

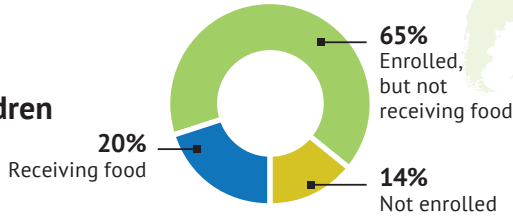


REPUBLIC OF
Sierra Leone

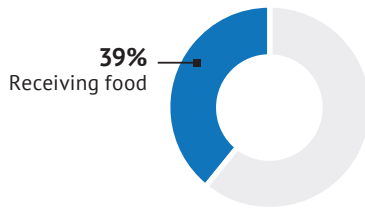


School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

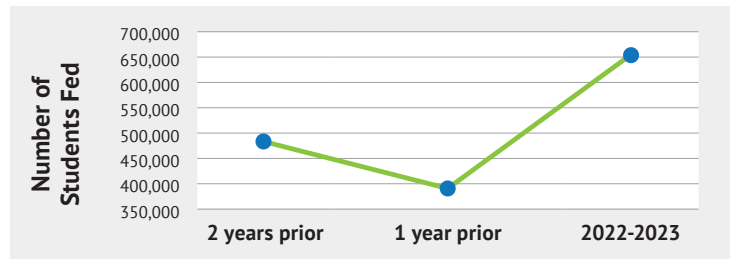
All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	850,000	250,000	14,316
Primary School	2,045,379	1,656,528	640,645
Secondary School	1,127,106	1,060,680	0
TOTAL	4,022,485	2,967,208	654,961



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 29,952,000**
- Government: Unknown
 - International donors: Unknown
 - Private sector: 0
 - NGOs (domestic): 0
 - Other donors: 0

The U.S. Department of Agriculture lists Catholic Relief Services as receiving support in 2021 from the McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program for school feeding activities in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone also received other international assistance.

- 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
Foods that did not meet the quality standards of the Nutrition and Health Policies

- 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...

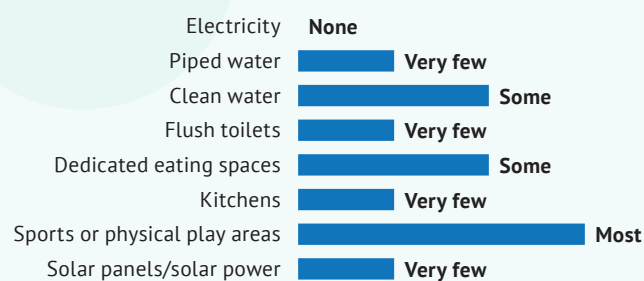
- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

Additional Information

Rice was fortified with zinc and vitamin D, and biofortified foods included iron rich potatoes, iron lentils, vitamin A cassava, and vitamin A sweet potato (orange flesh sweet potatoes-OFSP). Nutritional supplements or micronutrient powders containing folic acid were also provided. No beverages with non-nutritive or artificial sweeteners were available to students at school. Produce from school gardens was partly consumed by students, while the surplus was at times sold to procure extra condiments. Approaches to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity included nutritional requirements for school food, food and/or beverage restrictions on or near school grounds, food and nutrition education, health education, and physical education.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...



Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **5,178**

- Percent paid: 0
- 100% women

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

Food for the program was purchased through open-bid (competitive tendering) procedures with preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies. Cooks received special training in nutrition, portions/measurements, and food safety/hygiene.

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 reduce the distance between where school food was produced and the schools, efforts were made to increase local procurement, local production, and local processing capacity. The program did not use any packaged or processed foods.

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

In the 2022-2023 school year, school feeding in Sierra Leone was affected by extreme food price inflation and a teachers’ strike. While there was no plan in place to mitigate the impact of emergencies, all schools in the country remained open and there were no interruptions to school feeding operations. Nevertheless, these emergencies had the effect of slightly increasing the cost of transporting food for the school feeding program. At the same time, the program’s budget increased from local or national government sources, and there was an increase in the use of home-grown food products.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. Improved educational outcomes.
2. Reduction in drop-out rate from schools, especially among girls.
3. Increased retention and pass rate of pupils in schools.
4. Reduced short-term hunger for most regularly attending students.
5. Home-grown school feeding has engaged and helped smallholder farmers across the country.

Challenges

1. Monitoring of the program was challenging, as the program still relies on paper-based reporting.
2. Lack of adequate monitoring staff.

National School Feeding Programme

Management

- Lead implementer(s): World Food Programme (WFP) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).
- Implementing partner procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	14,316	–	–
Primary School	640,645	–	–
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	654,961	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- ✓ Whole grains
- ✓ Refined/milled grains
- ✓ Legumes
- ✓ Eggs
- ✓ Poultry and game meat
- ✓ Processed meat
- ✓ Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- ✓ White roots and tubers
- ✓ 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 reduce hunger
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

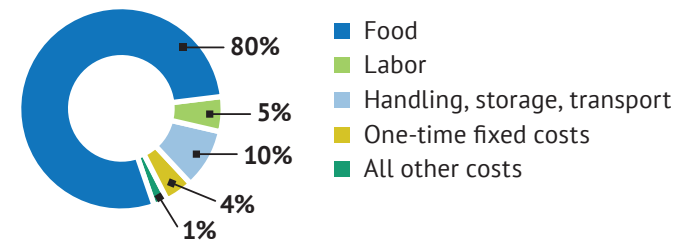
Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Geographic targeting based on vulnerability index (a survey conducted every five years by the Ministry of Agriculture, WFP, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to determine communities that need immediate government response) and individual student characteristics

Expenses



Food Sources

20% Purchased (domestic)
60% Purchased (foreign)

5% In-kind (domestic)
15% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

The National School Feeding Programme reached 3,500 public schools during the 2022-2023 school year. Communities were engaged to ensure awareness of roles and responsibilities in implementing the program and to encourage local ownership of 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, Republic of Sierra Leone. <https://gcnf.org/country-reports/>