

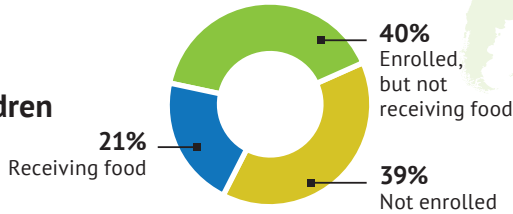


ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
Mauritania

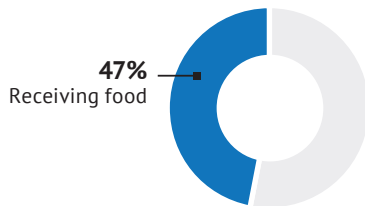


School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

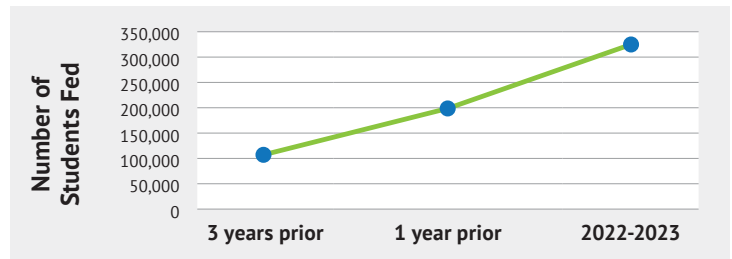
All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	401,983	Unknown	0
Primary School	766,744	688,118	322,884
Secondary School	773,698	258,338	0
TOTAL	1,942,425	946,456	322,884



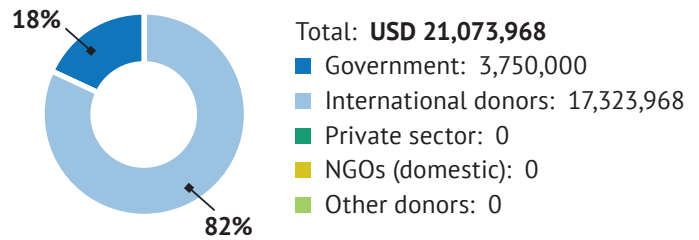
National Laws, Policies, and Standards

- 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

- 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

All foods forbidden by the Islamic religion

Food Sources

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

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

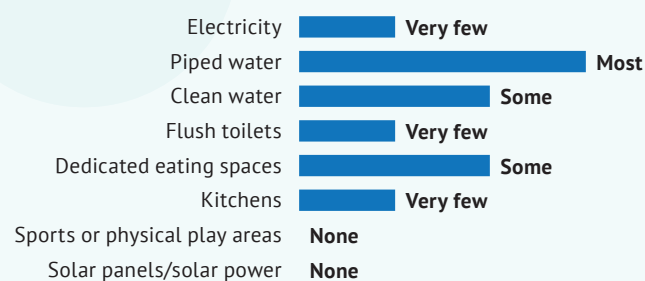
- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

Additional Information

In Mauritania, the National School Feeding Program (PNAS) served enriched sorghum flour and corn-soy blend, as well as iodized salt. Meanwhile, the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition program served oil and rice fortified with iron, iodine, zinc, folic acid, calcium, and vitamins A, B6, and D. The McGovern-Dole-funded program also engaged four nutritionists in the design and implementation of the program. The National School Feeding Program (PNAS) aimed to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity with nutrition requirements for food baskets, as well as physical education and education on nutrition and health, and the McGovern-Dole-funded program also offered nutrition education.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...



Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **2,470**

- At least 25-50% paid
- 75-99% 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

Cooks received payment (both in cash and in kind) in the McGovern-Dole-funded program. These cooks additionally received training in nutrition, portions, menu planning, and food safety/hygiene. In addition to the role of cooks, school meal programs in Mauritania also supported some jobs in food transport, management, and inspection.

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

The School Meal Program WFP and the McGovern-Dole-funded program used butane gas in an effort to reduce the use of wood or charcoal. The School Meal Program WFP also reduced food waste with close monitoring of food and store management by WFP monitors and staff from the National and Regional Education Directorates. Food waste was further limited by counting the number of students before preparing meals.

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

The National School Feeding Program and the School Meal Program WFP did not report experiencing any emergencies in the 2022-2023 school year. However, the McGovern-Dole-funded program experienced emergencies in the form of national disaster(s), economic crisis, extreme food price inflation, and teachers' strike(s), and, in turn, experienced interruptions that lasted several days during strikes and floods. This program had to decrease rations (i.e., reduce the quantity of food delivered to schools) due to the increase in food prices.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. Strong political commitment to school feeding;
2. A National School Food Policy adopted by the Council of Ministers;
3. An evolving annual budget line in the national budget.

Challenges

1. The setting is challenging, given the dispersion of schools and the high rates of poverty and illiteracy among parents;
2. There is limited involvement of communities, municipalities, and the private sector in school meals;
3. There are problems with transport and storage of foodstuffs;
4. There is a lack of consistency across the three components of the national program (products, training modules, approaches, etc.);
5. There is a need for studies on the potential supply of school canteens, particularly based on local products;
6. Guidelines associated with the PNAS need to be updated.

National School Feeding Program

(Programme National d'Alimentation Scolaire – PNAS)

Management

- Lead implementer(s): The Directorate of Nutrition and Health Education
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).
- National government procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	0	–	–
Primary School	199,337	50%	50%
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	199,337	50%	50%

Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- Fish and shellfish
- 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

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

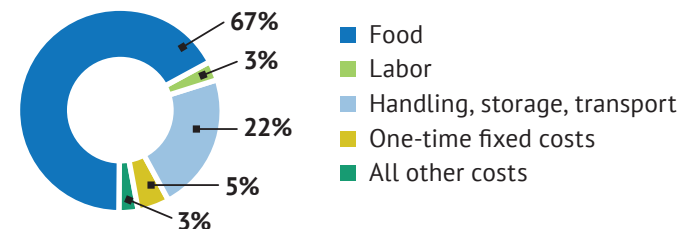
Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Targeting based on school type, school characteristics and individual characteristics. The program operates in all wilayas (regions) of the country, but especially in the most vulnerable areas of each wilaya.

Expenses



Food Sources

20% Purchased (domestic) 22% In-kind (domestic)
28% Purchased (foreign) 30% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

This program began in 2021 and, as of the 2022-2023 school year, operated in 1,228 schools. The program is inclusive of three implementing partners: the Government, the World Food Programme (WFP), and Counterpart International. Students' families contribute through the payment of cooks' salaries and the purchase of wood or gas for cooking.

School Meal Program WFP (SMP1)

Management

- Lead implementer(s): Directorate of Nutrition and Health Education (MENRSE); and collaborating NGOs
- The program was in transition between centralized and decentralized decision-making (Semi-decentralized).
- Implementing partner procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	0	–	–
Primary School	51,000	51%	49%
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	51,000	51%	49%

Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Refined/milled grains
- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- 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 provide a social safety net
- To address gender-specific challenges
- To reduce hunger

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

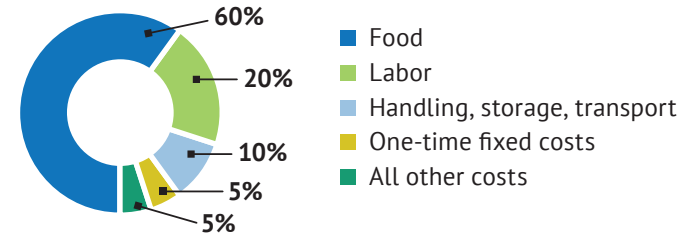
Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Schools were chosen in vulnerable areas.

Expenses



Food Sources

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

Additional Information

This program operated in 412 schools in the 2022-2023 school year, communities provided firewood, water, and payment for cooks. While most of the program's targets were considered to be achieved/mostly achieved, the target for the level of menu diversity was only considered to be "slightly achieved".

McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition

Management

- Lead implementer(s): Counterpart International
- An international donor agency or other implementing partner managed the program.
- Implementing partner procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	0	—	—
Primary School	72,547	51%	49%
Secondary School	0	—	—
TOTAL	72,547	51%	49%

Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- Red meat
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Liquid oils
- Salt

Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
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Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

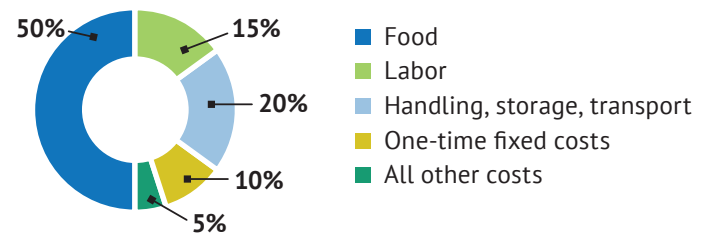
Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

Targeting was based largely on school characteristics. Schools with six grades were prioritized, just under one third of primary schools in Mauritania meet this criteria. The program was targeted toward schools that were close to villages; were accessible for the purposes of food transportation; had necessary infrastructure such as storerooms, latrines, and water sources; and were characterized by the active participation of the community in the project.

Expenses



Food Sources

- 10% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 90% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

Rations in the form of grains/cereals were given to cooks on a quarterly basis. Parents' associations and school management committees played a major role in food preparation and other activities. Students' food preferences are taken into account through the use of surveys. This program is in a state of transition, and over five years, the program has transferred the management of 21 (out of 209) schools to the Government. These schools are now supported by the National School Feeding Program (PNAS).

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, Mauritania. <https://gcnf.org/country-reports/>