School Meal Programs in Sub-Saharan Africa

**Coverage**
- 25% Primary school age coverage
- 3% Secondary school age coverage
- 40% of countries in this region reported an increase in coverage of at least 5% from three years prior.

**Statistics reported here cover 49.0 million children received food.**

- 27% of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, which together hold 90% of the population of the region.

**National Laws, Policies, or Standards Related to School Feeding (% of countries)**

- Dedicated Line Item in National Budgets
  - Sub-Saharan Africa: 68%
  - Global: 69%

In Sub-Saharan Africa, countries with a line item had an average budget per recipient child of $23.5, compared to $46 for those without a line item.

**Food Sources (% of programs)**

- 83% Purchased (Domestic)
- 37% Purchased (Foreign)
- 25% In-Kind (Domestic)
- 37% In-Kind (Foreign)

**Food Basket (% of programs)**

- Millet: 24%
- Oil: 90%
- Meat: 27%
- Legumes/Grains/Cereals: 46%
- Sugar: 25%
- Roots/Roots: 28%
- Fruits: 19%
- Vegetables: 40%
- Legume/Beans: 87%
- Grains/Cereals: 99%
- Dairy Products: 34%
- Eggs: 16%
- Fish: 40%
- Spices: 79%

The food baskets in Sub-Saharan Africa contain an average of 5.3 food categories, compared to 6.9 globally.

**Health and Nutrition**

- 78% of programs serve foods—such as oil, salt, grains/cereals, corn-soy blend, or biscuits—fortified with micronutrients. Biofortified foods, such as the vitamin A-rich orange flesh sweet potato, are also served in Mozambique and The Gambia.

- 9% of programs have an objective to prevent or mitigate obesity.

Rates of childhood overweight and obesity are rising in many regions of the world, including in Sub-Saharan Africa where concerns about undernutrition are also salient.

**Focus on Creating Income-generating Opportunities for Women**

- In Burundi, women are encouraged to join agricultural production cooperatives connected to the National School Feeding Program (Programme National d'Alimentation Scolaire – PNAS) and lead school canteen management committees.

- In Togo, canteen mothers are remunerated for their catering services. The STARS project also implements savings and credit activities for women's groups in its project intervention area.

- In Côte d'Ivoire, cooks in the program are predominantly women and are paid in cash. Women's agricultural groups also supply the school canteens, and leadership positions in canteen monitoring committees are held by women.

This has implications for the ability of schools to refrigerate or preserve food items, such as fresh fruit and vegetables.

**Health and Nutrition**

- 91% of programs have an objective to meet nutritional and/or health goals, and 9% have an objective to prevent or mitigate obesity.

The analysis is based on the Global Survey of School Meal Programs database. See School Meal Programs Around the World: Results from the 2021 Global Survey of School Meal Programs.

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