

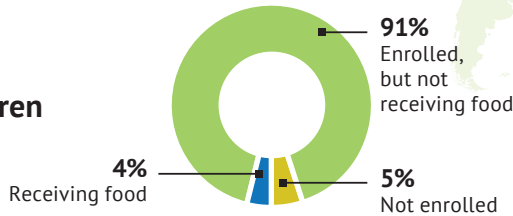


REPUBLIC OF
Iraq

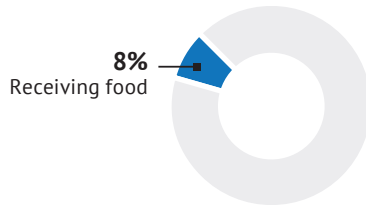


School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

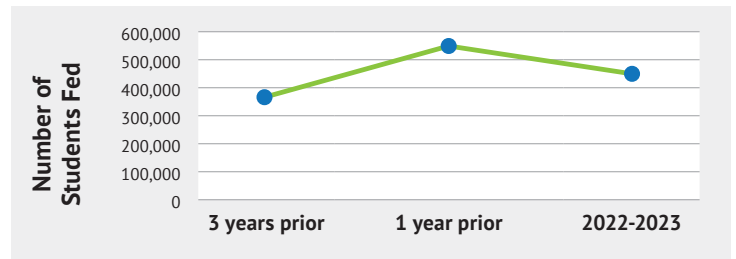
All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	2,246,467	500,000	0
Primary School	6,866,568	6,000,000	450,000
Secondary School	5,773,231	6,000,000	0
TOTAL	14,886,266	12,500,000	450,000



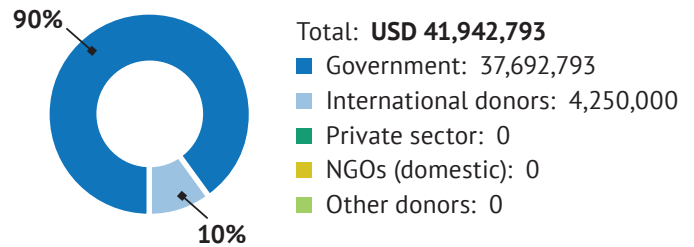
National Laws, Policies, and Standards

- 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



- Line item in the national budget for school feeding

School Foods and Beverages

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

Prohibited food items

High-sugar foods, soft drinks, energy drinks, and artificially-flavored juices.

Food Sources

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

Special Notes: Some population numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete the report.

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...

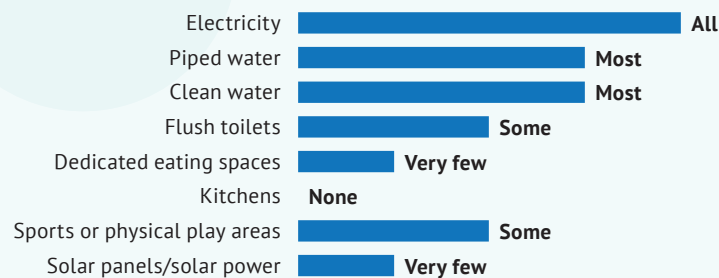
- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

Additional Information

Nutritionists employed by the World Food Program (WFP) were involved with the program. Several approaches were used to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity, including food and nutrition education, health education, physical education, and the restriction of certain foods and/or beverages and their marketing on or near school grounds.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...



Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **Unknown**

- Percent paid: Unknown
- Percent women: Unknown

There was a focus on creating job opportunities for...

- Women**
- Youth**
- Other Groups**

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**
- Hygiene**
- Health**
- Reproductive health**
- HIV prevention
- Physical education**
- Mental health**

Additional Information

Companies specialized in food trading, food processing, transport, and the provision of supplies (e.g., utensils and equipment) were employed in the school feeding program in Iraq. Cooks/caterers received special training in food safety/hygiene. There was a purposeful focus on creating job or income-generating opportunities for disadvantaged women, and youths were also purposefully employed in transportation, marketing, packaging, and processing.

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

To limit food waste, there was a daily distribution of the food basket in accord with the number of students; any surplus from absentee classes was distributed to the rest of the students according to the letters of the alphabet. Uneaten food and produce from school gardens was used as organic fertilizer to sustain the school garden.

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 National School Nutrition Program was affected by an economic/financial crisis, conflict, a health epidemic/pandemic, supply chain disruptions, and extreme food price inflation. Schools remained open during the school year, but school feeding operations were temporarily ceased in some schools/regions. As a result of these emergencies, there was a slight decrease in the accessibility (availability and affordability) of food for the program and a significant increase in the cost of operating (namely the cost of transporting food). To accommodate these changes, there was a significant adjustment to the menu (after conducting a survey about students’ desires and health priorities) which ultimately improved the nutritional quality of meals provided by the program. An additional mitigation strategy was the rehabilitation of factories to produce foods for this program, and this initiative was supported by the government and the private sector.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. Return to school of students who had previously dropped out;
2. Increased girls’ enrollment in schools;
3. Provided employment opportunities for unemployed youth and disadvantaged women.

Challenges

1. The number of beneficiaries has not increased;
2. Nutritional quality of the program can be improved;
3. There are financial challenges, a lack of infrastructure related to school meals, and a lack of specialized human resources in the field of monitoring and evaluation.

National School Nutrition Program

Management

- Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education; and companies specialized in manufacturing and supplying foodstuffs
- The program was managed jointly by the Ministry of Education and the World Food Program.
- Implementing partner procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	0	–	–
Primary School	450,000	44%	56%
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	450,000	44%	56%

Foods and Beverages

- Refined/milled grains
- Dairy
- Fruits
- Dairy milk

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 prevent or mitigate obesity
- To meet agricultural goals

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school snacks

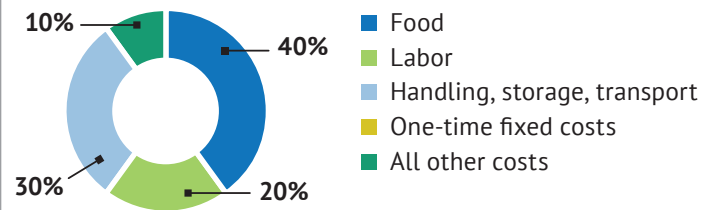
Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Geographic (the most vulnerable districts according to a survey by the Ministry of Planning)

Expenses



Food Sources

- 100% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 0% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

Although the National School Feeding Program began in 2004, school feeding first began in Iraq in 1937. In the 2022-2023 school year, the Ministry of Education led an inter-sectoral body comprised of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Planning, and the Ministry of Finance to coordinate school feeding at the national level. All food served through this program was produced by Iraqi factories and Iraqi farms. The community (including parents or others) was engaged in the program as members of the school nutrition committee, and students' preferences were integrated into the program.

The Global Survey of School Meal Programs® collects data from government sources and is funded, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture. Contact info@gcnf.org for more information.

Citation: Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF). 2024. Global Survey of School Meal Programs Country Report, Iraq. <https://gcnf.org/country-reports/>