Democratic Republic of the Congo

School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

All Primary and Secondary School-age Children

90% Enrolled, but not receiving food
1% Receiving food
10% Not enrolled

Only Enrolled Primary Students

1% Receiving food

National Laws, Policies, and Standards

☐ National school feeding policy
☐ Nutrition
☐ Health
☐ Food safety
☐ Smallholder farms
☐ Agriculture (apart from smallholders)
☐ Climate/environment policy
☐ Private sector involvement

The country had ...

☐ Inter-sectoral coordination committee for school feeding
☐ National system for monitoring school feeding

Budget

Total: USD 8,541,576
- Government: 0
- International donors: 8,541,576
- Private sector: 0
- NGOs (domestic): 0
- Other donors: 0

☐ Line item in the national budget for school feeding

School Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Refined/milled grains
- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Dairy
- Poultry and game meat
- Red meat
- Processed meat
- Fish and shellfish
- Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- White roots and tubers
- Fruits
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Deep-fried foods
- Sweets
- Liquid oils
- Semi-solid and solid fats
- Salt
- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- 100% fruit juice
- Other fruit drink
- Tea
- Other sugar-sweetened beverages

Prohibited food items
- None

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

Special Notes: None
Nutrition

School feeding program(s) include/involve 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

Limitations on food and beverage marketing...
- On school grounds
- To school age children

Additional Information

A team of nutritionists from the World Food Program supported the canteen program. Oil and salt were fortified with iodine and vitamins A and B12. Produce from school gardens was partly consumed, partly sold, and used to diversify students’ meals and ensure the functioning of canteens. Obesity was not considered to be a problem in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...

- Electricity: Very few
- Piped water: Very few
- Clean water: Very few
- Flush toilets: Very few
- Dedicated eating spaces: None
- Kitchens: Very few
- Sports or physical play areas: Some
- Solar panels/solar power: Some

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
- School gardens

Complementary Education Programs

- Food and nutrition
- Agriculture
- Environment/climate/sustainability
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education
- Mental health

Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: 8,306
- Percent paid: Unknown
- Percent women: Unknown

There was a focus on creating job opportunities for...
- Women
- Youth
- Other Groups

Additional Information

Food for the program was purchased through open-bid (competitive tendering) procedures with preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies. Small-scale farms received support in the form of agriculture subsidies (including inputs), purchase agreements set prior to harvest (forward contracts), and advice, seeds, or tools to prevent post-harvest losses and promote production of specific crops or foods for the program. During the 2022-2023 school year, approximately 8,306 cooks were involved in preparing children’s meals without receiving cash compensation. However, cooks received remuneration which included products from the World Food Program (WFP) food basket (cereals, legumes, oil, and salt).
Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. School feeding in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been mainly supported by the WFP since 2001, initially covering 15,000 students in 13 primary schools. Activities have significantly expanded with emphasis on the social safety net and educational aspects of school feeding.

2. School meals promoted education and the food and nutritional security of children during financial and food crises.

3. The enrollment rate of girls increased significantly in schools benefiting from school canteens.

4. There was a reduction in the school abandonment rate.

5. The program increased the income of small-scale producers through the creation of markets.

6. In conflict zones, the WFP provided take-home rations as an alternative to meals on site. This incentivized very vulnerable households to allow their children to continue their studies at school.

Challenges

1. Limited physical access and security in certain areas in the east of the country.

2. Need for protection of schoolchildren and school infrastructure in certain areas.

3. Policy and strategy still in "gestation."

4. Need for improvement in leadership and coordination.

5. More funding needed to cover a large number of vulnerable students.

Environmental Sustainability

Targeted climate-friendly foods

- Yes
- No

Steps taken to limit food waste

- Sealed food storage
- Fumigation/pest control in storage area
- Use of hermetic bags or larger hermetic storage system
- Routine testing/monitoring of dry food storage
- Use of nearly-expired food
- Use of usable but "imperfect" commodities or produce
- Campaign to reduce how much food students throw away

Steps taken to limit package waste

- Re-use of bags/containers
- Recycling
- Use of compostable materials
- Use of "bulk serve" containers
- Prohibiting specific types of packaging

Additional Information

Fuel efficient (energy efficient) stoves were utilized to reduce the use of firewood/charcoal as fuel.

Emergencies

Experienced disruptions to school feeding due to emergencies

- Yes
- No

Strategies to address the impact of emergencies

- Seek alternative food sources or suppliers
- Changes in numbers of students fed
- Negotiate better prices with existing suppliers
- Establish alternative supply routes or transportation methods
- Source different or alternative food
- Release of food reserves
- Increase funding or budget allocation for school feeding
- Collaborate with local producers or suppliers to reduce dependence on global supply chains
- Changes in delivery method
- Changes in feeding modality
- Changes in feeding frequency
- No particular strategy was used

Additional Information

During the 2022-2023 school year, the Classic and Home-Grown School Canteen Program was affected by natural disaster, supply chain disruption, extreme food price inflation, teachers’ strike, and general insecurity in the eastern part of the country. Some schools were closed for one month or more during the school year, causing school feeding operations to cease temporarily.
Classic and Home-Grown School Canteen Program
(Programme des cantines scolaires classique et HGSF)

Management
• Lead implementer(s): World Food Program
• An international donor agency or other implementing partner managed the program.
• Implementing partner procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Level</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>% Girls</th>
<th>% Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>222,800</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>222,800</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foods and Beverages
- Whole grains
- Legumes
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Liquid oils
- Salt

Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding
- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
- Local food sourcing
- Small-scale farmers involved by selling directly (or through their farmer organization) to the program or the schools
- Additional support provided to small-scale farmers
- Country had a law/policy/standard related to small-scale farmers and school feeding programs
- Preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies in tendering procedures
- Effort is made to reduce food miles

Objectives
• To meet educational goals
• To provide a social safety net
• To address gender-specific challenges
• To reduce hunger
• 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 (in-school meals) and once per week (take-home rations)
• During the school year

Targeting
• Targeting based on level of vulnerability in the provinces and donor requirements. In January 2023, the eastern part of the country faced a high level of insecurity. To support students in the affected region, take-home rations were provided until the end of the school year in June.

Food Sources
- 25% Purchased (domestic)
- 75% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 0% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information
Large-scale school feeding started in 2001, and all structures involved in the school feeding program come together within the SABER Interministerial Committee. Students’ families contributed to the supply of wood, water, and salt as needed.