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UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WFP'S SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for information

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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** School Feeding Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WFP's long-term vision is to reduce hunger among schoolchildren so that it is not an obstacle to their development. The school feeding policy approved in November 2009¹ reaffirms this vision, frames school feeding as a safety-net intervention with multiple outcomes, calls on WFP to work even more closely with national governments and includes eight quality standards for school feeding programmes to which to aspire.²

In line with this policy, WFP seeks to support national governments with a view to achieving:

- a) improved quality of school feeding by increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation: programmes must be targeted, nutritious, cost-effective and use locally produced foods to the extent possible;
- b) wider coverage, especially of girls, by scaling up school feeding to reach as many hungry schoolchildren as possible;
- c) sustainability by aiming to establish stable funding and budgeting; needs-based, nutritious, cost-effective programmes; sound implementation arrangements such as local procurement and links with agriculture and local development; and sound partnerships, coordination and community ownership.

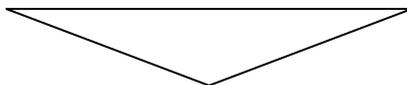
WFP will continue to respond to requests to fund and implement school feeding, especially in contexts of weak capacity. In line with the Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), however, WFP is now focusing more deliberately on the transition to national delivery of school feeding programmes. This involves enabling government ownership, developing capacity, providing technical support and promoting accountability, while ensuring school feeding programmes are situated within national and sector policies and strategies.

WFP has adopted a new approach to create a new generation of school feeding programmes and to improve capacities for implementing sound and sustainable programmes. To this end, WFP is focusing its efforts on three pillars: i) implementation support; ii) strategic thought leadership; and iii) global partnerships, fundraising and advocacy. This update describes WFP's policy implementation approach and the progress to date. It includes information on new operational partnerships, processes, tools and guidance that has been developed to support policy implementation and the roll-out of a new school feeding approach. A number of country examples are used to demonstrate the ongoing transformation process aimed at creating a new generation of sustainable school feeding programmes. The update also highlights recent learning and emerging insights including the challenges, successes and next steps to ensure the successful implementation of WFP's school feeding policy.

¹ WFP/EB.2/2009/4-A

² These are: 1 – Strategy for sustainability; 2 – Sound alignment with the national policy framework; 3 – Stable funding and budgeting; 4 – Needs-based, cost-effective quality programme design; 5 – Strong institutional arrangements for implementation, monitoring and accountability; 6 – Strategy for local production and sourcing; 7 – Strong partnerships and inter-sector coordination; and 8 – Strong community participation and ownership.

DRAFT DECISION*



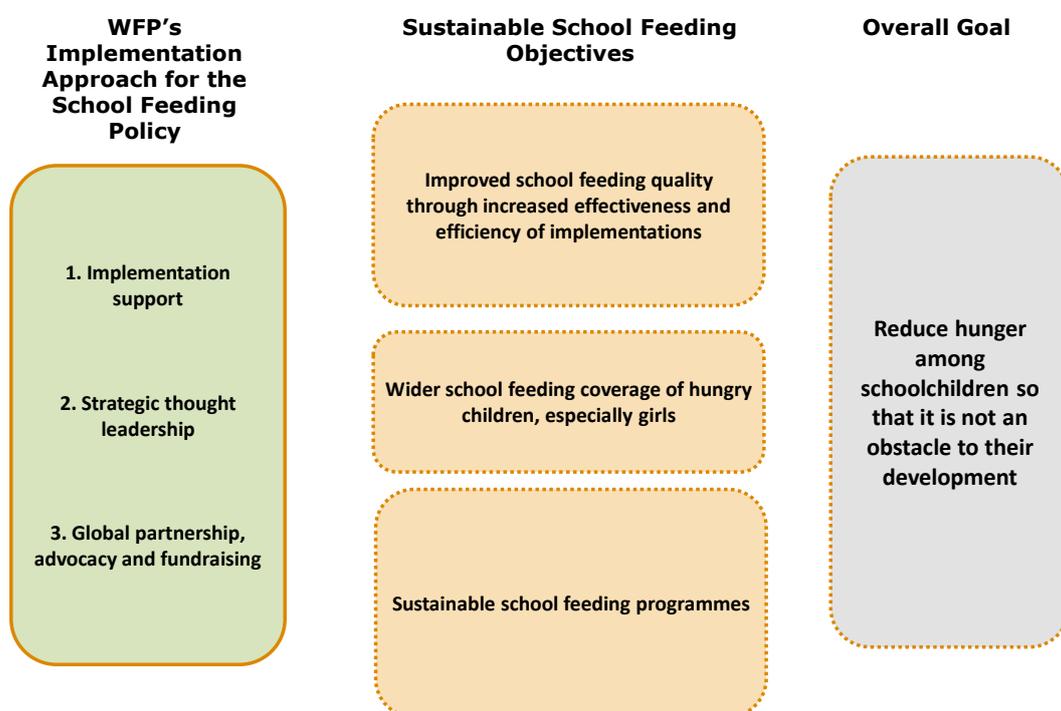
The Board takes note of “Update on the Implementation of WFP’s School Feeding Policy” (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-G).

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

1. WFP's long-term vision is to reduce hunger among schoolchildren so that it is not an obstacle to their development. To make this vision a reality, WFP is working with its school feeding partners to help governments increase the coverage, quality and sustainability of programmes. In particular, WFP and the World Bank are following up the joint study *Rethinking School Feeding*,³ which emphasized that: i) the transition to sustainable national programmes that are aligned with development strategies depends on mainstreaming school feeding into national plans, especially in the education sector, and augmenting implementation capacities; ii) the relative cost of school feeding declines as national income rises; and iii) the variation in the cost of school feeding in developing countries indicates that there are opportunities for cost containment.
2. WFP developed a school feeding policy implementation approach to support global and national initiatives to scale up school feeding programmes and increase their quality and sustainability by focusing on three pillars:
 - i) implementation support;
 - ii) strategic thought leadership; and
 - iii) global partnership, advocacy and fundraising.

Figure 1: Approach to School Feeding



³Bundy, D., Burbano, C. Grosh, M., Gelli, A., Jukes, M. and Drake, L. 2009. *Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector*. WFP and the World Bank, Rome and Washington, DC.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

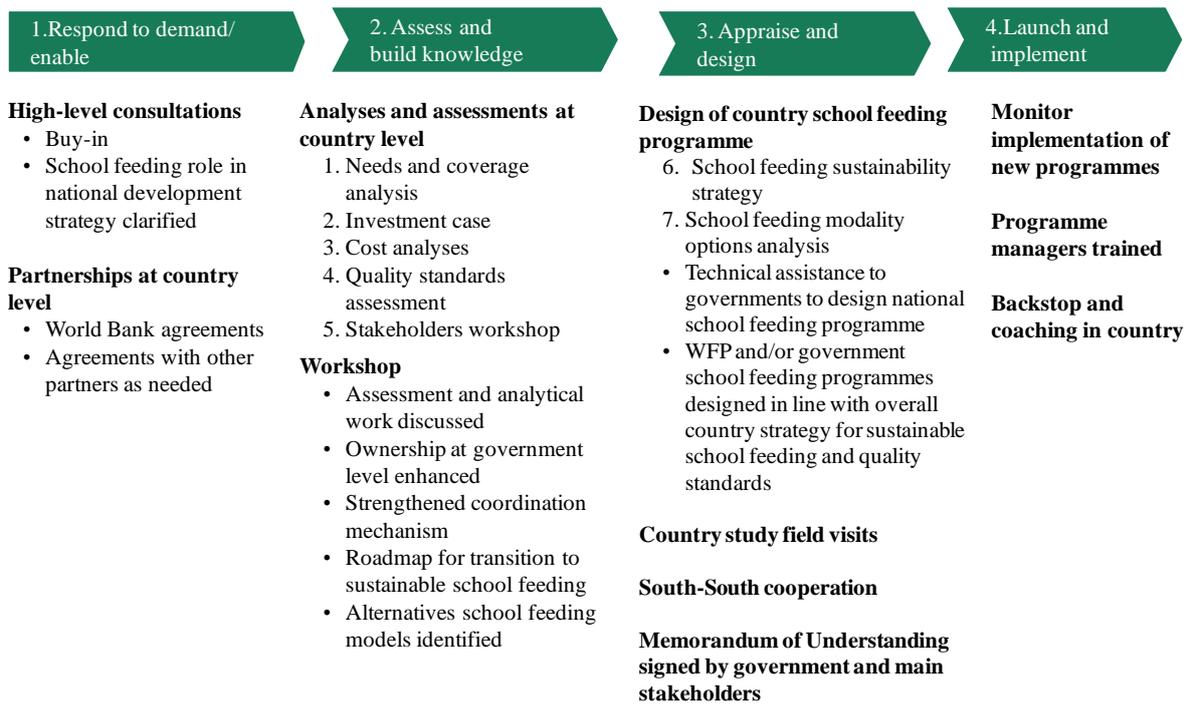
3. WFP continues to respond to requests to fund and implement school feeding, especially in contexts of weak capacity. In line with the Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), however, WFP is focusing on the transition to national delivery of school feeding programmes. This involves enabling government ownership, developing capacity, providing technical support, promoting accountability and ensuring that food security and nutrition are high on national agendas.
4. WFP has therefore adopted a new approach to create a new generation of school feeding programmes and to improve capacities for implementing sound and sustainable programmes. It is advising governments on issues of appraisal, design, targeting and re-targeting, funding, management, logistics, procurement, monitoring and other services. It is also working with governments to set medium-term and long-term goals for reaching all hungry school-aged children.

NEW OPERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

5. The WFP/World Bank partnership is supporting governments in the development and implementation of school feeding programmes as productive safety nets and investments in human capital under the Education for All approach. The partnership with the World Bank was formalized in November 2009 to support the mainstreaming of school feeding in national policies, develop institutional capacity to implement cost-efficient and sustainable school feeding manner and promote transition to nationally owned and resourced programmes. Joint activities have started in Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Haiti, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Mali and Mozambique; the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) is collaborating in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Mali. The new approach is gradually being mainstreamed into WFP school feeding programmes as they are developed or reviewed.

NEW APPROACH PROCESS

6. It is useful to understand the new approach as a four-stage process framework as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Four-Stage Process

7. To support transitions to nationally owned, resourced and implemented school feeding programmes, WFP is developing, testing and deploying analytical and process tools such as those shown in Figure 3.⁴

⁴ Some tools were developed with support from The Boston Consulting Group.

Figure 3: Implementation Toolkit

Tool	Description	Main usage
1 Investment case	Assessment of monetary cost and economic benefits of recognized outcomes of school feeding	Advocacy
2 Needs and coverage	Estimation of no. children in need of school feeding, no. of children receiving school feeding and regional distribution	Advocacy
3 Cost analysis	Cost analysis for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3a • WFP school feeding programmes 3b • National school feeding programmes 	Decision-making
4 Quality standards assessment	Qualitative assessment of country situation against 8 quality standards for sustainable school feeding	Decision-making
5 Stakeholder workshop	Set of generic modules on where school feeding stands in a country and what it takes to improve the quality while transitioning to sustainability using the 8 quality standards	Decision-making
6 Sustainability strategy	Guide for development of transition strategy for the government for sustainable school feeding programmes, based on quality standards, with estimated cost and timeline	Decision-making
7 School feeding model planning tool	Analysis of options – and relative tradeoffs - available for government choice among different models and modalities of school feeding programmes	Decision-making

Mainstreaming the New Approach in Programme Design

8. The new approach and toolkit are being mainstreamed into all WFP school feeding programmes. The needs and coverage analysis helps to set national targets for reaching all hungry children in a given country. Sustainability strategies and action plans guide capacity development, including WFP activities under Strategic Objective 5. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for example, advice on capacity development guided a revision of the WFP project to align it with the national sustainability strategy. Country offices are embedding design, quality assessment and cost analysis into projects. WFP projects are including capacity-development milestones for national institutions and identifying activities to reach them. Stakeholder consultations are being held during programme design and evaluations.

Guidance Materials

9. Guidance materials incorporating the new thinking are being developed. In 2010 WFP updated its guidance on school feeding food baskets and rations to ensure that programmes contribute effectively to diets and include appropriate micronutrients to address deficiencies. New guidelines on school feeding in emergencies and urban settings and for targeting are being developed and will be continuously updated to support learning and improvement.

Training

10. A training package for WFP staff is being developed to enhance capacities to enable WFP and governments to design and implement effective and sustainable school feeding programmes. The training will be rolled out through regional workshops.

Performance Measurement

11. WFP is aligning its monitoring and evaluation strategy with the school feeding policy. The benefits of school feeding in different operational contexts are reflected in the updated Strategic Results Framework and in programme guidance. A monitoring and evaluation and outcome measurement strategy aligned with the school feeding policy was developed at a workshop in November 2010. The quality standards assessment and sustainability strategy tools for the new approach also enable the transition to national ownership to be monitored, with medium-term objectives against which progress can be assessed. WFP is working with national government to strengthen national systems for monitoring and evaluating school feeding.
12. The World Bank's Human Development Network (HDNED) is currently developing tools to benchmark education-related programmes against best practice. The initiative, called SABER,⁵ is geared towards improving the advice and operational support offered by the World Bank to its partner countries, and seeks to provide standards of good practice against which countries can rate themselves. School feeding has been included as a programme in this initiative, along with other crucial areas of investment like teacher training, school health and nutrition, and incentives. WFP and PCD have been invited to develop the tool with the World Bank.
13. Four school feeding impact evaluations by the Office of Evaluation – in Kenya in 2009 and in Cambodia, The Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire in 2010 – looked at the wider range of outcomes introduced in the school feeding policy.

STRATEGIC THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

14. WFP recently held a four-day internal consultation in Rome on school feeding and nutrition to take stock of innovations in school feeding in order to: i) provide a learning opportunity for country offices and Headquarters staff to share experiences and lessons learned; ii) identify major issues and challenges that need to be overcome in coming years to fully implement and update the policy; and iii) interact with WFP's main school feeding partners to identify opportunities for collaboration. The consultation revealed that at the country level WFP is introducing a number of innovations in school feeding.
15. For instance, WFP and the World Bank are piloting a conditional cash-transfer project in Cambodia alongside the ongoing take-home ration programme and undertaking a comparative cost-benefit study. In Kenya, WFP is exploring a school-based procurement model that uses cash to prepare schools for hand-over to the national programme, which uses the same system. Purchase for Progress (P4P) is being used in Ghana to test a decentralized school feeding model. These innovations will provide information on how approaches could be replicated in other countries.
16. In terms of research, the joint WFP/World Bank publication *Rethinking School Feeding* identified areas for building knowledge, for which WFP has established a research agenda with its partners. A number of joint research activities are ongoing. WFP and partners are planning to study several countries that have made successful transitions to sustainable programmes; an example is the May 2010 case study of the national school feeding programme in Côte d'Ivoire carried out by WFP, PCD and the Institute for Development Studies to document the part of the national programme that achieved sustainability by including groups of women farmers in the supply chain.

⁵System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results

17. South–South learning through exchange visits have fostered national programmes and ownership and help to improve the sustainability and quality of school feeding programmes. In 2009 and 2010, visits to Côte D’Ivoire from Benin, Mali and Rwanda; to Egypt from Ethiopia; to Ghana from the United Republic of Tanzania; and to Brazil from Mozambique provided opportunities for learning from experience in the participating countries.
18. WFP will scale up its support for South–South learning by working with the Government of Brazil to establish a centre in Brasilia for capacity development in school feeding, nutrition and food security. The objectives are to: i) establish a training and capacity development facility for governments to promote best practices in school feeding programmes; ii) provide technical assistance to develop national capacities in the design and implementation of sustainable programmes; iii) advance research and innovation increasing global knowledge ; and iv) advocate for school feeding as an effective hunger solution.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP, ADVOCACY AND FUNDRAISING

19. The WFP/World Bank partnership on school feeding has been strengthened in recent years. In addition, efforts to address food security and local agricultural production have gained momentum through increased engagement from the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)–Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and through P4P and PCD, both of which benefit from grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Other key partners are the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Millennium Villages Project, the Global Child Nutrition Foundation, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development and stakeholders and donors interested in sustainable school feeding and the provision of Essential Package items.⁶
20. School feeding is supported by the governments of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Luxembourg, the Russian Federation and the United States, and by private-sector entities. Brazil and the Russian Federation in particular have in-depth knowledge of national school feeding programmes that will help to develop capacities for locally sourced home-grown school feeding programmes.

⁶ The Essential Package to improve the health and nutrition of school-age children: i) basic education; ii) school feeding; iii) promotion of girls’ education; iv) potable water and sanitary latrines; v) health, nutrition and hygiene education; vi) systematic deworming; vii) micronutrient supplementation; viii) HIV and AIDS education; ix) psychosocial support; x) malaria prevention; xi) school gardens; and xii) improved woodlots and stoves.

21. WFP is advocating the benefits of school feeding programmes as part of a call to increase support for school health, meals and nutrition with a view to promoting investment in education and human development. School feeding is recognized as a proven safety net and strategy in various international fora.⁷
22. WFP continues to raise funds for its school feeding programmes: it encourages multi-year funding and engages supporting countries with national funding strategies to reach all needy schoolchildren. For many countries that have started school feeding programmes, the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) and the Global Food Crisis Response Programme have started to support national funding. It is hoped that some funding for social protection and hunger solutions can be channelled to school feeding.

Implementation of the Policy at the Country Level

23. Several countries have started to apply the new approach and tools, which involves: i) consultations with governments and partners on policy, leading to sustainable national programmes and sustainable country-level partnerships; ii) application of quality standards to ensure sustainability; iii) analyses to improve quality and efficiency; and iv) global and regional advocacy, learning events and research. Figure 4 shows the application of the tools in some countries.

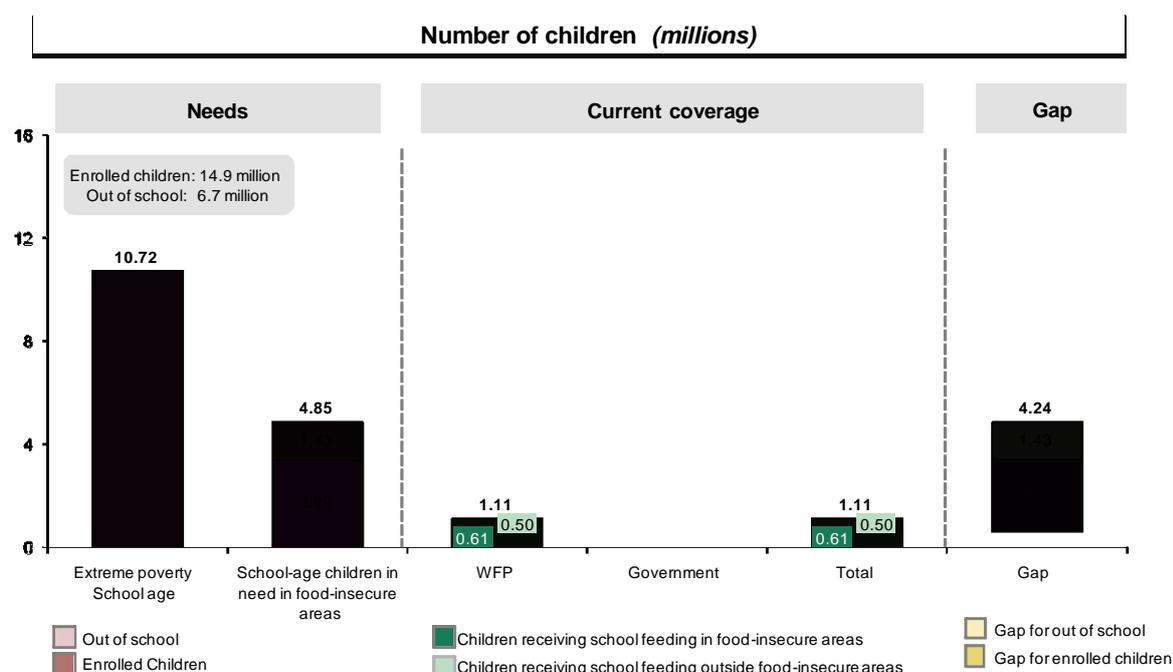
Figure 4: Application of Tools in Selected Countries

Pilot country	1 Investment case	2 Needs and coverage	3a WFP cost analysis	3b Govt cost analysis	4 Quality Std Assm't	5 Stakeholders workshop	6 Sustainability strategy	7 School feeding model decision tool
Ghana	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Kenya	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Bangladesh	✓	✓	✓					
Mozambique	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Malawi	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Côte d'Ivoire		✓	✓	✓				
Haiti			✓		✓	✓		
Mali			✓		✓	✓		

⁷ For example school feeding has been included during discussions and events such as the G8 Summit in L'Aquila and the high-level meeting on safety nets in Bellagio, which both took place in Italy in July 2009; the World Food Summit in Rome in November 2009; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Education For All meeting in Addis Ababa in February 2010; the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) side event in June 2010 in New York and planned for Geneva in 2011; during the NEPAD-organized meeting in July 2010 prior to the African Union Summit in Kampala; and the IFPRI international conference Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health, held in New Delhi, India in February 2011.

24. For instance, the Government of Bangladesh has been encouraged by the results of WFP's school feeding model, which uses fortified biscuits to address micronutrient deficiencies, and is working to replicate it. The needs and coverage analysis showed that many hungry schoolchildren are not being reached and highlighted areas for scaling up by WFP and the Government. The current school feeding programme is cost-effective and creates significant economic value.

Figure 5: Preliminary Needs and Coverage Analysis, Bangladesh



Primary schools and pre-primary schools included

Extreme poverty is based on World Bank indicator (absolute poverty, 2005) - Priority areas defined by country office (high priorities selected)

25. In Cape Verde, which has graduated from WFP food assistance, WFP's role has shifted from direct implementation to providing technical support with partners such as FAO. WFP's funding and implementation have gradually decreased as the Government has increased its involvement. Cape Verde is an example of how countries can transition to nationally owned programmes; the programme embodies WFP's new perspective on school feeding as set out in the school feeding policy.
26. The national home-grown school feeding programme in Ghana, a model of national commitment, uses decentralized implementation but faces challenges in targeting, coordination among ministries and links with smallholder farmers. A stakeholders' workshop supported by WFP and the World Bank indicated ways of moving forward; a high-level follow-up mission in June 2010 offered coordinated technical support from both organizations. PCD is creating a plan to support the national programme, with emphasis on the home-grown element.
27. In Haiti, WFP is working with partners to support the Ministry of Education in improving the quality of the national school feeding programme. During the next three years, WFP, the World Bank and Brazil will support the Government in drafting its national school feeding policy, creating a national monitoring and evaluation system, and piloting local purchase mechanisms for the programme.

28. Application of analytical tools in Kenya showed that school feeding was cost-efficient and provided major benefits. The stakeholders' workshop made recommendations on moving forward in terms of policy, targeting, coordination, capacity development and home-grown programmes. A draft transition strategy for sustainable school feeding was developed jointly with the Ministry of Education. As part of work to develop local and national capacities, WFP is exploring a school-based procurement model using cash to help schools to prepare for hand-over to the national programme.
29. WFP helped the Lao People's Democratic Republic to include school feeding in its application for Education for All-FTI funding to cover schoolchildren affected by poverty and food insecurity. The country has long-term plans to mainstream school feeding in national funding, using projected revenues from power stations under development. A stakeholders' workshop on developing the national school feeding programme resulted in a tripartite agreement between WFP, the World Bank and the Ministry of Education that identified areas needing technical assistance.
30. In Armenia, WFP is helping the Government to design a sustainable national school feeding programme by facilitating consultations, analyses and the identification of priority areas for capacity development in partnership with other actors.
31. In Bhutan, WFP is supporting the Government in the final stages of transition to a national school feeding policy. The school feeding programme has a well established procurement and delivery system; the Government already manages most operational functions, and it is gradually taking over the caseload covered by WFP and working to implement aspects of the Essential Package.
32. In 2010, the Iraqi Council of Ministers approved a national school feeding programme and budget for the 2011 school year. WFP is supporting development of the programme and building capacity to ensure a smooth transition to national ownership.
33. The World Bank, WFP, PCD and development partners are helping the Government of Malawi to consider a range of modalities that includes a home-grown, locally sourced and decentralized model linked to P4P.
34. The Government of Mali developed a school feeding policy in 2010 with support from WFP, building on lessons learned from national school feeding programmes started in 2008. WFP and PCD are working with the Government to support institutional capacity development.
35. In Mauritania, school feeding is part of the Poverty Strategy Reduction Paper and the Education Sector Plan. WFP is working with the Government to define the policy with a view to increasing the sustainability of the programme.
36. In Sao Tome and Principe, the National Assembly approved a National School Feeding and Health Policy document in February 2011. The policy document was developed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Training with support from the WFP country office and the Brazilian Embassy.
37. The World Bank, WFP and Brazil are helping the Government of Mozambique to establish a national school feeding programme as part of its new education strategy. WFP's analytical work in June 2010 highlighted the strong case for investment and provided insights into options for the Ministry of Education school feeding programme that fed into the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) application approved in November 2010. A tripartite agreement was signed in July 2010 to carry out pilot projects with different modalities. A national workshop supported by World Bank, PCD and WFP is planned for 2011.

38. Positive results of the WFP school feeding programme in the United Republic of Tanzania led the Government to seek WFP's assistance in developing a national programme for all schoolchildren in the country. A roadmap developed in consultation with the school feeding taskforce established by the Prime Minister is the basis for dialogue on integrating school feeding into the national Education and Training Policy and the development of a national strategy.

39. In Latin America, WFP's school feeding capacity development project is supporting governments in 12 countries to improve the sustainability and quality of their school feeding programmes: this involves the creation of national plans to address areas that require improvement. The countries will adapt and adopt WFP's eight quality standards to identify quality gaps and to develop long-term national capacities through South–South and triangular cooperation, technical assistance, knowledge management and training. It is hoped that this kind of work can be replicated in other regions.

Emerging Insights

⇒ *Embedding school feeding in Poverty Reduction Strategies and education sector development plans*

40. For school feeding to be mainstreamed and eligible for funding, it must be embedded in poverty reduction, education and/or nutrition strategies. It is essential that WFP engage in policy dialogue and sector planning processes to ensure that school feeding is included. WFP has in some cases taken on a leadership role, for instance in The Gambia, where WFP is the lead agency for the education sector.

⇒ *Transition process*

41. Transition to national ownership takes time. Some countries that have tried to launch large national school feeding programmes have faced difficulties in implementation. The transition in El Salvador to a nationally owned, funded and managed programme, as documented in *Rethinking School Feeding*, took 20 years. Abrupt hand-over of a programme can jeopardize sustainability if institutional capacities are limited: a planned transition with clear milestones is recommended rather than premature hand-over or exit. External support in implementation, capacity development and funding is often needed until governments have the ability and financial means to reach all hungry pupils with school feeding.

⇒ *Funding national programmes*

42. The funding of national programmes can be a challenge, especially in the early stages. Ghana and Kenya, for example, allocated substantial portions of their national budgets to school feeding programmes; the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritania and Mozambique were able to tap external funding sources to develop nationally owned programmes, particularly through FTI. Other funding could come from the social-protection and agriculture sectors if multi-sector approaches are enhanced.

⇒ *Targeting*

43. Prioritization of the neediest people is critical. All children should eat at school, and universal school feeding is desirable in all countries, but governments with tight budgets have to decide how public funds should be spent and who to serve first. For school feeding to work as a safety net it has to target the poorest and most food-insecure.

⇒ *Different school feeding models*

44. There are many options when it comes to designing school feeding models. Contextual factors will determine the most appropriate model for a particular country or area. The new approach seeks to understand the advantages and disadvantages of centralized, decentralized and mixed or “blended” models. Some governments initiating national school feeding programmes are choosing decentralized models with funds allocated at the school or district levels: examples are Ghana and Kenya. Côte d’Ivoire uses a mixed model as it moves towards community ownership. It may make sense to have more than one model operating in the country if the potential for local purchase varies. WFP has traditionally used a more centralized model, and is now beginning to pilot other models that are more conducive to an eventual take-over by national governments. Under the new approach with partners, WFP has been building knowledge about the appropriateness of centralized, decentralized and mixed models.

⇒ *South–South cooperation*

45. South–South learning through exchange visits is an important way to foster national interest for improving the sustainability and quality of school feeding programmes. WFP expects that the Centre of Capacity Development in School Feeding, Nutrition and Food Security in Brasilia will become a hub of global knowledge and support South–South learning on school feeding models.

⇒ *Capacity development*

46. Capacity development requires systematic assessment of the status of school feeding programmes. Understanding current capacities and issues can enable governments to develop strategies for sustainable school feeding. Work plans with capacity-development milestones and quality standards enable countries to implement strategies and help partners to support the governments concerned. The new WFP financial framework approved in November 2010 will enable WFP to seek resources for capacity development of national programmes.

⇒ *Local procurement and home-grown school feeding*

47. Local procurement and home-grown school feeding mean different things to different actors, and many innovative models are emerging. Some consider home-grown school feeding to mean a sustainable nationally owned and nationally sourced programme; others see it as a direct benefit for smallholder farmers. WFP supports home-grown school feeding by: i) linking WFP-supported programmes to national procurement; ii) increasing purchases from small farmers or farmers’ associations such as is done using P4P; iii) supporting the processing of local products; and iv) working with partners and through South–South cooperation to help governments to develop home-grown school feeding programmes.

⇒ *WFP’s capacity, skills and resources*

48. To make this important shift and respond to demands from country offices and governments, WFP needs to increase its school feeding capacity, develop its new approach, and engage in policy dialogue and planning processes. These efforts are time-consuming. Programme staff are often already fully engaged in operational issues and ensuring the smooth implementation of the WFP programme. Appropriate staff skills and dedicated staff time and resources are required to support national governments to build sustainable school feeding programmes.

49. Partnerships are a major enabling factor in capacity development, and WFP cannot support governments on its own. The new partnership between WFP, PCD, the World Bank and NEPAD is an important step in developing coordinated approaches: it builds on existing country-level partnerships on the Essential Package with FAO and UNICEF. Governments, however, need to be in the lead and coordinate the various school feeding partners. Coordination can be improved through common workplans around school feeding at the operational level.

⇒ *Nutrition*

50. A new concept gaining global traction is 1000 Days PLUS or the Healthy Child Concept, which supports children of pre-school and school age through a series of age-specific programmes. It emphasizes support before and after birth: good nutrition starts with the future mother. Girls' education is important in this context in a virtuous cycle from the adolescent to pregnancy, infancy, early childhood and school. School feeding has the potential to address micronutrient deficiencies that affect the school-age population. WFP is gradually improving the micronutrient value of school feeding rations and has drafted new nutrition guidelines. Research is still needed on the advantages and disadvantages of options such as biofortification, micronutrient fortification, supplementation and diet diversification for school feeding programmes. There is, for example, a demand to find ways of producing fortified noodles, rice and biscuits that are more acceptable in Asia and encourage sustainability to avoid reliance on imports. At the country level, WFP has introduced many innovations, but there is a need to harness this knowledge for scaling up and policy development.

Next Steps

51. In the period ahead, WFP will focus on supporting governments and developing partnerships at the country level. WFP will mainstream the new approach to:

- increase the global knowledge base in best practices for: i) transition to sustainable programmes; ii) cost analysis and containment; iii) design or re-design of cost-effective programmes; and comparing cash and food approaches;
- foster an understanding of the evidence base on the benefits of school feeding programmes within national policies and strategies;
- support fundraising, with an emphasis on multi-year funding such as support for national funding strategies;
- working with partners, provide advice and technical support to assist in the transitions to sustainable nationally owned, resourced and implemented programmes; and
- coordinate with key partners at the country level in support of national school feeding programmes.

52. Programme staff will be trained in sustainable school feeding, with a focus on context analysis and programme design, implementation and monitoring in various countries and contexts, to enable them to:

- conduct context analyses and identify design options for enhanced impact;
- systematically embed capacity development to help countries to identify and reach eight WFP quality standards and sustainable school feeding milestones;
- create partnerships and synergies with other sectors in programme design and implementation;

- engage in policy dialogue and sector strategy and planning processes;
 - provide or facilitate governments' access to technical and management support in the design and implementation of school feeding models; and
 - understand and advise on centralized, decentralized and mixed or "blended" school feeding options, trade-offs, and the potential for local production, P4P-type links, processing and procurement, and cash and voucher activities.
53. The Office of Evaluation is conducting an evaluation of the WFP school feeding policy, as requested by the Board, and will report at the First Regular Session in 2012. The evaluation will focus on: i) the quality of the policy; ii) the extent to which WFP is already implementing it and taking action to ensure that the shifts outlined in the policy are translated into changes in operations; iii) results that are already visible; and iv) lessons to be learned. It will draw on the evidence from impact evaluations in five African and Asian countries, and will use evidence from case studies in some Latin American countries.
54. School feeding can be a sustainable, effective safety net and a good investment in a nation's future. WFP has decades of experience in school feeding programmes, but the policy approved in November 2009 marks a major change: WFP is using the strategies and tools described in this update to ensure that sustainable nationally owned, nationally led and locally sourced school feeding programmes can be developed. The process will take time: the support needed by governments will change over time and in different contexts. The vision – to reduce hunger among schoolchildren so that it is not an obstacle to their development – remains the same in all WFP's school feeding programmes.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FTI	Education for All Fast Track Initiative
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
P4P	Purchase for Progress [WFP]
PCD	Partnership for Child Development [Imperial College UK]