SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)
School year: 2021
- National School Meals Program
Lead Agency: Ministry of Education (Department of School Health, Nutrition, and HIV/AIDS)

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 13,944,065
- Government: USD 111,248
- International donors*: USD 13,832,815
- 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
Most schools in Malawi have clean water and latrines; some have piped water, and very few have electricity or flush toilets. School meals are prepared on-site (on school grounds) in kitchens typically equipped with closed cooking areas, piped water, storage facilities, serving utensils, and charcoal or wood stoves.

SPECIAL NOTES
The U.S. Department of Agriculture lists Nascent Solutions as receiving support from the McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program in 2019 for school feeding activities in Malawi. Some 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 that are high in fat, sugar, or salt

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/every 2 years □
- 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.

SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS 2021

CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 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>1,698,675</td>
<td>462,291</td>
<td>26,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>5,166,181</td>
<td>4,956,667</td>
<td>2,777,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>2,055,945</td>
<td>989,847</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8,900,801</td>
<td>6,408,805</td>
<td>2,803,891</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COVERAGE:
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN
Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 7,702,126
Receiving school food: 2,777,588
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:
- Yes ☑️ Fortified foods
- Yes ☑️ Bio-fortified foods
- Yes ☑️ Micronutrient supplements
- Yes ☑️ Nutritionists involved
- Yes ☑️ Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- Yes ☑️ Objective to meet nutritional goals
- Yes ☑️ Objective to reduce obesity

Food items fortified/biofortified:
- Grains/cereals
- Iron, iodine, zinc, folic acid, calcium, riboflavin, niacin, and vitamins A, B12, B6, C, and D

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Efforts to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity include nutritional requirements for food baskets, food restrictions on or near school grounds, food and nutrition education, and health education. Cooks/caterers receive special training in nutrition, portions/measurements, menu planning, food safety/hygiene/storage, waste management, and COVID-19 prevention measures.

STUDIES CONDUCTED
None specified.

RESEARCH NEEDED
A cost-benefit analysis of school feeding programs and an evaluation of the impact of school feeding on the health and nutritional status of learners.

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
Jobs created by school feeding programs*
- Cooks and food preparers
- Transporters
- 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
Food is purchased through open-bid (competitive tendering) procedures, though just 9% of schools engage with smallholder farmers under the school grants model. Farmers provide grains/cereals, roots/tubers, legumes, fruits, and green, leafy vegetables. The program also procures processed com-soy blend (CSB) from processors. The private sector is engaged in food trading, processing, and transport. While the government does not employ any paid staff in the program, various partners employ their own staff.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES
Recent successes related to school feeding in Malawi include increased enrollment; reduced absenteeism and dropout; improved health and nutritional status of students; and the promotion of relationships between schools and communities. Recent challenges include the high cost of food which undercuts efforts to increase coverage; the heavy reliance on donor support, which results in participating schools exiting from the program after financial support has been reduced; issues of drought and floods which reduce agricultural yields, and a lack of nutritionists involved in the program. Moreover, the program’s budget deficit meant that only 45% of the targeted schools were reached in 2021.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Schools in Malawi were closed and not operating for several months in the middle of the 2021 school year. Moreover, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were decreases in the number of students fed, the frequency of school feeding, the size of rations, the level of food basket variety, and the amount of funding, with some funds intended for school meals being diverted to procure COVID-19 prevention materials. There was also a temporary change in feeding modality (e.g., switching from in-school meals to take-home rations, whereby ingredients were provided to prepare and eat at home), and in some cases, students’ families were provided with hard currency (cash) or physical vouchers (paper coupons) to purchase food. The pandemic has promoted joint planning and collaboration with parents, and has helped parents realize that apart from school meals, it is important that children receive meals/snacks at home.

CONTACTS: MALAWI
Agency: Department of School Health, Nutrition, and HIV/AIDS (Ministry of Education)
Website: www.education.gov.mw
NATIONAL SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM

Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education, Mary’s Meals International, Government of Germany, European Union

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

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

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:
- 5 times per week for in-school meals; quarterly for take-home rations
- During the school year

TARGETING:
Geographic targeting: Schools are targeted based on local levels of food insecurity, poverty, and academic performance, and all learners in a chosen school receive meals.

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 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>26,305</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>2,777,588</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,803,891</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

* fortified

FOOD SOURCES:
- 96% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 4% In-kind (foreign)

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
The National School Meals Program began operating in 1999, and during the 2021 school year, 2,661 public schools participated in the program. The program receives a combination of financial support from the government and development partners; NGOs finance the program through their own resources, but the government allocates schools and finances some schools using government resources through district councils. Fumigation/pest control is used within sealed food storage areas to limit food waste, and bags/containers are re-used to limit packaging waste.