School Meal Programs in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Statistics reported here cover school meal programs in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) school feeding aggregate budget per child per year (USD) of 15 ECOWAS countries.

The highest primary and secondary school age coverage rates are found in:
- Cabo Verde (64%)
- Burkina Faso (53%)
- Guinea-Bissau (38%)

Of programs across the ECOWAS region report adequate funding.

84% of funding in the ECOWAS region comes from government sources.

60% of programs reported experiencing at least one emergency.

30% of programs reported experiencing at least two emergencies.

FOOD SOURCES (% of programs)

- Purchased (Domestic): 81%
- Purchased (Foreign): 39%
- In-kind (Domestic): 31%
- In-kind (Foreign): 23%

FOOD ITEMS SERVED IN SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS (% of programs)

- 100% Oil, Grains/cereals
- 97% Legumes/nuts
- 83% Salt
- 43% Other vegetables
- 40% Green leafy vegetables
- 37% Dairy products
- 30% Roots/tubers, Meat
- 20% Sugar
- 13% Fruits, Poultry
- 10% Eggs

PREVALENCE OF COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES

- Handwashing: 100%
- Deworming: 62%
- Weight measurement: 28%
- Height measurement: 14%
- Anemia testing: 14%
- Menstrual hygiene: 10%
- Hearing testing: 3%

This analysis is based on 15 ECOWAS Country responses to the 2021 Global Survey of School Meal Programs covering school year 2020. In all, 139 countries responded to the survey, describing 183 large-scale school feeding programs. See School Meals Around the World: Results from the 2021 Global Survey of School Meal Programs © https://gcnf.org/global-reports/
**Cabo Verde** has the highest school feeding coverage rate in the ECOWAS region and 4th highest in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Recent successes related to school feeding in **Burkina Faso** include an innovation to transfer financial resources to municipalities to purchase food locally.

In **The Gambia**, Vitamin A-rich orange flesh sweet potatoes are served to address micronutrient deficiencies.

In **Guinea**, students’ families contribute to the school meal programs through voluntary in-kind contributions, as directed by local school management committees. They also construct the kitchens, refectories, and stores, and provide wood.

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In **Niger**, school feeding is understood to improve the retention of girls in school (especially in rural areas) and provide them with social protection, thereby reducing the risk of early marriage.

In **Sierra Leone**, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions introduced (such as market lockdowns), take-home rations were provided to households in at least some project communities to alleviate food shortages. This elicited greater community interest in, and support for, the school feeding programs.

The **National Home-Grown School Feeding Program (NHGSFP)** in **Nigeria** procures all food domestically with about 90% coming from local sources.

Recent school feeding successes in **Liberia** include the development of the national school feeding policy and code of conduct, as well as the development of the ZOA Home-Grown School Feeding Programme operations manual.

In-kind donations from domestic sources tend to come from within the local community, often from students’ parents. Thus, in **Benin**, **Mali**, and **Togo**, community members are encouraged to provide in-kind contributions to support and ensure local ownership of the school feeding programs.

The **School Canteen Program** in **Guinea-Bissau** prioritizes procurement from family farmers with agricultural subsidies, school feeding-specific training, and purchase agreements set prior to harvest.

An estimated 80% of food in the **Ghana School Feeding Program** is procured from local sources near the schools.

In the **Support for School Feeding in Senegal** program, cash transfers are provided to schools, and purchases are then made by school management committees from selected local retailers. Further up the food supply chain, small-scale farmers (including women’s groups) sell products, such as cereals and cowpeas, to the retailers.

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