SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)
School year: 2020–2021
- Home Grown School Feeding Program

Lead Agency: Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education - School Agriculture & Food Management Unit (SAFMU)

NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS
- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition
- Food safety
- Health
- Agriculture
- Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget...
- Yes
- No
- No response

BUDGET
Total: USD 2,885,293
- Government: USD 2,331,798
- International donors*: USD 553,495
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors:  USD 0

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture
- Yes
- No
- No response

*International donations by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.

INFRASTRUCTURE
Very few schools in The Gambia have electricity or flush toilets. Some schools have piped water, most have clean water, and all have latrines and school kitchens. The kitchens are generally equipped with storage facilities and charcoal or wood stoves.

SPECIAL NOTES
None

SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY
- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Take-home rations
- Other

- Grains, cereals
- Roots, tubers
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil
- Salt
- Sugar
- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- Fruit juice
- Tea
- Water
- Other

Prohibited food items: Pork

FOOD SOURCES
- Purchased (domestic)
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES
- Handwashing with soap
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water
- Water purification

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS
- Food and nutrition
- Agriculture
- School gardens
- Hygiene
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education

The checked items were provided in most or all participating schools.

CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020–2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th># Enrolled</th>
<th># Receiving food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>220,666</td>
<td>188,312</td>
<td>44,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>360,153</td>
<td>214,152</td>
<td>182,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>284,102</td>
<td>212,134</td>
<td>33,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>864,921</td>
<td>614,598</td>
<td>261,231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN
Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 644,255
Receiving school food:
- Yes: 216,821
- No: 427,434
- No response: 10,990

Food was also provided to some students in...
- Yes: Pre-schools
- No: Vocational/trade schools
- No response: Other

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NUTRITION
School feeding program(s) included/involved the following:
- Fortified foods
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements
- Nutritionists involved
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- Objective to meet nutritional goals
- Objective to reduce obesity

Food items fortified/biofortified:
- Oil, salt, sweet potato

Micronutrients:
- Iron, zinc, vitamin A, iodine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
At least seven nutritionists are engaged in school feeding, and vitamin A sweet potato (orange flesh sweet potato–OFSP) is included on the school meal menu. Various education programs are aimed at preventing or mitigating overweight/obesity.

STUDIES CONDUCTED
Studies have found positive impacts of school feeding on school attendance, completion, and performance.

RESEARCH NEEDED
SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results) report

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Jobs created by school feeding programs*
- 2,874 Cooks and food preparers
- 1 Transporters
- 0 Off-site processors
- 0 Food packagers and handlers
- 12 Monitoring
- 0 Food service management
- 7 Safety and quality inspectors
- Other

*If blank, no response was provided.

Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...
- Yes ☑ No ☐ No response

Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...
- Yes ☑ No ☐ No response

There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...
- Women ☑ Other groups ☑
- Youth ☑ Other groups ☑

There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)...
- Yes ☑ No ☐ No response

Were there links between food banks and the school feeding program(s)?
- Yes ☑ No ☐ There are no food banks in this country.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Small-scale farmers provide vegetables, oil, grains/cereals, roots/tubers, and legumes for the school feeding program. The private sector is also engaged in catering, and communities are engaged in managing the school feeding activities. The cooks/caterers are paid in cash and in kind.

CONTACTS: THE GAMBIA
Agency: Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education, School Agriculture and Food Management Unit
Website: www.edugambia.gm

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES
Successes related to school feeding in The Gambia include improved attendance and retention in both lower basic and upper basic schools, the attainment of gender parity in basic schools, and the safety net offered to beneficiaries. A code of conduct for all partaking in school feeding has helped ensure that the program is not affected by corruption/mismanagement. However, there remains a need for greater community participation and intersectoral coordination in school feeding activities.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC
The COVID-19 pandemic caused some schools in The Gambia to operate remotely as movement in the country came to a halt (apart from essential activities). The school feeding program was therefore able to reach fewer students, and there was a temporary shift from in-school meals to meals and/or ingredients made available for pick up. Students’ families were also provided with monetary support or vouchers to purchase food.
HOME GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education - School Agriculture & Food Management Unit (SAFMU)

OBJECTIVES:
- To meet educational goals
- To provide a social safety net
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals

MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:
- In-school meals
- Take-home rations

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:
- Five times per week for meals; take-home rations distributed during emergencies
- During the school year

TARGETING:
Targeting based on indicators of vulnerability

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th># Students</th>
<th>% Girls</th>
<th>% Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>44,410</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>182,862</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>33,959</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>261,231</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:
- Grains, cereals
- Roots, tubers*
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Oil*
- Salt*
- Water
- Oil* fortified

FOOD SOURCES:
- 85% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 15% In-kind (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
The national government manages this program with support from the World Food Program (WFP). In 2016/17, WFP handed over management of two regions to the national government as part of the gradual transition to government ownership.