**SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)**

**School year:** 2020–2021

- National School Feeding Program

**Lead Agency:** Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health

**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 28,000,000**

- Government: USD 28,000,000
- International donors*: USD 0
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors: USD 0

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture: Yes

**CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020–2021**

**SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS**

**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.

**FOOD SOURCES**

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

**COMPLIMENTARY ACTIVITIES**

- 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: None

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

All schools in Iraq have electricity and piped water, though few have clean water. Most have latrines, while few have flush toilets. No schools have kitchens or dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias. School snacks and take-home rations are prepared off-site in private facilities.

**SPECIAL NOTES**

None

**GCNF GLOBAL SURVEY 2021**

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GCNF is a non-political, non-profit entity. Funding for the 2019 and 2021 surveys is provided, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture, agreement number FX18TA-10960G002.
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:
Not applicable

Micronutrients:
Not applicable

**NUTRITION**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

At least four nutritionists are engaged in school feeding in Iraq. Approaches to preventing or mitigating overweight/obesity include nutritional requirements for school food and food and nutrition education, health education, and physical education in schools.

**STUDIES CONDUCTED**

There have been studies on the impact of school feeding programs on children’s cognitive, health, and physical outcomes, and a study on teachers’ perceptions of the impact on students’ educational achievement.

**RESEARCH NEEDED**

Field experiments to implement school feeding programs according to the models of countries similar to the reality of Iraq.

**AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

**Jobs created by school feeding programs**

- Cooks and food preparers
- Transports
- Off-site processors
- Food packagers and handlers
- Monitoring
- Food service management
- 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
  - No response

- 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**

About 40% of the food for this program is purchased from local sources, and the private sector is involved in food trading and catering. However, it is not common for small companies to be successful in securing a contract in the National School Feeding Program. Women lead the monitoring of the school feeding program and are involved in its management.

**CONTACTS: IRAQ**

Agency: Ministry of Education
Website: http://moedu.gov.iq

**SUCCESES AND CHALLENGES**

Successes related to the National School Feeding Program include a decrease in student dropout, a reduction in hunger, the reintegration and empowerment of girls in society, and a greater awareness of diseases and other health threats, owing to the associated education programs. At the same time, challenges include a worrying lack of funding, which has affected the program’s implementation and limited its ability to reach a greater number of students. Iraq also suffers from poor infrastructure (such as kitchens) and limited experience (i.e., human resources) in the field of school feeding. A lack of cooperation from some school administrations raises concerns about mismanagement.

**EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused schools in Iraq to operate remotely for part of the 2020–2021 school year, with some schools subsequently open for in-person learning while others continued to operate remotely. The pandemic caused a temporary disruption in school feeding activities and a decrease in funding, though there was no change in the number of students reached or the modality of school feeding. Iraq was also faced with an economic/financial crisis during this time.
NATIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

OBJECTIVES:
• To meet educational goals
• To provide a social safety net
• To meet nutritional and/or health goals
• To prevent or mitigate obesity
• To meet agricultural goals

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

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:
• 4 days per week during the school year

TARGETING:
Targeted towards areas that are poor

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>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

Grains, cereals       Fruits       Water
Dairy products        Fruit juice

FOOD SOURCES:

40% Purchased (domestic) 0% In-kind (domestic)
60% Purchased (foreign)  0% In-kind (foreign)

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
Although the National School Feeding Program began in 2004, school feeding first began in Iraq in 1937. The program intends to reach 440,000 children in the 2021–2022 school year. The World Food Program serves as an implementing partner, and the Higher Committee for School Nutrition and its sub-committees in affiliated governorates coordinate school feeding at the national level.