized that program design is an important factor in achieving a country's school feeding program goals.

Examples of design decisions include: Nigeria has hired cooks from the private sector. Zambia improved school feeding efficiency by creating a consolidated program. Chad uses take-home rations to promote education for girls. And as Sierra Leone finalizes its program design, it intends to make locally grown foods an important part of its school feeding initiative.

### Nigeria

- **Nigeria's design includes private sector hiring.**

Nigeria has brought the private sector into the school feeding program by establishing a design that entails hiring and training cooks. The government sets standards that staff must adhere to. Food quality is regulated by a quality team. To strengthen the connection between farmers and the school feeding program, cooks are advised to use locally grown foods like sweet potatoes.

### Liberia

- **Liberia's food basket is designed to improve education.**

In Liberia, the school feeding program strives to improve education for all genders by providing nutritional meals. The food basket has been designed to meet those goals.

### Zambia

- **School feeding has been consolidated to improve efficiency.**

Zambia has utilized school feeding programs since 2003. Since multiple programs have been used, a cost analysis was done in

2009 to evaluate which were providing the best value. This analysis found that the Ministry of Education's program was more expensive than the others. As a result, two programs were consolidated into one with centralized management.

### Chad

- **Chad encourages education for girls through take-home rations.**

The design of Chad's school feeding program involves providing both in-school meals and take-home rations at 1,200 schools. Meals and rations are given to both children and adult learners. Take-home rations encourage girls to enroll in school. This has changed the traditional culture where girls stay home and only boys attend school. Since resources are limited, the program focuses on the country's most vulnerable areas. Challenges that must be overcome include logistics issues and better reporting.

### Sierra Leone

- **The school feeding program design incorporates locally grown foods.**

In Sierra Leone, the WFP is working with the government to evaluate the country's school feeding programs. As the program design is formalized, significant opportunities exist for linking procurement with local farmers.

Small-scale agriculture is a good food source for the school feeding program. Purchasing locally blended foods helps support local communities. Through partnerships with agricultural stakeholders, school menus have been adapted to use seasonally available and cost-efficient foods.

Despite these aspirations, there are numerous challenges. The nutritional content of local foods must be guaranteed, as well as food safety and quality. In drought-stricken areas, the lack of water is an obstacle to meal preparation and hygiene. Supply and demand also are concerns. Local farmers must increase productivity to meet the demand generated from school feeding programs. From an administrative perspective, programs must do a better job balancing objectives, monitoring and evaluating performance, and accounting.

Since its school feeding program design is still under development, Sierra Leone would like to explore new opportunities related to commodity exchanges, community engagement, stakeholder incentives, and technology adoption.

### Mozambique

- **Mozambique has found that local procurement requires support from all stakeholders.**

Mozambique has had a school feeding program since 1977. Its procurement works best when all partners are involved. Mozambique's line ministries work together with other partners to support the program. In addition to purchasing food from local farmers, students are also taught how to farm.



# Country Perspectives: Implementation and Community Participation

- Speakers: **Philomena Chege (Moderator)**, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Kenya  
**Irene Messiba**, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana  
**Zuberi Samataba**, Ministry of Education, Tanzania  
**Demissew Lemma Mekonne**, Ministry of Education, Ethiopia  
**Sarah Balaba**, The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), Uganda  
**Alice Montheu**, Ministry of Education, Cameroon

## Overview

Community participation in the day-to-day implementation of school feeding programs is critically important for promoting the local community “ownership” that can make the difference between a successful transition away from donor support and a failed program that is unable to be sustained.

A school feeding program that responds to community needs, is run locally by engaged and accountable community stakeholders, and is supported by community contributions has far greater prospects for successfully becoming self-sustaining over the long term.

community members are encouraged to donate what resources they can to help school meal programs succeed. Some countries have local committees charged with managing the logistics of food procurement, storage, security, meal preparation, and distribution. Through cash for work programs, some parents are paid for their labor.

*“The school food program that responds to community needs, is locally ‘owned,’ and incorporates parental and community contributions can go far.”*

— Philomena Chege, Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya

## Context

Representatives from Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Cameroon briefly described the school feeding programs in their countries, focusing on ways in which local communities help implement and benefit from these programs. Chairperson Philomena Chege summarized key messages.

## Key Points

- **Local community participation in school meal programs is crucial to their long-term sustainability.**

Underlying principles emerged as delegates from Ghana, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Cameroon described their school feeding programs’ implementation processes, governance structures, challenges, and accomplishments.

Collectively, these programs reflected awareness that several key elements, related to community involvement in program implementation, are critically important:

- *Having a policy defining program-related roles and responsibilities.* Each of the five countries either has a strategy or policy in place or is in the process of creating a policy that defines clearly the roles of each actor in the school feeding programs, including members of the community.
- *Sensitizing all stakeholders to program issues and objectives.* All actors—from national officials down to the local community members who are touched by the program daily—must be sensitized to the significance of providing school meals, including the program’s critical objectives as well as health, nutrition, and educational benefits. Engaging members of the community is particularly important for fostering the program ownership at the local level that is critical to programs’ long-term sustainability.
- *Getting community participation in the school feeding program’s daily implementation.* Parents and other local

- *Engaging in community capacity-building efforts.* Some countries have training efforts underway to teach community members the skills they need to administer and manage the school feeding programs after external support ends.
- *Securing community representation in program governance.* Community members should be represented in the governance of school feeding programs to ensure the community’s needs are being met. In some countries, program decisions are made by coalitions including school and community stakeholders, such as PTA groups.
- *Establishing processes and policies to monitor progress and promote accountability.* Successful programs need to have mechanisms that alert stakeholders to situations requiring correcting, processes that promote financial transparency and accountability and measures that document evidence of progress toward objectives.

While the five countries examined in this session are making progress toward many of these success factors, some challenges and obstacles unique to their specific situations remain.

## Ghana

- **An initiative to promote demand-side accountability has been very successful.**

Back in 2007, rapid expansion of Ghana’s school feeding program resulted in abuses requiring a robust accountability system. Demand-side accountability in particular was the problem (supply-side accountability has long existed given the financial reporting required of food suppliers).

In 2009, a partnership of the Dutch government, SNV, and the Government of Ghana introduced a social accountability project. Through that project, stakeholders have been educated about school feeding program objectives and their own roles and responsibilities; distribution and financial processes have been reorganized for better transparency and oversight; and



independent assessors are now used to monitor financial accounting and the entire process of resource flows.

These measures have greatly improved school feeding program accountability. They are leading to enhanced community ownership and greater community contributions to the program, in cash and in-kind.

## Tanzania

- **The daily implementation of Tanzania's school meals program depends on community participation.**

The school feeding program in Tanzania is currently WFP-funded, but the WFP in conjunction with the national government is working to equip local authorities to take over program implementation and management. Local community members have been sensitized about the issues of school feeding and trained to do jobs such as prepare meals and eating places, procure food and safeguard the food against theft. The WFP conducts regular meetings with community members to ensure that efforts do not lapse.

Tanzania's school meals program operates in five regions, benefitting 700,000 schoolchildren. Maize, beans and cooking oil are provided. Children receive porridge and lunch daily throughout the year. The program has made significant progress toward its education-focused objectives: raising enrollment and attendance rates, improving academic performance and stabilizing the dropout rate.

Tanzania's government is in the very initial stages of taking the program national. What form a national school feeding program might take is still undecided.

## Ethiopia

- **School feeding programs are locally run according to national guidelines.**

In Ethiopia, the school meals program is run by local communities according to national guidelines, published in multiple languages and widely distributed. These guidelines define the responsibilities and procedures for financial and program management to be followed by schools.

Committees organized at the school level manage the logistics of food distribution and select the children who will benefit based on need (not all children receive the meals).

However, determining family income levels is difficult and most parents petition the committee to have their children fed. This situation is challenging for the local committees. Transporting food represents another big challenge.

## Uganda

- **School feeding benefits children in the neediest regions.**

School feeding programs have operated in Uganda since 1965. They are administered differently in different regions depending on the poverty levels of the population. Parents sometimes pay fees for school meals.

All schools in the troubled Karamoja region are provided with grains, salt and vegetable oil. Teachers are trained and community members mobilized to use these resources for school meals. Community members have built 38 teachers' huts in a work for cash program. While paying cash has drawbacks, it is viewed as a good way to involve parents.

Uganda has a home grown school feeding program in the pilot stage. Community members produce commodities for schools and hospitals. Parents are provided with seed and are expected to send food to school with children and to contribute to the program in cash or in-kind.

The Ugandan government maintains that the responsibility for feeding children rests squarely with parents. A participant asked how the government reconciles that stance with the large numbers of Ugandan children orphaned by AIDS. A government representative responded that orphans, if identified as such and registered, do benefit from various food aid programs.

## Cameroon

- **Cameroon is working on a national school feeding strategy to sustain and expand upon WFP efforts.**

The school meals program in Cameroon dates from 1998. It is administered by the WFP in three of the nation's 10 provinces. Some 246 schools are assisted, benefitting 58,000 children. The impacts have been positive and the government of Cameroon hopes to establish within the Education Department a national school feeding program by year-end. The WFP will be ending its support in 2012.

Parent participation had been weak in the rural, food-insecure areas where the program operates. But involvement is growing with efforts to sensitize the communities. Some parents supplement WFP efforts by contributing fish and vegetables. Parents organize food preparation efforts, rotating the job of cooking. If the designated cook is not available, however, no food is served.

The national school feeding program strategy that the government is working on will address such problems. It will have clearly defined objectives, coordination of activities, monitoring mechanisms and training efforts. A pilot program now underway to continue the WFP program as well as the lessons learned at GCNF's 2011 conference will help Cameroon create a strategy that prioritizes school feeding at the national level.

## Feedback Reports: Tier I and Tier II Countries

- Speakers: **Penny McConnell**, GCNF  
**Stanley Garnett**, GCNF  
**Lydie Mukashyaka**, Delegate from Rwanda  
**Delegates from Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Liberia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia**

### Overview

The *School Feeding Toolkit* developed by GCNF provides a framework for assessing a country's current situation and developing a country plan. Many countries have successfully used this toolkit to develop a plan and to guide their implementation of a school feeding program.

For delegates that had not previously been exposed to this *Toolkit*, most view government commitment and political will as the most important target, and lack of funding for school feeding as their greatest challenge. Their key indicators include developing a legal framework and a national policy for school feeding.

For delegates from countries that have experience using this toolkit, many have made significant progress. They have developed policies, gotten government support, and in some instances, have had success in getting the government to budget for school feeding.

### Context

Penny McConnell described GCNF's *School Feeding Toolkit*. Delegates then divided in groups based on their tier. After developing country goals and objectives, as well as identifying challenges and barriers, the delegates reconvened and reported back the key points of their plans.

### Key Points (School Feeding Toolkit)

- **GCNF's *School Feeding Toolkit* is an instrument to assess needs and plan sustainable food programs.**

GCNF developed this *Toolkit* about 12 years ago. The purpose of the *Toolkit* is to help countries develop plans for sustainable school feeding programs. The *Toolkit* assists countries in assessing their current situation, setting priorities, identifying resources, and determining the capacity that is needed.

This *Toolkit* is flexible and adaptable. It is suitable for use at any level (national, provincial, or regional). It gives countries ownership for their goals and is available in multiple languages.

The *Toolkit's* country-planning process consists of five steps:

1. **Country Goals and Objectives.** This step entails defining the school feeding program's goals and objectives. The process for establishing goals should be collaborative and involve multiple stakeholders including ministry representatives, teachers and school foodservice providers, and parents.

2. **Diagnostic Information.** This entails answering numerous questions such as: the current status of school feeding; school attendance; the nutritional status of school-age children; the commitment and infrastructure for school feeding; and the capacity of the food supply for school feeding. These answers will affect the school feeding plans.
3. **Needs Assessment.** Each country must evaluate its capacity and commitment to implement school feeding. The needs assessment entails looking at several targets and indicators that show an area's school-feeding needs.
4. **Country Plan.** Based on the needs that are identified, a country plan can be developed.
5. **Country Plan Revision and Feedback.** A country plan is never final. It is constantly evolving and being revised, which is why the diagram below is a continuous circle.



- **Based on their experience using the *Toolkit*, countries are thought of as Tier I or Tier II.**

Tier I countries have never completed a workshop using the *Toolkit* and therefore don't yet have a country plan. At this Forum, delegates from Tier I countries focused on Step 1, developing country goals and objectives. Tier II countries have used the *Toolkit* and have a country plan. Delegates from these countries spent their time at this Forum reviewing their progress, goals, and challenges. (In some situations, a country might have previously developed a school feeding plan, but the delegates were unfamiliar with the *Toolkit* and attended the Tier I sessions.)

## Key Points (Tier I Countries)

Participants in the Tier I session included representatives from countries that had not previously used the GCNF *Toolkit* to develop a country plan, along with individuals whose countries have used the *Toolkit*, but where the delegate lacked experience with the *Toolkit*.

Delegates were asked to highlight one specific target for their school feeding program and one indicator.

### Angola

Angola is focused on political involvement. The reality is that without political involvement, school feeding in Angola won't go forward. Political involvement is a necessity.

The most important indicator is the use of local resources and cooperation between departments. The most difficult indicator is the involvement of the community, which is necessary for success.

### Cameroon

Education is a right in Cameroon, and Cameroon has implemented school feeding since 1998. The country's main partners have been WFP and Counterpart International. With these partners, school feeding has been implemented in 400 schools in three regions. Experience has shown that when school feeding works well, enrollment and attendance both increase.

The main target discussed was gaining greater government commitment and political will. The government has already committed to work to improve enrollment and is focused on the country's four neediest regions. The current Minister of Basic Education is involved and committed to school feeding. A national forum about school feeding will hopefully lead to a national school feeding policy.

The most important indicator relates to the infrastructure to deliver school feeding. The most difficult indicator to implement is creation of a legal framework and a national policy for school feeding. As the experience in other countries has shown, this could take 3-5 years.

### Cape Verde

The most important objective in Cape Verde is development of capacity for home grown school feeding. This requires developing linkage between the agricultural sector (farmers) and schools. Cape Verde will be enlisting the support of a consultant to provide technical assistance in establishing this linkage.

### Ethiopia

In Ethiopia today there is no clear school feeding policy. School feeding in Ethiopia is largely funded by the WFP. Based on this, the most important target in Ethiopia is securing political commitment and creating political will to establish a legal and policy framework for school feeding. Creating a school health and nutrition policy will eventually lead to creation of a school feeding program.

The greatest challenge in Ethiopia is getting the government to fund school feeding in light of competing priorities.

The main strategies and actions are to introduce home grown school feeding to the government and to link HGSF to agricul-

tural and food security programs. The hope is to convince the government that HGSF is an investment in agriculture.

### Ghana

Ghana's primary target is government commitment and political will. The leading indicator is the need to develop a national policy for school feeding. While papers and documents exist, the country lacks a policy. Effort must take place to transform these documents into an accepted policy. Such a policy would provide greater direction and would ensure the sustainability of school feeding.

The greatest challenge in Ghana is lack of funding for school feeding. Ghana's government faces serious funding constraints and has not earmarked any funds for school feeding.

The most important actions to be taken are to organize consultations among multiple stakeholders to get input on a national school feeding policy. In addition, lobbying and advocacy must take place to make school feeding a government priority and to convince the government to allocate funding.

### Kenya

The most important target for Kenya is community commitment and resource utilization. The most important indicator is getting community members to positively contribute to the success of school feeding programs through community empowerment. This is necessary to scale up school feeding and ensure that school feeding is sustainable.

The most important action step is to develop school feeding program guidelines that are region specific and that take advantage of local foods. Another important action is to strengthen school feeding management committees.

The most difficult indicator in Kenya is the stability of the food supply. Concerns about the food supply are based on drought, rising food prices, lack of seeds, low technology adoption, high rates of post-harvest losses, and contamination of food. Action must be taken to improve the food supply and diversify the range of food crops that are grown in different regions.

### Liberia

Liberia currently has school feeding in 14 of the country's 15 counties. However, coverage is just 40% of Liberia's public schools. These school programs are implemented by three different partners, each of whom has its own model for school feeding.

The primary focus in Liberia is to create a legal framework and a policy that mandates school feeding. A national school feeding policy is already being reviewed, but it is important that all stakeholders be brought together to review and validate this policy. Having one policy would unite and harmonize the different programs that currently exist. However, bringing the various stakeholders together is quite difficult as each has competing priorities.

### Mozambique

Choosing just one target and indicator is very difficult, but among all of the important goals, creating government commitment and political will is most important.

Mozambique has had success in developing a country plan for school feeding, but resources are lacking to implement this plan. It is expected that the government will allocate funds in its 2012 budget to support school feeding.

#### **Tanzania**

The primary target for Tanzania is government commitment and political will. The most important indicator is creating a legal framework and a national policy that mandates school feeding. Developing this framework and policy must involve all stakeholders, including various ministries (Education, Health, Water, and more), development partners, teachers, and communities.

The most significant barrier is lack of funding. The key action is advocacy and lobbying to secure a budget to support school feeding.

#### **Uganda**

In Uganda, children represent 40% of the population. Policies encourage schools to have a farm and to provide children with one hot meal. However, many schools aren't able to do this as they lack the funding. The current policy is that parents must pay for school feeding and many are unable to do so. The school feeding that is provided relies on donors.

The most important target for Uganda is government commitment and political will. Many documents exist about school feeding in Uganda, yet the government has not yet embraced school feeding or created a legal framework for it. Lack of a legal framework is hampering broad implementation.

The greatest challenge faced is resource mobilization. Resources include people at the community level as well as funding from the national government. The government has a budget ceiling which prevents allocating funding to school feeding. Securing support requires a broad, multi-sectoral approach, as expecting action from the Ministry of Education alone will not be successful. This ministry must pay teachers, invest in infrastructure, and provide educational supplies. School feeding is simply not a priority.

#### **Zambia**

School feeding in Zambia exists in 800 schools, but Zambia hopes to scale this up to 3,000 schools in the near future. With this in mind, the primary target in Zambia is building institutional capacity. The main indicator is creating a single coordination unit for school feeding. This coordination unit will work with all sectors and ministries to coordinate and harmonize school feeding.

The most difficult indicator to achieve is creating adequate capacity at the local level. The action that is required is training people in communities so they can implement school feeding programs. This includes teaching them what information they need to collect and creating a process to provide feedback.

## **Key Points (Tier II Countries)**

Tier II countries include Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Senegal. Delegates from these countries briefly summarized which activities over the past year have been undertaken to further the goals and mission of home grown school feeding; what has worked best; and what are the greatest challenges.

Rwandan delegate Lydie Mukashyaka shared the thoughts of the delegates from these countries.

#### **Kenya**

Kenya has developed a transitional model to move from a donor-driven school feeding program to a home grown program. This transition has begun as the WFP is handing over its school feeding program to the government of Kenya. About 50,000 students will be involved in this transition, which is expected to take five years.

Essential to the success of home grown school feeding is the involvement of all stakeholders in school feeding. This includes the Ministers of Education, Agriculture, and Water.

The greatest challenge in Kenya is creating a country-wide school feeding program with national coverage.

#### **Malawi**

Malawi has developed a document laying out plans for a national school meals program. The government has adopted a national school feeding policy and has created a group for school feeding under the Minister of Education. In addition, the government has voted to allocate a budget for national school feeding and has introduced a home grown school feeding pilot in one district.

Representatives from Malawi see creating a harmonious system where all of the various actors work together as the greatest challenge faced.

#### **Nigeria**

Representatives from Nigeria have participated with various stakeholders in a series of workshops. These included a workshop conducted in partnership with UNICEF to sensitize stakeholders about school feeding and another workshop with farmers in Nigeria to make them aware of school feeding.

The greatest challenge in Nigeria is inadequate support from the federal government.

#### **Rwanda**

Rwanda has put in place a multi-sectoral working group to develop a school nutrition policy. In addition, over the past year, effort took place to begin mobilizing toward a transitional phase where Rwanda takes over some aspects of school feeding from WFP. The idea is that parents and communities will become responsible for feeding their children two days each week and WFP will continue to feed children the other three days of the school week, instead of all five. Mobilization is still taking place and it is hoped that this transition can begin in the next year.

The greatest challenge related to school feeding in Rwanda is a funding commitment from the government.

#### **Senegal**

Senegal has adopted a school feeding policy and has had training sessions at a regional level for program administrators and coordinators. It has also put in place a monitoring and evaluation framework and an information management system to assist with monitoring and evaluation.

The greatest need in Senegal is national coverage of the school feeding program.



## **School Feeding Call to Action Nairobi, Kenya**

Delegates from 22 African nations attending the Global Child Nutrition Forum in Nairobi, Kenya, May 3-7, 2011, call upon all African Nations to immediately focus on establishing and expanding home grown school feeding programs through legislation and national policies. NEPAD and the African Union are invited to support this call to action.

Hunger is on the rise and there is an immediate and imminent need to feed our children. The United Nation's millennium development goal of cutting hunger in half by 2015 is not on target; the G8 pledge to 'Feed the Future' has not been fully funded. However, calls by the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) to increase national budgets to 10% of the gross national product for agricultural development is being heard and realized by many African countries.

Home grown school feeding programs have been shown to improve:

- Education - through improved enrollment, school attendance and test scores
- Health and Nutrition Outcomes - by improving the nutritional status of school-aged children
- Rural Prosperity - by linking school feeding to local agricultural production and small-holder farmers
- National Food Security - by reducing food insecurity within local communities

Home grown school feeding programs are sustainable methods of attracting all children, especially girls, to school, while increasing local agricultural production and stimulating the local economy.

The Forum, attended by delegates from 22 African countries, regional and international organizations, representatives from the private sector and other countries, was hosted by the Kenyan government and co-sponsored by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation (Washington, DC) and the Partnership for Child Development (Imperial College London).



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