EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The importance of investing in the health and nutrition of school children and adolescents

Healthy and well-nourished school children learn better. Healthy children also have better chances to thrive and fulfill their potential as adults. Ensuring that girls and boys stay in school and are able and ready to learn allows countries to develop their human capital and individuals to more fully achieve their potential in life. It strengthens community cohesion, stability and productivity, and helps make people and societies more resilient in a rapidly changing world.

Investments in human capital development of children are among the most effective and productive investments that countries can make. Failing to invest in a well-nourished, healthy and educated population undermines growth and economic development: low-income countries in Africa account for 25 out of the 30 countries with the lowest ranking in the World Bank’s Human Capital Index, and this underinvestment in human capital leads to a loss of economic potential ranging from 50 to 70 percent in the long-term. Africa’s Human Capital Index puts the region at 40 percent of its potential. Its GDP could be 2.5 times higher if the benchmarks for health and education were achieved.

The world has made great strides in improving access to education, but learning remains suboptimal. There needs to be more investment in quality education, but the world is failing its school children in other important ways that constrain learning. In low- and middle-income countries, about 300 million school children have anemia, causing them to lose some six IQ points per child; and about 73 million school children in low-income countries go to school hungry. These conditions translate into the equivalent of between 200 million and 500 million schooldays lost to ill health each year.

Current approaches to investing in a nation’s children are neither sufficient nor wise. While low-income countries invest some USD 210 billion annually in providing education for their children (infrastructure, teachers, curriculum), they only invest about USD 3.4 to 5.5 billion in ensuring the children have the health and nutrition to allow them to learn: we invest in learning, but not in the learner. There is a growing consensus that there is a need to fix this mismatch. Very simply: sick children cannot attend school and hungry children cannot learn.

WFP will champion this neglected issue. In this strategy WFP aims to provide a clear strategic framework for WFP’s work on school feeding as part of an integrated school health and nutrition package, not only for the immediate future, but for the long-term to 2030. This document seeks to lay out, for governments, partners, and WFP employees worldwide what to expect from WFP in the next ten years, what its priorities and roles will be, and how WFP plans to change its way of working to provide context specific and targeted support to governments and children.

This strategy is also a call to action. It asks governments and partners to join in a new multi-sectoral, multi-actor response to an issue which contributes to achieving at least eight of the Sustainable Development Goals related to poverty (SDG1), hunger (SDG2), health (SDG3), education (SDG4) gender equality (SDG5), economic growth (SDG8), reduced inequalities (SDG10) and strengthened partnerships (SDG17).
An effective global response: an integrated and multisectoral approach to school health and nutrition

An integrated package of support to school children and adolescents is needed, at scale. It is important that growing children are fully supported by good health and nutrition during the first 1,000 days of their development. That has been the development focus for the last decade, but we now know that is not enough. If the early gains are to be sustained, and the children are to achieve their full potential as adults, then they need to maintain good health and nutrition throughout the vulnerable periods of development that continue through to the early twenties; the first 8,000 days of life. Most importantly, good health and nutrition need to be sustained when children are being educated during school age and adolescence.

WFP estimates that some 305 million children in low and middle-income countries, about half of all those enrolled, are fed at school every day, and many of these children receive other elements of an integrated package of school health and nutrition, which would likely include: deworming, supplementation, vaccination, vision screening, malaria control, menstrual hygiene management, nutrition education, WASH and oral health. But these interventions rarely reach the poorest children who need them the most. WFP estimates that about 73 million primary school children living in extreme poverty in 60 countries do not have access to national school feeding programmes and are most likely not receiving most of the other essential school health interventions.

A global effort to support governments to reach these 73 million primary school children is a priority, and one which makes good economic sense. Providing these children with at least one meal a day would have an additional cost of around USD 4.6 billion annually, adding the essential school health package would increase the cost to USD 5.8 billion annually, which overall represents some 2.5 percent of the current annual investment in primary education. The return on this investment is a Benefit-Cost Ratio that exceeds 20, and which leverages the greater than USD 210 billion a year investment in learning.

WFP’s strategic response

Over the next ten years, WFP will work with governments and partners to ensure that the 73 million primary school children living in extreme poverty have access to quality meals in school, accompanied by a broader integrated package of health and nutrition services. WFP does not aim to meet the needs of all 73 million primary school children directly or on its own. It will take a context-specific approach and adapt its roles to the particular country context, in partnerships with other key players, including governments, UN agencies, private sector, international financial institutions and NGOs.

WFP will deliver on this by focusing on three main roles:

1. **In crisis or humanitarian settings WFP will scale up by providing operational support.** It will operate quality programmes in countries that do not have the capacity to ensure vulnerable children are covered. 18 countries have been identified under this role. In these countries, WFP plans to increase the quality of its programmes and scale up its coverage to about 20.8 million children annually by 2030 and will raise USD 1.2 billion to do that.

2. **In stable low-income and lower-middle-income countries WFP will support the transition to national programmes.** It will support systems strengthening and provide technical assistance in countries that have the capacity and are working on improving the scale and quality of national programmes. WFP has identified 41 countries under this category with around 48,3
3 million children in need of school feeding. WFP has set the target to handover programmes in about 25 of these countries by 2030. This will have a consequent decrease in direct beneficiaries.

3. **In middle income countries WFP will support the consolidation and strengthening of national programmes.** In countries where the transition has already happened, WFP will continue to support the reform and strengthening of national school feeding programmes of quality. It will support governments to innovate and test new approaches.

At the corporate level, WFP will put in place four workstreams to support the implementation of this strategy.

**Workstream 1 – Sharing knowledge and best practice globally:** Drawing from decades of engagement in school feeding, WFP will document and share global lessons learned, good practices, standards and norms more effectively to inform national decision making and contribute to quality programming. As it did in 2009, WFP will establish a research agenda for school feeding with partners (including multilateral partners, UN agencies, research institutions, private sector and NGOs) for the next ten years, based on a mapping of learning needs, to ensure that global gaps in the knowledge base are being filled.

**Workstream 2 – Increasing the investment in school feeding: a new funding model:** A new funding model that differentiates the contexts is needed. Funding to support low-income and fragile countries with their programmes given their limited fiscal space must be increased. In middle income countries, governments need to move away from a reliance on actors such as WFP and NGOs, into different ways of financing their own national programmes and WFP needs to identify sources of funding to provide technical assistance and capacity strengthening in a more comprehensive and sustainable way. WFP will work with partners to identify additional and innovative funding alternatives in these different contexts.

**Workstream 3 – Acting in partnership to improve and advocate for school health and nutrition:** WFP will champion the issue of school health and nutrition globally and advocate for its prioritization in the next decade of action towards the global goals. It will work with partners to ensure that the additional elements of the essential integrated package for children, which are not part of WFP’s mandate or areas of expertise but are nevertheless crucial for children, are provided in an integrated way.

**Workstream 4 - Strengthening programmatic approaches in key areas:** country demand for further guidance and support has been identified in the following areas, which WFP will develop with partners: nutrition sensitive approaches; girls’ and adolescents’ education and wellbeing; food systems and value chains; digital innovation; and the triple humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

This strategy is aligned with and supports WFP’s School Feeding Policy, which was approved by the Executive Board in 2013. With the implementation of this strategy, WFP will change the way it thinks. WFP has six decades of experience supporting school health and nutrition, and a trajectory of working with more than 100 countries to help set up sustainable national school feeding programmes. WFP’s track record is well established, but there are no grounds for complacency: consultations for this strategy highlight that organizational learning and change are required if WFP is to be better equipped to more fully meet the challenges ahead.

In general three major changes are expected as this strategy is rolled-out: 1) WFP will change the way it works with governments, increasing the sustainability and institutionalization of its efforts; 2) WFP will change the way it delivers school feeding, ensuring better integration, coherence and quality of
programme delivery; and 3) WFP will change the way it works and acts in partnership, acting as a catalyst and a facilitator of country, regional and global efforts.

There are ten years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Through the process of implementing this strategy, WFP aims to directly improve the lives of millions of children and their families, contributing to end child hunger, and to make a substantive and concrete contribution to achieving the SDGs by 2030.
INTRODUCTION

1. Healthy and well-nourished school children learn better. Healthy children also have better chances to thrive and fulfil their potential as adults. Ensuring that girls and boys stay in school and are able and ready to learn allows countries to develop their human capital and individuals to more fully achieve their potential in life. It strengthens community cohesion, stability and productivity, and helps make people and societies more resilient in a rapidly changing world.

2. Better child health and child learning means that all girls and boys receive adequate nourishment, while being protected against diseases. It means making sure there are no barriers to children’s education, especially for girls, children living in fragile contexts and emergencies, children living in poor households and rural areas, children living with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalized children. It means ensuring that children can perform effectively against traditional educational indicators, while acquiring the digital literacy and skills needed to compete and prosper in the 21st century. These investments in human capital development of children and young people are among the most effective and productive investments that countries can make in their own future.

3. However, these investments are far from adequate. While low-income countries invest some USD 210 billion annually in providing education for their children (infrastructure, teachers, curriculum), they only invest about USD 3.4 to 5.5 billion in ensuring the children have the health and nutrition to allow them to learn: we invest in learning, but not in the learner. There is a growing consensus that there is a need to fix this mismatch. Very simply: sick children cannot attend school and hungry children cannot learn.

4. WFP will champion this neglected issue. In this strategy WFP aims to provide a clear strategic framework for WFP’s work on school health and nutrition and school feeding, not only for the immediate future, but for the long-term to 2030. This document seeks to lay out, for governments, partners, and WFP staff worldwide what to expect from WFP in the next ten years, what its priorities and roles will be, and how WFP plans to change its way of working to provide more and better support to governments and children.

5. WFP has six decades of work supporting school health and nutrition and a trajectory of working with more than 100 countries to set up sustainable national school feeding programmes. Despite achievements, consultations for this strategy highlight that organizational learning and change is required to fully meet the challenges ahead.

6. One of the most important challenges for WFP is ensuring the sustainability of its efforts. It needs to work better with governments so that they can smoothly take over the responsibility of managing national school feeding programmes. WFP needs to strengthen its ability to engage and influence policy and decision making, and work with governments to help them secure sustainable sources of funding and increase their institutional capacities for programme management. As a

---


2 This dialogue included discussions with all Regional Directors and with Country Directors of three regions (Dakar, Johannesburg and Bangkok); four donor roundtables in Rome and visits to Washington DC, Paris, Finland, Denmark, Canada and Brussels; a workshop with regional programme advisors; an initial consultation with more than 55 NGO partners representing 40 countries; sharing of ideas at the Global Child Nutrition Forum, including a side meeting attended by more than 100 WFP staff; and more than 15 country missions.
voluntarily funded organization, however, WFP needs to simultaneously identify ways to fund these capacity strengthening and technical assistance activities, which at the moment is a major bottleneck.

7. In general, a different outlook and approach are needed to handle these development challenges, while sustaining WFP’s strong humanitarian footprint and identity. These issues were highlighted by the 2016 External Audit on the School Feeding Programme and the Strategic Evaluation of Capacity Development.\(^3\) To be able to truly achieve change, WFP will need to address these issues at a corporate level.

8. At the same time, increased fragility in some contexts due to conflict, climate change, migration, violence and food insecurity, has led to increased needs in some countries, which requires a concomitantly greater response from WFP. Increased support for school children and their families as well as for those that are out of school in countries affected by war and instability, combining immediate response with strategic investments for the future is crucial to peace building and to ensuring no “lost generations” without access to education. Yet WFP school feeding programmes in many contexts are chronically underfunded, and the resulting gaps in coverage leave millions of school children living in extreme poverty without assistance. This strategy lays out how WFP will address these challenges to provide better support over the next ten years.

9. This strategy also represents a broader call to action. The first section of this document presents evidence that the investment in the health and nutrition of school children is important and it also highlights that it is a systematically neglected issue, especially in low-income countries. The second section lays out an evidence-based integrated response, which goes beyond what WFP or any single actor or sector can do. Therefore, this strategy is also intended for governments and partners, calling out for a new multi-sectoral, multi-actor response to a crucial issue directly related to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the third section the document presents WFP’s role and strategic response to closing the identified gap, focusing on the shift that is required for the organization to achieve the vision.

10. In the spirit of UN Reform, WFP commits to a new partnership approach in which its contributions to school feeding efforts are part of an integrated package of support to children and adolescents. Through a coalition of partners, the lives of millions of children can be improved, making this a substantive and concrete contribution to ending child hunger and poverty, ensuring that every child learns and thrives and achieving the SDGs by 2030.

---

PART I: THE IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN THE HEALTH AND NUTRITION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

1.1 Optimizing education outcomes: the learning and inclusion agenda and its connections to school health and nutrition

11. One of the significant achievements of the Millennium Development Goal era was to get more children than ever before in school. But challenges remain. Ensuring an inclusive and quality education for all is at the heart of the 2030 agenda.

12. Currently, around 63 million of primary school-aged children are out of school, of which half are in sub Saharan Africa. In low income countries (LICs), approximately 40 percent of children do not complete primary education. Children in conflict-affected countries are more than twice as likely to be out of school and girls in conflict affected countries are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than girls in stable contexts. Only 63 percent of refugee children have access to primary education, compared to 91 percent globally and only 24 percent of refugee adolescents are in lower secondary school.

13. For the poorest students, enrolling in school, attending regularly, and learning are often made more difficult by illness, hunger, and malnutrition. In low- and middle-income countries, about 300 million school children have iron-deficiency anemia, causing them to lose some six IQ points per child; and about 73 million primary school children in low-income countries go to school hungry. In Ecuador 32% of grade repetitions are attributable to undernutrition. These conditions translate into the equivalent of between 200 million and 500 million schooldays lost owing to ill health each year.

14. Other barriers to education are associated with gender and social norms. In Northern Africa and Western Asia, there are 132 female adolescents out of lower secondary school for every 100 adolescent boys. Women and girls are more exposed to hunger and malnutrition; they represent 60 percent of all undernourished people in the world. When girls are out of school, they are more vulnerable to forced marriage, early pregnancy and violence. Ethnicity, language, ill health and disability can also be barriers to education in many countries.

---

6 GEM Report, Policy Paper 21, June 2015, p.2 Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233557
15. There are clear synergies between education and health and nutrition investments and outcomes. Moving forward, efforts and resources must focus on both health and nutrition and education to achieve further gains in human capital development and progress toward the SDGs. Long-term goals in health and nutrition and food security are unattainable without an educated population, and children cannot learn if they suffer from the effects of poor health and nutrition.

**1.2 Human capital development and the importance of investing in children**

16. Investing in human capital—the sum of a population’s health, skills, knowledge, and experience—can strengthen a country’s competitiveness in a rapidly changing world. Human capital matters for people, economies, societies, and for global stability. And it matters over generations. When countries fail to invest productively in human capital, the costs are enormous, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable people.

17. Child health and learning is critical for boosting human capital development. A well-nourished, healthy and educated population is the foundational pre-requisite for growth and economic development. Low-income countries in Africa account for 25 out of the 30 countries with the lowest Human Capital Index rankings. For many of these countries, underinvestment in human capital leads to a loss of economic potential ranging, from 50 to 70 percent in the long-term. Africa’s Human Capital Index score of 0.40 puts the region at 40 percent of its potential. Africa’s GDP can be 2.5 times higher if the benchmarks for health and education were achieved.

18. While building human capital depends on quality education, good health and nutrition are also required for children and adolescents to grow and be able to participate and learn in school. When the health and nutrition of school children are improved, it transforms the rest of their lives. Children who are well-nourished learn better, and as adults they earn more and are more productive. That transformation carries through to the next generation with the improved nutrition and health of their own children, contributing to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition and creating a long-term cycle of economic growth and progress.

**1.3 Food systems, diets and climate change**

19. The challenges facing the global food system are piling up. Recent decades have been characterized by rapid changes: increasing globalization; increasing inequality; consumption changes; increases in conflict, post-crisis, and fragile contexts; exponential growth in energy use and new technology; urbanization and climate change.

20. Increases in climate variability are already having effects on agricultural systems and these will intensify in the future; rising CO2 concentrations are being linked to decreases in micronutrient densities of some staple crops; and increasing frequency of floods, droughts and extreme heat are having serious repercussions for human wellbeing and health. Globally, agricultural production has fallen by 1-5 percent each decade for the past 30 years, with tropical regions the hardest hit.

---


13 Climate Change and Food Security Program of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR): Food Transform XI. Levers to transform food systems under climate change. 2019 (in progress)

21. Today, approximately three billion people have low-quality diets. In many countries the majority of the population simply cannot afford nutritious foods: in certain regions of Ghana, Madagascar, Mozambique and Pakistan, more than 70 percent of households cannot afford a nutritious diet. In low- and middle-income countries, over half of the young women and adolescent girls are not meeting their micronutrient needs. Finally, the prevalence rates of overweight and obesity are increasing in every region and most rapidly in low- and middle-income countries.

22. Today’s food systems are too focused on food quantity and not enough on quality. They are not helping consumers to make healthy and affordable food choices consistent with optimal nutrition outcomes. The multiple forms of malnutrition will not diminish unless policy makers and private sector business leaders work together to reshape food systems in ways that will advance the goal of healthier diets for all.

23. In 2014, the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition released its technical brief: How Can Agriculture and Food System Policies Improve Nutrition? In it, the Panel recommends the implementation of policies across the food system to reduce undernutrition and growing overweight, obesity and other diet-related non-communicable diseases. Some of the policy recommendations are about making better use of existing public food distribution programmes like school feeding programmes ensuring that they are agriculture-supportive and nutrition-sensitive, integrating nutrition education into all available national services reaching consumers; expanding agriculture-supportive targeted social protection programmes; and improving adolescent girl and adult women’s diet quality as a priority in all policy making that shapes food systems.

1.4 The first 8,000 days: a growing call to rethink the investment in health and nutrition of school children

24. The recent 3rd edition of the World Bank Disease Control Priorities (DCP3), supported by the Gates Foundation, confirms the crucial importance of investing in the first 1,000 days, but also highlights the neglect of investment during the next 7,000 days (or up to age 21). The findings of Volume 8, entitled Child and Adolescent Health and Development, have led to the realization that there is a need to move towards a new 8,000-day paradigm.

---

25. Just as babies are not merely small people—they need special and different types of care from the rest of us—so growing children and adolescents are not merely short adults; they, too, have critical phases of development that need specific interventions. Intervention is required in three phases: the middle childhood growth and consolidation phase (5–9 years), when infection and malnutrition constrain growth, and mortality is higher than previously recognised; the adolescent growth spurt (10–14 years), when substantial physical and emotional changes require good diet and health; and the adolescent phase of growth and consolidation (ages 15 to early 20s), when new responses are needed to support brain maturation, intense social engagement, and emotional control.

26. The DCP3 publications call for research and action on child health and development to evolve from a narrow emphasis on the first 1,000 days to holistic concern over the first 8,000 days; from an age-siloed approach to an approach that embraces the needs across the life cycle.

27. A USAID report entitled Maximising human capital by aligning investments in health and education, joined the increasing calls for better alignment of investments in health and education, especially by investing in school health and school feeding programmes during school age and adolescence.

28. The role of schools in investing in children was emphasised by the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition in 2017, in a statement entitled Schools as a System to Improve Nutrition. A publication prepared by the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education entitled Optimizing Education Outcomes: High-Return Investments in School Health for Increased Participation and Learning, took this a step further, emphasising the need to fix the almost complete mismatch between investments in the health of children, currently almost all focused on children under 5 years of age, and investment in education, mostly between 5 and 21 years of age.

References:


PART II: AN EVIDENCE-BASED INTEGRATED RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

2.1 Schools as a platform for delivery of an integrated package

29. Many of the health conditions that are most prevalent among students that are disadvantaged have significant effects on education – causing absenteeism, leading to grade repetition or dropout, and adversely affecting student achievement – and yet are preventable and treatable.

30. The school system represents an exceptionally cost-effective platform through which to deliver an essential integrated package of health and nutrition services to school children, as has been well documented in high-income countries.\(^{24}\) The education system is particularly well situated to promote health among children and adolescents in poor communities without effective health systems. There are typically more schools than health facilities in all income settings, and rural and poor areas are significantly more likely to have schools than health centers. Providing health interventions through school attracts out of school children, especially in emergency contexts.

31. An integrated package of support through schools can also have specific benefits for girls. Some of the most common health conditions affecting education are more prevalent in girls and gender inequalities and exclusion can place girls at greater risk of ill health, neglect, and hunger.\(^{25}\) For example, women and girls are, for physiological reasons, more likely to experience higher rates of anaemia, than are men and boys.\(^{26}\) Evidence shows that where families undervalue girls’ education, increasing other values of schooling, such as providing food or health services, has a disproportionately positive impact on girls’ attendance and enrolment.\(^{27}\)

32. DCP 3 Volume 8 proposes two cost-efficient health and nutrition intervention packages, one delivered through schools and one focusing on later adolescence, which combined, provide phase-specific support across the life cycle, securing the gains of investment in the first 1,000 days, enabling substantial catch-up from early growth failure, and leveraging improved learning from concomitant education investments (see figure 1).

\(^{24}\) Shackleton and others 2016


\(^{27}\) A meta-analysis of school meals programmes across 32 sub-Saharan countries showed on-site meals combined with take-home rations increased the enrolment of girls by 12%. In: Snistveit et al. in Chapter 12, Bundy et al. (2018) Re-imagining School Feeding: A High-Return Investment in Human Capital and Local Economies, Disease Control Priorities 3, v. 8
2.2 Why school feeding?

School feeding is the costliest element of the integrated package but is cost-effective due to the multiple benefits it achieves. A recent Benefit-Cost Analysis shows that school feeding programmes could have substantial benefits for the costs invested, with about USD 20 of returns for USD 1 invested in school feeding programmes. This represents a substantial return on investment, comparable in magnitude to several of the best-buy interventions analysed by the Copenhagen Consensus exercise. This large scale of benefit reflects the additive returns on investment to multiple sectors. The analysis examines the returns in 14 low- and middle-income countries and shows average Benefit-Cost Ratios of 13.5 to education (through human capital development), 6.7 to the local economy (though local procurement and local employment) and 0.8 to social protection (through substantial resource transfer to the household). Other returns,

---

28 Illustration by the Global Partnership of Education based on Disease Control Priorities 3rd Edition Volume 8 Available here: [https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/school-based-health-programs-money-well-spent](https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/school-based-health-programs-money-well-spent)


31 Copenhagen Consensus Centre: [https://www.copenhagenconsensus.com](https://www.copenhagenconsensus.com)
for example to gender equality and peace-building, have yet to be estimated but are likely to make substantial additional contributions to the overall rate of return. In this section we examine each of these different sectoral returns in more detail.

34. In practice, school feeding has emerged as the main intervention for children in schools around which other elements, such as deworming or supplementation are delivered. This is because it is the most widely implemented element of the integrated package – almost every country in the world provides food to its school children in some scale, in 2013 reaching about 368 million children worldwide (see box 1 on the evolution in thinking on school feeding) – and communities more often than not prioritize this over any other intervention in schools. This is true even for the poorer countries, and a recent assessment of school feeding coverage in low- and middle-income countries suggests that some 305 million children are now fed in school daily, some 47% of all the children enrolled.32

35. When linked to nutrition and education, well designed equitable school feeding programmes contribute to child development through increased years of schooling, better learning and improved nutrition. School feeding provides consistent positive effects on energy intake, micronutrient status, school enrolment, and attendance of children.33 The effects are particularly strong for girls. In its influential 2016 report, The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, Chaired by Gordon Brown, identified 13 nonteaching interventions as “highly effective practices to increase access and learning outcomes”, these included three health programmes: school feeding, malaria prevention, and micronutrient intervention.34 A recent UN agency review of evidence finds that school feeding is among the two interventions with the strongest evidence of impact on equity and inclusion in education (the other one being conditional cash transfers).35 School feeding programmes have demonstrated effects on reducing anemia on primary school-aged children and adolescent girls.36

36. School feeding is one of the most common safety nets, providing the daily support and stability that vulnerable families and children need, and was shown to be one of the first social protection solutions that poor countries turned to during the social shocks of the 2008 financial crisis.37 Particularly when integrated into a national social protection scheme as part of a lifecycle approach, school feeding can contribute to protect, prevent and promote. Associating school feeding with other social assistance programmes such as scholarships, unconditional transfers and public works provides opportunities to address the multidimensional social and economic vulnerabilities faced by children and their families and helps to reinforce the impact of these programmes.

37. Finally, well designed school feeding programmes that procure food locally, can offer major additional benefits, particularly for small holder farmers, supporting local food production and economies, and promoting sustainable local markets for diverse, nutritious foods. Local procurement creates employment opportunities for women smallholder farmers or jobs in the school canteens for women and improve the livelihoods of the communities near the schools and therefore contributing to women’s economic empowerment and decision-making.  

38. Figure 2 illustrates the multiple benefits, showing that the single intervention of school feeding has consequences for at least four different sectors. These effects often operate across sectors and the effects are interconnected: the returns to human capital development, through health, nutrition and education, and the returns to investment in the community, through social protection and local agriculture. For example, social protection helps promote social stability, and a stable community potentiates the effects on education outcomes and opportunities for employment. It is these multiple and potentially multiplicative benefits that make well-designed school feeding programmes a particularly worthwhile investment.  

Figure 2. Four key benefits of school feeding programmes  

2.3 Unfinished business: how many children are not receiving school health and nutrition support  

39. Health and nutrition programmes targeted through schools are among the most ubiquitous for school-age children in LMICs. It is difficult to find a country that is not attempting to provide school health services at some level, although the coverage is often limited. Similarly, the World Health

---

Organization (WHO) estimates that more than 450 million schoolchildren—more than half of the target population—are dewormed annually through school-based programmes in nearly all LMICs⁴¹, although these largely public efforts are variable in quality and coverage.

40. Detailed information on the coverage of school feeding programmes is available thanks to WFP’s fifteen years of research and documentation in this area. More work is needed from the research community and partners to estimate the coverage and the coverage gaps of the other elements of the school health and nutrition package.

41. Recent analysis shows that today nearly half the world’s primary school children in low- and middle-income countries, some 305 million, will sit down to eat a meal at school.⁴² Almost all high- and middle-income countries have between 80 and 90 percent coverage, meaning they provide food to almost all children enrolled in primary school.⁴³ India now feeds more than 100 million children; Brazil 42 million; China 37 million; and South Africa and Nigeria each more than 9 million. These meals are provided not once, but every day of the school year, and half of the children fed are girls.

42. Despite this progress, there are still some significant challenges. While coverage of school feeding programmes is adequate in high and upper middle-income countries (reaching 80 percent of school-aged children in most contexts), it is unacceptably low in low-income countries (reaching only 18 percent of school-aged children).⁴⁴

43. WFP has explored the scale of need for school feeding in low and middle-income countries globally. Of the 663 million primary school children enrolled in school: 338 million live where the coverage of school meals is inadequate (below 80 percent). Of these, 251 million children live in countries where there are significant nutrition challenges, including more than 20 percent of stunting in children younger than 5 and anaemia among women. 73 million of these children live in extreme poverty (with less than USD 1.85 per day) in 60 countries and almost 85 percent of them live in Africa; 14 percent live in Asia and 1 percent in Latin America.⁴⁵

---


⁴² WFP has spent more than 15 years studying the school feeding landscape worldwide. The most recent and comprehensive database of school feeding coverage was presented in 2013 in a WFP publication called “the State of School Feeding Worldwide”. Thanks to these and other efforts done by partners, data on school feeding is highly reliable, making it one of the areas of school health and nutrition that has been better studied and quantified to date in terms of coverage, costs and implementation approach. Drake, L., Fernandes, M., Chu, K., Lazrak, N., Singh, S., Ryckembusch, D., Burbano, C., Bundy, D. (2019) How many poor children globally could benefit from new generation school feeding programmes, and what would be the cost? *Frontiers in Public Health* (in process).

⁴³ While the service is provided to all children in high income countries, not all countries provide free school meals to all children. In certain countries, some households pay full or subsidized prices for the meals, while children from poor and vulnerable households receive the meals for free. See “State of School Feeding Worldwide” for a description of the different targeting mechanisms used by countries and what the pros and cons of these are. [https://www1.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2013](https://www1.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2013)


44. Supporting governments to reach these 73 million primary school children in 60 countries with nutritious meals is a priority, and clearly a focus on Africa is needed. Bridging this gap will require supporting governments to expand coverage in countries with existing school feeding programmes and initiate school feeding programmes in countries that lack those (see Map 1).

Map 1: The 60 countries where the 73 million children in need to school health and nutrition support live (threshold: children living in extreme poverty not receiving school feeding)

2.4 How much would it cost to scale up an integrated school health and nutrition package?

45. As mentioned above, there are some 73 million primary school children most in need of school feeding programmes, based on the inadequacy of current provision, the prevalence of indicators of poor nutrition, and the relative lack of financing for the countries to implement the programmes themselves. Unsurprisingly, the majority (>66 percent) of these children live in low-income countries, but there is also a substantial minority who live in pockets of poverty in middle-income countries.

46. The cost of feeding these children in need was calculated based on benchmark costs for low- and middle-income countries (see Table 1).

---

46 Ibid.
Table 1. School feeding and school health costs for the 73 million primary school aged children in extreme poverty without access to national school feeding programmes in low- and middle-income countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Enrolled children in need (million)</th>
<th>Cost of school feeding per child per year (USD)</th>
<th>School Feeding Budget (USD millions)</th>
<th>Additional school health budget (USD millions)</th>
<th>Total integrated package of support (USD millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Income</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2.132</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2.538</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.670</td>
<td>1.125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47. Table 1 shows that the cost of covering 73 million children in need of school feeding is 4.7 billion USD, an average of USD 64 per child per year. Benchmark costs of school feeding are taken from Disease Control Priorities 3rd edition, Volume 8.

48. Adding the other interventions of the school health package for children from 5–14 years in Table 1 would cost about 29 percent more in middle-income countries and 20 percent in low-income countries or USD 618 and 507 million respectively.

49. The total cost of the integrated package would therefore be USD 5.8 billion annually, with around half that amount for the low-income countries alone. Middle-income countries have resources, often substantial resources, that could help close this gap. Further analyses are underway to explore how this might be accomplished through a combination of transition and co-financing arrangements.

50. Current investment in basic education is USD210 billion per year, much of which is from the public sector and is intended to provide pre-primary, primary, and secondary education free at the point of delivery, although some countries still charge fees for education. The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity calls for governments to increase domestic public expenditures to support universal provision of primary education in low and lower-middle-income countries by 2030, requiring an increase from 4.0 to 5.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), which is equivalent to an annual rate of growth in public education spending of 7 percent over a 15-year period.

51. In contrast to these very large public expenditures for education, the incremental cost of the integrated school health and nutrition package, including school feeding is about 2.76 percent.

---

Costs of school feeding include costs associated with food procurement, transportation and storage, and monitoring of implementation. They were drawn from a sample of 74 low-, middle-, and high-income countries. These estimates are standardized for several parameters to support cross-country comparability, including the number of kilocalories in the ration and the number of days school feeding was provided. Source: L. Drake, M. Fernandes, E. Aurino, J. Kiamba, B. Giyose, C. Burbano, H. Alderman et al (2018): School Feeding Programs in Middle Childhood and Adolescence. In: Bundy, D. A. P., N. de Silva, S. Horton, D. T. Jamison, and G. C. Patton 2018. Re-Imagining School Feeding: A High-Return Investment in Human Capital and Local Economies. Washington, DC: World Bank.

2.5 Supporting middle- and low-income countries to address implementation challenges

52. The first and most important challenge to scale up and transition to national programmes is the low fiscal capacity of low-income countries for school feeding. While programmes in high- and middle-income countries are almost exclusively financed by internal revenues (taxes and other sources), programmes in low-income countries rely largely on donor support. In these countries, external sources of funding cover about 83 percent of the current programmes. Thus, exploring transitional and permanent sources of funding for school feeding in low-income countries is a priority.

53. While high- and middle-income countries have recognized that school feeding is a multisectoral intervention and consequently have created multisectoral budgeting and governance arrangements which support the implementation of this large national safety net, in low-income countries the education sector is still expected to bear most of the costs and responsibility and accountability for management, which clearly limits the scope given the countries’ reduced education budgets and capacity to begin with.

54. Countries that have recently successfully transitioned and scaled up national school feeding programmes (e.g. Kenya, Bhutan and El Salvador), have done so by recognizing that school feeding contributes to many sectors (education, social protection, health and nutrition, gender equality, agriculture) and as such is considered a key safety net that builds human capital and advances development. In these cases, the costs are borne by the national budget rather than the education sector budget alone although the implementation may still rest with the education sector. Thus, helping countries to situate these programmes within national development plans (and education and social protection sector plans) and to establish multisectoral budgeting arrangements is a priority.

55. In general, all countries struggle with the following implementation challenges:

1) ensuring adequate nutritional value of the food: to prevent malnutrition in all its forms (including micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity) and to allow optimal physical and cognitive development. Specifics include paying attention to the type, quantity and quality of the food (i.e. if the food is fortified, if it meets the age and sex-specific nutritional requirements of both boys and girls and the diversity of the meals, compliance with nutritional and food safety guidelines, etc.);

2) deciding on where the food comes from: the more local the better in general (although this might not always be the case, as in very arid and low-producing areas), taking into account local consumption patterns, preferences, and benefiting the local economies as well as challenges in value change arrangements (storage, processing and WASH facilities and infrastructure);

3) containing the cost to ensure affordability and coverage of as many vulnerable children as possible;

4) Monitoring and evaluating the management and impact of the programmes.

56. There are clear trade-offs between the first three issues and finding the right balance is not easy but is the key to quality and sustainable programmes (see the 2013 School Feeding Policy for a complete analysis of the trade-offs).

57. In some contexts, especially in middle income countries, governments are reforming their programmes in response to rising overweight and obesity among school children and adolescents emphasizing quality over quantity of food and promoting nutrition-sensitive\(^{50}\) approaches by strengthening the health and nutrition education component of the programmes, including through innovative digital tools, understanding food habits, behaviours and the food environment and promoting physical activity, etc. The latest Global Nutrition Report (2018) states that 30.3% of school aged children do not eat any fruit, yet 43.7% consume soda every day.\(^{51}\) In countries where assistance is also provided to pre-schoolers and adolescents, the challenge is tailoring the programmes to the differences in nutritional needs for various age groups and sexes and finding new and better ways to provide the right support to adolescent girls to improve their nutritional status and provide incentives for them to stay longer in school. For all age groups school feeding needs to be paired with social and behaviour change communication to change food and nutrition behaviour, but also as an opportunity to address social cohesion, violence, gender issues, among others.

58. There has been great success at implementing home-grown school feeding programmes (HGSF) - those that make an intentional effort to provide children in schools with safe and diverse food produced and sourced locally, particularly from smallholder’s farmers- in some countries, but scale remains a challenge. Key impediments include ensuring a stable supply of food to schools, and controlling and ensuring food safety, especially when purchases are done at the local level. However, there is evidence that when smallholder farmers are required to produce higher quality food and strengthen their capacities to meet food safety standards, they not only grow better food, but can also achieve higher prices when selling surplus in formal markets.\(^{52}\) HGSF allows the inclusion of fresh produce in the meals and is thus directly related to improve the food diversity of children, strengthening the nutrition-sensitive approach of the programmes.

59. HGSF approaches significantly shorten the supply chain of school feeding programmes reducing the carbon footprint of the logistic operations. By promoting local food, it contributes to generating life-long food habits among children that support a low energy demand profile throughout life. Local purchase may also reduce the amount of packaging-related waste. In addition to climate change mitigation, HGSF can also promote climate change adaptation in vulnerable ecosystems. When linked to ‘green’ food value chains and systems, schools can purchase food from local producers that utilise climate smart agricultural practices, thereby increasing community resilience to climate change in areas where food insecurity is caused by or exacerbated by climate drivers.

60. A review of the costs of school feeding programmes in 2012 found that there are significant opportunities for cost containment, especially in low income countries.\(^{53}\) On the institutional side, the governance of school feeding programmes, including quality assurance, supply chain and procurement arrangements that mitigate risks of corruption and leakage and improve monitoring and accountability, is still a challenge. The capacity of national institutions to manage these programmes and coordinate multisectoral action is very strong in certain countries and still

---

\(^{50}\) Nutrition-sensitive approaches are defined by programmes taking place in sectors complementary to nutrition and are designed to address some of the underlying and basic determinants of malnutrition.


\(^{52}\) More information can be found in the “Food Safety and Quality Guidelines for Safer School Meals” https://newgo.wfp.org/documents/food-safety-and-quality-guidelines-for-safer-school-meals

nascent in others, which is why south-south cooperation has been such a critical element in allowing country learning to take place.

61. There are also significant infrastructure challenges in many countries. Including access to proper kitchen facilities and equipment, running water and sanitation. Shifting to cleaner and more efficient cooking solutions for school meal preparation reduces the fuel costs as well as the collection time for children and their families, decreases the incidence of respiratory diseases due to indoor air pollution and reduces adverse effects to the environment such as deforestation. Sustainable energy solutions can help to preserve and process food (refrigeration, drying, smoking, milling). Such solutions nurture innovation that can spread from the school into surrounding communities, extending clean and efficient energy solutions to household and commercial uses.

62. Supporting governments to address these challenges will be at the center of WFP’s efforts over the next ten years. Tackling these issues is important to ensure that children are getting the best support possible in their early years of development and countries are getting the best return on their investments. As the lead agency supporting school feeding programmes for over 50 years, WFP is well placed to support this agenda.
Box 1. The school feeding landscape – the evolution of a policy priority

Making a strategic change from supply chain to development investment: not just programmes that deliver food

During most of the 20th century, the typical view of the development community was that school feeding was simply about delivering food-aid. New strategic thinking across multiple sectors changed that perspective dramatically. In the 2000’s, the education sector drove some of this change, most notably with the launch of the FRESH Framework (Focusing Resources on Effective School Health) as part of the Global Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal. The FRESH Framework was supported by UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, FAO and other key development partners, and helped provide a policy context for school-based health interventions, including school feeding. Ensuring that the learner had the health and cognitive development to take full advantage of the new education opportunities, contributed to the countries’ massive and largely successful efforts towards Education for All.

The role of the agricultural sector became more prominent in school feeding in the 2000s. For example, in 2003 nine African governments decided to include school feeding programmes that sourced food locally from smallholder’s farmers in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The adoption by countries of this “Home Grown” agenda has grown and evolved dramatically since those early days, with significant support from FAO, IFAD, NEPAD, the Gates Foundation, and other development partners.

Rethinking school feeding as an investment in people and a productive safety net: the multiple benefits had been under-valued

In 2009, there was a marked - and in those days unexpected - increase in country demand for school feeding in response to the global food, fuel, and finance crises. The World Bank, WFP and the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) worked together on an in-depth analysis to better understand the countries’ motivations. The analysis published as “Rethinking School Feeding,” concluded that countries had recognized the multiple returns to school feeding and were using the programmes as strategic interventions to both mitigate the ongoing global financial crisis and to support national development.

In times of stability, school feeding could be viewed as promoting health, nutrition and education: contributing to the quality of the diet of poor children and enhancing their school attendance and learning, while at the same time addressing short-term hunger and malnutrition – what we now call, building human capital. If linked to local agriculture, additional economic and social benefits could be extended to schoolchildren households and their communities.

In hard times, school feeding programmes could rapidly expand their role as a social safety net, ensuring food is quickly and directly available for the communities that needed help most. It was estimated, for example, that school feeding programmes supply about 10 percent of household expenditure for each child who participates, providing a substantial resource transfer to the poorest households and serving as an effective safety net. This analysis helped define a new, and more effective way forward for school feeding, leading to the approval of WFP’s first Global School Feeding Policy in 2009 (updated in 2013).

Bringing this new strategic thinking into the political economy: big changes in national and global policy

In 2015, the adoption of the 2030 agenda helped provide an appropriate multisectoral framework for the new generation of school feeding programmes. School feeding yields results directly related to the sustainable development goals addressing poverty (SDG1), hunger (SDG2), health (SDG3), education (SDG4) gender equality (SDG5), economic growth (SDG8), reduced inequalities (SDG10) and strengthened partnerships (SDG17). This alignment was accompanied by a realization that school feeding offers programmatic benefits that had previously been undervalued: the programmes reach into the heart of poor communities, they benefit needy children and communities directly in ways that cash alone cannot, especially when seen as an entry point for other sectoral interventions to reach children,
e.g. with health, hygiene, nutrition or sexual and reproductive health education; and provide a multisectoral platform that bridges both humanitarian and development actions.

These changes in thinking have been matched by a noticeable up-turn in government interest and demand for school feeding. Today, more than half of the world’s school children receive food at school, the largest number and proportion ever. This is partly due to expanding existing national programmes, but in addition around 30 countries have started their own school feeding programmes while 20 have formalized their processes in the long term by adopting national school feeding policies. These country-led changes have been supported in part by new global public goods, including WFP’s Center of Excellence Against Hunger, established in 2011 in partnership with the government of Brazil, and by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation’s annual school feeding forum.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, nearly all countries are now providing school feeding to their children.\(^{60}\) In the Middle East, interest is growing thanks in large part to the Middle East and North Africa Initiative for School Meals and Social Protection launched with the support of WFP.\(^ {61}\) In Asia school feeding programmes have been introduced by most countries, with exceptionally large-scale programmes in China and India.

In Africa, where the need is greatest, and the programmatic response has traditionally been weakest, there is a renaissance. During the African Union Summit in 2016, 54 Heads of State committed to promoting nationally-owned home-grown school feeding programmes and they are working to operationalize these commitments.\(^ {62}\) In West Africa alone, governments are investing some USD 500 million dollars per year on school feeding, and in 2019, a new Center of Excellence in Cote d’Ivoire has been inaugurated to support south-south efforts across the African continent.

---

54 FRESH framework: [http://www.schoolsandhealth.org/Pages/FRESH_Framework.aspx](http://www.schoolsandhealth.org/Pages/FRESH_Framework.aspx)
55 Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme Portal: [https://www.nepad.org/caadp](https://www.nepad.org/caadp)
58 Ibid.
59 WFP (2013): School Feeding Policy. Promoting innovation to achieve national ownership. [https://www.wfp.org/content/school-feeding-policy](https://www.wfp.org/content/school-feeding-policy)
PART III: WFPs ROLE AND STRATEGIC RESPONSE

3.1 WFP’s vision

63. For the next ten years, WFP will work with governments and partners to ensure that the 73 million primary school children living in extreme poverty have access to quality meals in school, accompanied by a broader integrated package of health and nutrition services. WFP will build on its existing operations in countries and leverage its expertise, tools, systems and partnerships to support countries achieve their human capital objectives through increased investments in nutrition, quality of learning, gender equality and healthy growth. WFP does not aim to meet the needs of all 73 million primary school children directly or on its own. It will take a context specific approach and adapt its roles to the particular country context, in partnerships with other key players, including governments, UN agencies, private sector, international financial institutions and NGOs.

64. This vision is aligned with and supports WFP’s School Feeding Policy, which was approved by the Executive Board in 2013. In fact, this strategy is meant to operationalize the objectives, principles and goals of the 2013 policy, putting in place a framework for action at the country, regional and global levels. In line with the policy WFP efforts will continue to focus on primary school children, however in certain contexts, WFP will aim to provide support to pre-primary and secondary school children.

65. Over the last ten years, WFP and partners such as FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations such as the African Union and NEPAD, and community and civil society groups, have helped change the landscape of school feeding worldwide in support of government efforts (see box 1). Generous support from donors has helped to ensure coverage and allowed WFP to move towards a new generation of sustainable school feeding programmes. This strategy is designed to build on that joint work to deliver more and better support for governments and children.

3.2 WFP’s response – what it will do

66. WFP’s vision of ensuring that 73 million primary school children have access to meals will be addressed in various ways: by operating programmes in countries that do not have the capacity to ensure vulnerable children are covered; by focusing on systems strengthening and providing technical assistance in countries that do have the capacity but are working on improving the scale and quality of national programmes; by working with partners, donors, regional groups and blocks, and communities to build coalitions of support for children in schools; and by working with communities of experts to document the evidence and continue to make the case for investment in school health and nutrition interventions. Thus, WFP aims to meet the needs of 73 million primary school children by taking a context specific approach and by adapting its roles to the particular context.

67. To achieve the vision, WFP will put in place a strategic framework including three roles at country level and four workstreams that support a corporate effort to rally support for children in schools. The following graph summarizes WFP’s new approach. While countries transition to national ownership, WFP’s role evolves along this spectrum ensuring it is aligned to the government’s needs.

68. **Role 1 – In crisis or humanitarian settings WFP will scale up by providing operational support.** In countries affected by fragility, low capacity, conflict, or recurrent shocks, WFP will support the
implementation of quality school feeding programmes. WFP estimates that 20.8 million children in 18 countries are still not being reached with national school feeding programmes (29% of the 73 million global gap), which would become WFP’s operational target. WFP’s programmes in these contexts currently benefit 4.9 million children. Thus, WFP will aim to increase the coverage and quality of cost-effective and nutrition-sensitive programmes in these contexts, enabling the organization to reach as many vulnerable children as possible, while laying the foundations to build national capacities. The organization will aim to raise USD 1.2 billion annually to support this scale up and will progressively increase the capacity of implementation on the ground.

69. **Role 2 – In stable low-income and lower-middle-income countries WFP will support the transition to national programmes.** In stable contexts with emerging government capacity, WFP will respond to the increasing government demand for nationally-owned and operated school feeding programmes. WFP estimates that 48.3 million primary school children in 41 countries are still not being reached with national school feeding programmes (66% of the 73 million global gap). To close the gap in these contexts, WFP will support governments to scale up national programmes and to strengthen their quality. In countries where WFP still has operations, it will work with governments on a sustainable transition plan leading to a gradual decrease of WFP’s operational beneficiaries (currently at 6.2 million children). In these countries, WFP will work on a new funding model to support its systems strengthening and enabling role.

70. **Role 3 - In middle income countries WFP will support the consolidation and strengthening of national programmes.** In middle-income countries, where the transition to national ownership has already happened and WFP has an enabling role, it will continue to support governments with established school feeding programmes in reforming and continuously improving them following some successful and transformative experiences already underway (e.g. in India, Peru and China). In most of these countries, governments are self-financing national school feeding programmes and receiving WFP technical assistance and capacity strengthening on demand. Thus, WFP is able to deploy its expertise, best practices and knowledge in stable, middle-income countries and facilitate south-south triangular cooperation for the benefit of vulnerable children.

WFP will work to ensure that the 73 million children in extreme poverty have access to meals in school through:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role 1: Operational support</th>
<th>Role 2: Transition to national programmes</th>
<th>Role 3: Consolidate and strengthen national programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Countries in conflict, instability and crisis needing WFP operational support</td>
<td>Stable countries with emerging and established government capacity</td>
<td>Countries, where transition to national ownership has already happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country examples:</td>
<td>Country examples:</td>
<td>Country Examples:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>• Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>• India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Somalia</td>
<td>• Bangladesh</td>
<td>• Tunisia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Central African Republic</td>
<td>• Benin</td>
<td>• Dominican Republic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Targets to be achieved by 2030

63 Targets will be reviewed every 2 years to adapt to changing contexts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20.8 million additional children living in fragile settings to be covered by WFP</th>
<th>48.3 million additional children to be covered by national school feeding programmes with WFP support</th>
<th>3.8 million children living in extreme poverty included in government run programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USD 1.2 billion to be mobilised by WFP to meet identified needs</td>
<td>All children reached by WFP are integrated into national school feeding programmes (currently 4 million)</td>
<td>USDXX to be raised by WFP to provide technical support and meet identified needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All (100%) WFP programmes that deliver meals and snacks meet established nutritional standards</td>
<td>USD 3.2 billion to be raised by the global community</td>
<td>100% of national school feeding programmes are optimised through iterative research, analysis and proactive learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All (100%) WFP programmes are able to meet planned feeding days identified in the Country Strategic plans</td>
<td>All (100%) WFP programmes have time-bound concrete transition plans in place to handover operational support services of school feeding to national programmes (25 estimated countries to fully handed over)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All countries have adequate policy and legal frameworks to address the school feeding needs of vulnerable children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions to close 29% of total estimated gap</td>
<td>Contributions to close 66% of total estimated gap</td>
<td>Contributions to close 5% of total estimated gap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Major strategic shifts and organizational learning required to reach the vision

**Role 1 – Providing operational support. Challenge: ensuring consistent delivery of quality school feeding**

71. WFP’s work in low income and crisis-affected countries will be about operationalizing the humanitarian-development- peace nexus[^68], to which school feeding can contribute, deploying

[^64]: Sum of WFP’s 2018 beneficiaries in countries identified under this role
[^65]: TBD
[^66]: 25 countries have been identified as countries that might be ready to transition in the next 10 years based on the government’s engagement, current state of the programme and development
[^67]: TBD
[^68]: Humanitarian-development- peace nexus refers to the efforts to bridge immediate response operations with sustainable development programmes. Also referred to as “the triple nexus”. 
WFP’s available resources, programmatic know-how and operational capacities to ensure no child gets left behind. WFP will work with other education partners to ensure the delivery of an integrated package of support and consider innovative mechanisms to ensure the inclusion of crisis-affected children and refugee children whose education has been disrupted.

72. The complexity and increasingly protracted nature of many of these crises has been at the heart of efforts to increase collaboration between humanitarian and development actors with the objective to address the root causes and better support longer-term sustainable solutions while effectively addressing immediate humanitarian needs. Integrated, multi-sectorial approaches are required for school feeding to deliver mutually reinforcing outcomes, build resilience by mitigating the devastating impacts of shocks on the lives and livelihood of families and yield transformative change for school children and their communities.

73. While ensuring scale up in these contexts, WFP will strengthen its’ programmes to meet all quality standards. This will in a later stage facilitate the hand over to national programmes. A review of country strategic plans, audits and evaluations have highlighted shortcomings on design and integration and has identified some key needs that will need to be addressed.

74. Strategic shifts:

- **A focus on quality and integration**: better programming, including improved analysis, design, implementation, monitoring and controls; more diversified and nutrient-dense food baskets that meet school children’s nutrition requirements in different contexts; including nutritional education to promote healthy eating habits; making the link to local purchase explicit and intentional; ensuring consistent service delivery throughout the school year; integrating gender throughout the programme cycle and better collection of sex and age disaggregated data.

- **A stronger partnership approach**: WFP can only provide a part of what is the full integrated school health and nutrition package and needs to work with partners to ensure the focus on quality education and WASH. In these countries stronger multisectoral partnerships with key partners will be sought to reduce the funding gap, to lay the foundations for transitioning to national programmes where possible, and to ensure the delivery of solid integrated packages. Key partners include: Governments, UN system (UNICEF, FAO, WHO, UNHCR, UNFPA), Education Cannot Wait, Global Partnership on Education, World Bank, private sector, as well as new emerging donors, key civil society organizations and NGOs.

75. WFP will continue to focus on primary school-aged children as the main target group for its operations, in line with the 2013 policy. However, in certain contexts and with the right partners, WFP will aim to provide support to pre-primary and secondary school children, including finding new ways to reach adolescent girls and address their particular barriers to education. WFP will address current gaps in programming in emergency contexts with new guidance documents and tools (e.g. corporate guidelines for school feeding in refugee settings). Wherever possible, WFP will work with governments at the national and decentralized levels (such as local education authorities) and with local actors to build national capacities and lay the foundations of a transition to a national programme.

---

69 2018 WFP Position paper – Nexus (draft)

70 A review of country strategic plans, audits and evaluations have highlighted shortcomings on design and integration and has identified some key issues that need to be strengthened or corrected in WFP programming.
Figure 3. Measure of success and targets for Role 1: Providing operational support

Role 1 - Providing operational support:
Ensuring consistent delivery of quality school feeding

Measure of success:
High-quality programmes implemented by WFP reach all children in need living in fragility

Targets:
- 20.8 million additional children living in fragile settings to be covered by WFP
- US$ 1.2 billion to be mobilised by WFP to meet identified needs
- All (100%) WFP programmes that deliver meals and snacks meet established nutritional standards
- All (100%) WFP programmes are able to meet planned feeding days identified in the Country Strategic plans

Expected trends:
- Number of children reached by WFP
- Quality of WFP programmes

Main actions:
- Roll out new advocacy and funding plan
- Improve programme quality: nutrition, local purchases, school feeding in emergencies, gender equity and inclusion, etc.
- Improve integration with other programmes
- Improve capacities for monitoring and develop new quality indicators
- Start to build national capacity (e.g. policy and legal framework, technical capacities)

Role 2 – Transitioning to national programmes. Challenge: learning to let go successfully

76. In stable low-income and lower-middle income countries, WFP will shift to an enabling role. This approach implies a deeper strategic and operational shift for WFP and will thus need time for change and learning to take place. To fully support the transition to national ownership WFP needs to become good at supporting others to do the job, which means fully embracing a facilitating role and rather than an operational role. It needs to strengthen its capacity to support governments design, test, and implement at scale effective, efficient and equitable school feeding models that work best in their specific context.

77. While there is an increased awareness in the organization that this shift is needed and there have been developments regarding learnings from evaluations and new approaches, the operationalization of them is still a challenge. In this sense, the implementation of the school feeding strategy is a good opportunity to tackle some of these systemic issues and continue learning from on-going transition processes, which could then inform corporate approaches more broadly. While transitions will happen progressively, WFP will need to ensure high quality programmes and review its implementation arrangements and cost structures to ensure they are designed to support transition to government programmes.

78. Strategic shifts:

- Timebound transition plans with governments: to fully accomplish the goal of supporting national programmes, WFP will establish time-bound targets with national governments to transition to sustainable national programmes in the next 10 years. Based on the current situation in countries, WFP estimates it will hand over its programmes in 25 countries by 2030. Transition strategies will be negotiated and approved at the highest levels, ensuring national resources are committed to this before a WFP transition. Country-specific plans will be negotiated with governments, which may imply the possible drafting of complementary...
transition strategies to those country strategic plans where transition plans were not sufficiently articulated.

- **Stronger capacities for systems strengthening and upstream policy work**: to fully ensure sustainability and facilitate the transition to national ownership, school feeding and school health and nutrition more broadly, needs to be embedded into national education, health and social protection sector plans and to support this, WFP needs stronger engagement in these processes at country level. Staff capacities and systematic guidance will be strengthened to understand the national and sub-national systems within which school feeding programmes are embedded, including the national supply chains, information management systems, policy, planning and budgeting processes, the administrative set up, and accountability and reporting mechanisms of governments. WFP will also strengthen its advocacy and political engagement capacities to generate political will and secure necessary budgets at national and sub-national level (see workstream 3).

79. **WFP will support regional groups that have prioritized school feeding in continental discussions.** Support to the African Union (AU) will be a priority, as will partnerships with the African Union Development Agency (AUDA), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as it seeks to increasingly support regional efforts and ownership. These partnerships will be strengthened to build accountability mechanisms within the regions and transfer technical assistance capacities to regional bodies, providing expert technical and policy advice in social safety nets and protection, food security and nutrition with specific emphasis on reaching goals that promote gender equality. South-south cooperation approaches will be critical to achieve this objective. The WFP Center of Excellence in Brazil will play a leading role in the implementation of this objective, in partnership with other Centers in China and Cote d’Ivoire, and Regional Bureaux.

80. **A multisectoral approach and the identification of new financing tools and mechanisms to strengthen and develop further partnerships with Government Partners, IFIs and the UN System among others, will be sought for school feeding initiatives in support of the transition to national programmes.**

**Figure 4. Measure of success and targets for Role 2: Transitioning to national programmes**

**Role 2 – Transitioning to national programmes:**

**Learning to let go successfully**

**Measure of success:** Transition plans are fully implemented and high-quality programmes are implemented by governments, and supported by WFP, to reach vulnerable children living in a stable context.

**Targets:**
- 48.3 million additional children to be covered by national school feeding programmes
- All children reached by WFP are integrated into national social protection systems (~4 million)
- US$ 3.2 billion to be raised by the global community
- US$XX to be mobilised by WFP to provide technical support and meet identified needs
- All (100%) WFP programmes have time-bound concrete transition plans to handover (~25 countries to be fully handed over)
- All countries have adequate policy and legal frameworks to address the school feeding needs

**Main actions:**
- Develop new policy engagement and advocacy plans
- Establish hand-over agreements with governments
- Roll-out capacity development approach with Centre of Excellence
- Define indicators to measure capacity development outcomes, including counting beneficiaries from national programmes
- Roll-out funding and financing plan

**Expected trends:**
- Number of children reached by WFP
- Number of children reached by national programmes
- WFP technical assistance support
Role 3 – Consolidating and strengthening national programmes. Challenge: taking a regional approach to country support

81. To date, 44 countries are operating national school feeding programmes that began with WFP support decades ago, illustrating the strong WFP legacy in this area. These are middle income countries where the transition to national ownership has already happened (e.g. Peru, Dominican Republic, Indonesia) and where WFP is providing technical support and strengthening capacities to improve specific parts of the national programme at the request of the governments. Currently, WFP provides technical assistance and strengthens capacities together with its operational support in 61 countries; in 10 countries WFP only provides technical on-demand support. In many of these countries WFP helps facilitate south-south and triangular cooperation, showcasing good examples and fostering cooperation between governments.

82. WFP will continue to leverage and deploy its organizational expertise in these countries, and it will strengthen its ability to document and disseminate its achievements.

83. Strategic shifts:

- **Adopting a regional approach to country support**: a new approach is needed for WFP in regions like Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia where countries are requesting specific support to improve existing programmes. High level technical assistance by experts is needed for assessments, studies and evaluations of national programmes that inform policy decisions or reforms. This capacity can be shared across countries through rosters of regional experts, for example, which would make the assistance more efficient. Support will be provided to regional school feeding networks and institutions to facilitate dialogue between countries, document what is happening regionally at countries’ request, organize and host regional events, and provide technical support on demand. Stronger partnership engagement with global, regional and national research entities, international financial institutions, private sector, academia and think tanks, will be sought.

*Figure 5. Measure of success and targets for role 3: Consolidating and strengthening national programmes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role 3 – Consolidating and strengthening national programmes: Taking a regional approach to country support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Measure of success:**
| Established national school feeding programmes are optimised through iterative research, analysis and proactive learning |
| **Targets:**
| - 3.8 million children living in extreme poverty included in government run programmes
| - US$XX to be raised by WFP to provide technical support
| - 100% of national school feeding programmes are optimised through iterative research, analysis and proactive learning |
| **Expected trends:**
| - Number of children reached by national programmes
| - Quality of national programmes |
| **Main actions:**
| - High level technical assistance for assessments, studies and evaluations of national programmes to inform policy decisions or reforms.
| - Support regional school feeding networks and institutions to facilitate dialogue between countries
| - Stronger partnership engagement with global and regional research entities. |
3.4 The supporting workstreams of the strategy

At the corporate level, WFP will put in place four workstreams to support the implementation of this strategy. These will be rolled out in the form of taskforces led by the relevant departments or divisions in the organization. External organizations will also be invited to join as appropriate. At regional level the strategy will be supported by regional implementation plans, which will define effective and context specific measures to ensure country alignment.

Workstream 1 – Generating and sharing knowledge and best practice globally

84. As the leading international agency supporting school feeding, WFP has the responsibility to house and make available global knowledge so that countries can use that information to improve programmes and provide adequate support to vulnerable children. Drawing from decades of engagement in school feeding, WFP will document and share global lessons learned, best practices, standards and norms more effectively.

85. In recent years, new decentralized approaches are emerging on knowledge sharing including south-south exchanges, knowledge hubs and other initiatives at the regional level, that need to be supported, in order to create more of a networked approach to knowledge rather than a centralized one. However, better coordination is needed between all these initiatives to ensure coherence.

86. As it did in 2009, WFP will establish a research agenda for school feeding with partners (including UN agencies, research institutions and NGOs) for the next ten years, based on a mapping of learning needs, to ensure that global gaps in the knowledge base are being filled. In particular, WFP will continue developing the case for school feeding by generating evidence, calculating its benefit-cost ratio and the multiple returns that the programmes can bring in terms of human capital, including education and learning, health and nutrition, local economies and safety nets.

87. Future areas of research include: nutrition and diet quality of school-aged children (energy and micronutrient intakes); development of indicators to measure the impact of school feeding on nutrition status of school children; study the contribution of school feeding to human capital, costs and cost drivers of national programmes; the impact of school feeding on girls’ education and adolescents; analysis of how countries have transitioned from external support to country financing and management of programmes; the cost effectiveness of using school feeding programmes as a platform for the delivery of other services (health and nutrition, protection, etc); and the contribution of school feeding to peace and stability outcomes as well as its contribution to cognition and learning outcomes.

88. WFP will work with the World Bank and other relevant partners to document the results of almost five years of implementation of the SABER framework and to update the tool for further use as part of the Bank’s new Universal School Health and School Feeding Strategy. An operational tool will be developed by WFP to better assess national capacities for school feeding and provide technical assistance. WFP will work with partners such as the Global Child Nutrition Foundation on a global school feeding survey. A periodic flagship publication will consolidate and report back on the state of school feeding worldwide. Better outcome indicators to document and track results of school feeding operations will be developed, in particular those related to nutrition and capacity development.
### Taskforce 1 – Knowledge and best practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead: Programme Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WFP internal divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential external partners (examples – list non exhaustive)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Workstream 2 – Increasing the investment in school feeding: a new funding model

89. A new funding model that differentiates the contexts is needed. Low-income and fragile countries that do not have the same fiscal space as middle and high-income countries (countries in role 1 as described above) continue to rely on operational support from WFP, which in turn relies on a limited set of donors, making funds unpredictable and the operations unsustainable. To finance its operations in these countries WFP needs to explore new opportunities, such as results based or performance-based financing models with emerging donors and with the private sector. A multi-sectoral approach is needed, acknowledging the impact of school feeding in different areas and bringing on board donors that have traditionally not been involved in funding school feeding programmes.

90. New multilateral funds are available, especially in the education sector and innovative financing mechanisms, that need to be explored. Donors are receptive to a multisectoral approach and are increasingly interested in how school feeding can support human capital development, local economic development and small holder farmers’ market access, gender equality and women’s empowerment efforts, and these topics need to be addressed more directly in WFP programme design, analyses and funding efforts.

91. In more stable and developed countries (role 2 as described above), governments need to move away from a reliance on actors such as WFP and NGOs and their sources of funding, into different ways of financing their own national programmes. These could be, for example, increased bilateral contributions and budgetary support, debt swaps, specific domestic taxes or levies, corporate social responsibility projects with the private sector and other innovative national financing schemes (e.g. national level crowd sourcing). WFP’s challenge is to support governments increase access to these funds while also securing funding for capacity strengthening activities. National and regional fiscal policy innovations are key to sustainable financing of school feeding programmes in any context. WFP will need to learn to engage with host governments in designing and implementing innovative fiscal policy approaches to finance national and regional school feeding programmes. An additional need will be for WFP to strengthen its ability to manage, implement and account for funding coming from development sector partners.

92. International Financial Institutions like the World Bank, the African, Asian and Inter-American Development Banks and others will be crucial to enable this transition to national ownership and sustainability by channelling financing to national programmes. Funding for technical assistance and capacity development work would need to be secured for WFP to continue playing its enabling role. The private sector support has been instrumental in mobilizing resources, advocating and providing technical assistance to strengthen school feeding programmes. WFP will continue to work closely with the private sector and identify avenues to expand that cooperation through innovative financing mechanisms and individual giving, to contribute to the reduction of the funding gap, especially in fragile contexts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taskforce 2 – Resources</th>
<th>Co-leads: Programme Department/Partnerships Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WFP internal divisions</td>
<td>School Feeding, Government Partnerships, Private Sector (including foundations), Finance and Resource Mobilization, Strategic Partnerships and Innovation and Change Management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Potential external partners | IFIs and Trust Funds  
Public sector: government partners  
Private sector: Companies, individual giving, WFP Committees and foundations, etc.  
UN agencies |

**Workstream 3 – Acting in partnership to improve and advocate for school health and nutrition**

93. WFP will champion the issue of school health and nutrition globally and advocate for its prioritization in the next decade of action towards the global goals. It will work with partners to ensure that the additional elements of the integrated package for children, which are not part of WFP’s mandate or areas of expertise but are nevertheless crucial for children, are provided in an integrated way. Joint approaches are proving to be more effective and cost efficient, including joint advocacy and communication strategies.

94. In July 2019, an inter-agency meeting co-organized by UNESCO and WFP highlighted the importance of better UN agency collaboration in the context of the UN Reform and the need for a mapping of ongoing activities leading to a more effective, efficient and integrated new multi-agency school health and nutrition approach. WFP will support this new partnership opportunity at the global, regional and country levels.

95. WFP will update its bilateral partnerships with key agencies including UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, GPE, World Bank and ECW through new Memorandums of Understanding or action plans on school health and nutrition. WFP successfully collaborates with UNICEF in providing an integrated package of school feeding and health, WASH and nutrition interventions. WFP is currently working with FAO on sustainable Home-grown School Feeding approaches, with the view to improve linkages between local farmers and school feeding programmes. WFP will actively participate in a review of the SABER School Health and School Feeding frameworks (Systems Assessment for Better Education Results), led by the World Bank following five years of implementing the current tool, to improve policy analysis for school health and school feeding. Support will be provided to regional bodies like the African Union to strengthen their leadership on school feeding.

96. At the regional and country level, WFP will work with governments as key stakeholders, UN agencies and NGOs to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes and to provide better and more information to decision makers at the right time, engage and reposition school health and nutrition in national policy discussions at the right level and with the right capacities, in particular through sectoral and UN coordination mechanisms (eg. Education working groups/clusters, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework process), and support overall upstream decision-making by pointing out key trade-offs, best practices and solutions to governments. WFP will foster multi-sectoral approaches by actively promote inter-
ministerial/multisectoral coordination mechanisms at national levels and convening across ministries, government structures and regional groups.

97. NGOs have clearly asked WFP to review its approach to partnering with them on school feeding through the consultations for this strategy. At the country level, there is an opportunity to develop shared platforms for knowledge sharing, development of indicators, and coordinated support to governments. This may include jointly strengthening monitoring systems, transition plans and government ownership. At the regional and international levels, this engagement provides a basis for joint advocacy to increase the profile of school feeding, as well as global coordination of school feeding and sharing of research, lessons learnt and best practice. In response, WFP will establish an NGO advisory board at global/HQ level and include NGOs in various workstreams of this strategy, including the new research agenda.

98. The private sector - including multinational, national and local profit-making enterprises, foundations and individual giving – has been a strong player in school feeding particularly in stable contexts where it has supported transition strategies with governments. Support in the form of funding, advocacy, and technical support for the design and development of national school feeding programmes is being increasingly leveraged. Here, an area of growth will be the development of new partnerships with national private sector companies who can and should be part of country level advocacy and policy platforms to strengthen the quality and sustainability of school health and school feeding interventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taskforce 3 – Partnerships and advocacy</th>
<th>Co-leads: Programme Department/Partnerships Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WFP internal divisions</td>
<td>School Feeding, Communications and Advocacy, Strategic Partnerships, Government Partnerships and Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential external partners</td>
<td>UN agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IFIs and Trust Funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INGOs/NGOs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workstream 4 - Strengthening programmatic approaches in key areas

99. WFP has identified six thematic focus areas that will be further strengthened. All these areas require integrated, multi-sectorial approaches. WFP will work in partnership with UN organizations, NGOs, community-based organizations and other partners to deliver a range of interventions and benefits to school children and their communities, leveraging the school as a key platform of service delivery.

- **Girls’ (including adolescents) education and well-being** Helping girls stay in school, especially into adolescence, is an effective way of preventing early marriage and of delaying the first pregnancy, both of which can trap women into poverty, social exclusion, violence and chronic ill health. However, a multitude of gender inequalities may hinder the access of children, especially girls, to schools. Financial, social, religious, health, protection and safety concerns may all present obstacles to girl’s school attendance disproportionately. 71 In some countries WFP has successfully

operationalized approaches with partners such UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women to address some of these barriers through integrated platforms, which need to be supported and scaled up.

- **Nutrition sensitive school-feeding**
  In the face of the double burden of malnutrition, priorities for school aged children are promoting healthy diets through nutrition education, physical activity and behaviour change communication, addressing and preventing micronutrient deficiencies, and tackling the specific needs of adolescent girls and other vulnerable groups. WFP will issue new nutritional guidelines for governments on how to design the best models based on their situation, nutritional needs and challenges, while promoting links with other health, hygiene and nutrition-related activities.

- **School feeding and the triple humanitarian-development-peace nexus:** School feeding is part of an essential package to bridge immediate response and long-term development efforts. For children living in fragile and conflict-affected areas and refugee settings, where food insecurity and fragility are mutually reinforcing, school feeding can become an essential safeguard and can make an important contribution to a sense of normalcy and educational continuation. A robust conflict/context analysis needs to underpin and inform WFP’s programme design for school feeding in order to ensure that our assistance is conflict-sensitive and does not result in additional protection risks for children. The contributions that School Feeding might have to improving the prospects for peace on different levels need to be further researched. WFP will work to strengthen the evidence base and gather quantitative and qualitative data to show the impact of school feeding across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace areas.

- **School feeding, food systems and value chains:** Despite over a decade of work in this area, homegrown school feeding programmes are still not implemented at scale. WFP will deploy its significant expertise in this area, including market analysis and supply chain support, links to local food systems and small-holder farmers’ groups, access to energy, support of cash-based programming, and shock-responsive programmes and improved monitoring and traceability solutions for local procurement to governments to ensure that the connection between school feeding and local agricultural production is a reality. Ensuring complementarities with other programmes, strengthening the engagement of other sectors, particularly agriculture and trade, and partnerships with Rome based agencies and specialised international and national NGOs and farmers’ organisations will be important.

- **Data and digital innovation:** as part of its corporate digital transformation goal, WFP is developing a school feeding digital platform to increase near real-time data availability from operations and enable better and quicker decision-making by WFP programme managers. Eventually these solutions can be linked with national reporting and monitoring systems in support of government led programmes. Digital solutions for attendance tracking, monitoring of meals served, type of cooking appliances, fuels and consumption as well as stock management in schools will be fostered. Structured data visualizations and integrated dashboards will support country offices to improve their programme quality where needed. Digital platforms to train school feeding actors on nutrition education, food quality and safety and promote healthy eating habits, such as NutriFrami will be further developed. Furthermore, the school meal optimization tool PLUS School

---

WFP’s 2017 Nutrition policy frames the engagement towards improving nutrition in all of WFP’s interventions.
Menus will help to improve menu design, focusing on nutrition, local sourcing and cost optimisation.

- **Local communities**: A variety of community-based actors contribute to school feeding programmes including school management committees, parent teacher associations, teachers, parents, traditional authorities, village leaders, women’s groups, farmer organizations, and of course, students. Local communities have an important role to play in the implementation of school feeding activities both in fragile and stable contexts, with increasing importance in their ownership of school feeding in stable contexts. WFP will strengthen the engagement of local communities in the school feeding to ensure the sustainability of activities, children attendance, community members contribution to school feeding through in kind or financial assistance, and parents and teachers’ leadership in the management of the daily activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taskforce 4 – Programmatic approach</th>
<th>Leads: Programme Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WFP internal divisions</td>
<td>School Feeding, Nutrition, SAMS, Innovation Accelerator, TEC, Centres of Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential external partners</td>
<td>UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, community-based organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.5 Demonstrating results and measuring the success of the strategy

#### Monitoring and evaluation of WFP’s operations

100. There are gaps in measurement and challenges to WFP’s capacity to demonstrate programmatic results across the outcome areas for school feeding. While school feeding monitoring systems provide output and outcome measurements for education, more work is needed to ensure improved measurements across all outcome areas identified in the school feeding policy including nutrition, safety nets and capacity strengthening. WFP will update its existing M&E framework to better demonstrate programme results under those areas at impact, outcome and output level and to make it more gender-responsive. In close linkage with the school feeding research agenda, the school feeding M&E framework will: 1) pilot-test new quantitative and qualitative indicators to provide standardized measures for key programme results; 2) enhance monitoring systems, data collection and reporting at the country level, for WFP and national programmes; 3) leverage new technologies to effectively monitor and evaluate school feeding programmes (see section on digital innovation) and 4) partner with other UN agencies to align common set of indicators to demonstrate impact towards achieving the SDGs by 2030; 5) partner with the World Bank to align common set of indicators to demonstrate impact towards learning outcomes and the Human Capital Index.

101. The updated M&E Framework will feed into the next Corporate Results Framework (2021). On the programme evaluation side, WFP will dedicate resources at the global and regional level to ensure school feeding evaluations planned under the CSP framework (or in response to donor’s

---

73 New indicators include: Child nutrition and diet quality and diversity of targeted children (nutrition); households’ income economy through school feeding resource transfer (safety nets); governments’ progress to establish sustainable school feeding system (capacity strengthening an advocacy) including reporting on beneficiaries reached through WFP’s support to national systems (i.e. Tier 3).
funding requirements) have a rigorous design and are able to produce reliable impact level evidence that fills into evidence gaps for programmes implemented under Role 1 and Role 2. Thematic syntheses will highlight programme results, lessons learnt and operational best practices. Syntheses will ensure that conclusions and recommendations of evaluations systemically feed into school feeding policy, guidance and practice.

102. This strategy will benefit from the implementation of WFP Corporate Evaluation Strategy (2016-2021) whose implementation allows WFP to generate the evidence and knowledge it needs to achieve its goals in an increasingly complex world; and the Corporate Monitoring Strategy (2018-2021), designed to strengthen WFP’s monitoring systems and capacities.

**Measuring the success of this strategy**

103. The implementation of the school feeding strategy is summarized in the Theory of Change in Annex I. The regular monitoring and centralized evaluations of the strategy will be based on this theory of change.

104. At the global, regional and country level, KPIs will be developed for all the strategy workstreams and actions identifying annual targets, 2025 targets and 2030 targets. Data will be disaggregated by sex and age. Targets will be reviewed annually to ensure adequate responsiveness to implementation realities and country context as WFP’s role evolves/changes within each country.

105. WFP has done an analysis of internal monitoring systems and has identified system bottlenecks to appropriately track planned and actual resources invested in school feeding and link them to results. A plan will be defined to progressively address these challenges in the first three years of the strategy.

106. The school feeding Strategy (2020-2030) identifies the following instruments and channels for both internal and external reporting at the global level:

- Annual update to the EB through WFP’s Annual Performance Report and annual informal updates/round-tables.
- Annual update to WFP’s leadership group through thematic global school feeding report.
- Periodically, the flagship publication ‘State of school feeding worldwide’ and other publications will provide an update to global partners.
Annex 1.- Theory of change School Feeding Strategy 2020 - 2030

SDGs

WFP Strategic Objectives

1. END HUNGER
2. IMPROVE NUTRITION
3. ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY
4. SUPPORT SDG IMPLEMENTATION
5. PARTNER FOR SDG RESULTS

WFP Strategic Results

1. Access to Food (SDG 2.1)
2. End Malnutrition (SDG 2.2)
3. Smallholder Productivity and Incomes (SDG 2.3)
4. Sustainable Food Systems (SDG 2.4)
5. Capacity Strengthening (SDG 2.5)
6. Policy Coherence (SDG 17.15)
7. Diversified Ressourcing (17.3)
8. Enhance Global Partnership (17.15)

Vision

All vulnerable school children are free from hunger and are well nourished and healthy, so they can learn and reach their full potential, thus benefiting their own development and wellbeing, and that of their families and communities.

Purpose

All vulnerable children have improved access to school feeding as part of the essential school health and nutrition package contributing to increasing human capital and economic growth, education and learning, food systems and healthy diets.

Strategy Outcomes

1. All vulnerable children in lower middle income countries are covered by high-quality programmes implemented by governments and supported by WFP (WFP hands over operational support services)
2. All vulnerable children in cross-affected countries are covered by high-quality programmes implemented by WFP and delivered in partnerships.
3. All vulnerable children living in extreme poverty in middle income countries are covered by optimized higher-quality national school feeding programmes

Drivers of change

Partnerships for Integrated School Health And Nutrition Package
Innovative Financing model for Governments and WFP
Knowledge Management and Demonstration of Results
Quality Programming