SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020–2021
- National School Feeding Program (Programme National d’Alimentation Scolaire)

Lead Agency: Ministry of National Education

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 9,868,740

- Government: USD 5,368,740
- International donors*: USD 4,500,000
- 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

Some schools in Mauritania have electricity, clean water, and flush toilets. Very few have piped water, dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias, or kitchens. School meals are prepared on-site (on school grounds), in kitchens typically equipped with either open or closed cooking areas, on-site and piped water, serving utensils, and either gas stoves or charcoal or wood stoves.

SPECIAL NOTES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture lists Counterpart International as receiving support from the McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program in 2019 for school feeding activities in Mauritania. Population and enrollment numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report.

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: Foods forbidden by the Muslim religion

FOOD SOURCES

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

COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 1,370,179
Receiving school food: 172,905
Food was also provided to some students in...
- Pre-schools ☐ Vocational/trade schools ☐ 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:
- Grains/cereals, oil, salt

Micronutrients:
- Iodine, iron

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Efforts to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity include health education, physical education, and food and nutrition education. Cooks/caterers receive special training in nutrition, and produce from school gardens is consumed by students.

STUDIES CONDUCTED

None specified

RESEARCH NEEDED

Research related to the use of local foodstuffs in school meal programs.

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Jobs created by school feeding programs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooks and food preparers</td>
<td>2,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transports</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-site processors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food packagers and handlers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and quality inspectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Food for the program is purchased through open-bid (competitive tendering) procedures in which small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies successfully compete. Students’ families contribute to the program through payment for stoves and by providing coal for preparing the meals.

CONTACTS: MAURITANIA

Agency: Ministry of National Education and the Reform of the Education System
Website: https://www.education.gov.mr

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Recent successes related to school feeding in Mauritania include the government’s strong support for the solar power program (which operates in the interior regions (wilayas) of the country), as well as the creation of a budget line in the country’s budget. Nevertheless, challenges remain. For example, within a targeted wilaya, food is not offered to all schools due to limited food resources. The poverty of students’ parents and their low level of education do not allow them to pay for the proper functioning of the canteen. In addition, school gardens in most school canteens have water constraints. There are also some concerns related to corruption/mismanagement, especially among the school canteen managers who have not yet been through proper training.

EMERGENCIES/Covid-19 PANDEMIC

Schools in Mauritania were open throughout the November 2020 to October 2021 school year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program temporarily ceased feeding operations and temporarily changed the source of funding, but also increased the amount of funding and the number of students fed. Meals were still prepared at school but were served in a very different way than before (e.g., fewer children eating together at the same time). The insertion of a dedicated budget line for school feeding in Mauritania’s national budget was a positive development that proved helpful during the pandemic. While funding for the program was secure, additional funding for school meals would better support getting food to children in times of emergency.
NATIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM
PROGRAMME NATIONAL D'ALIMENTATION SCOLAIRE

Lead implementer(s):
Ministry of National Education and the Reform of the Education System
(Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Reforme du Système Educatif)

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

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:
- 5 times per week during the school year

TARGETING:
Geographic targeting based on indicators of community 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>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>172,905</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>172,905</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:
- Grains, cereals*
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil*
- Salt*
- Sugar
- Dairy milk
- Water

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

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
The National School Feeding Program began operating in 2020 and covered 1,052 public schools in the 2020–2021 school year. To limit packaging waste, bags/containers are re-used. There are plans to serve 184,905 students in the upcoming school year.