



School feeding programmes

In Regional Bureau Cairo (RBC) region

Background

School feeding is a cornerstone of WFP assistance in the RBC region, providing a strategic catalytic intervention that can help deliver multiple benefits in support of childhood education and nutrition, and serve as part of national social protection and social safety net systems and services.

RBC is currently implementing school feeding activities in fourteen countries, one of the largest concentrations of school feeding programmes implemented by WFP globally. In total, 2.6 million children were reached and assisted by WFP in the region in 2014. This is expected to grow during 2015, to reach some 4 million children, including in support of those in or exposed to conflict situations.

WFP's interventions are directly benefiting school children with meals or snacks in **Algeria, Armenia, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan and Yemen**. Furthermore, in **Tunisia** and **Morocco** WFP is closely working with the Ministries of Education by providing support to strengthen national school feeding programmes. RBC pursues innovative partnerships through which WFP is able to implement multi-year capacity development and technical assistance interventions. This allows for systemic and coordinated approaches to school feeding

and national capacity development, including the strengthening of national programmes as well as promoting the gradual integration and hand-over of WFP's school feeding activities within national programmes. As described in more detail below, in addition to the partnerships with other UN agencies, RBC has developed a unique partnership with the Russian Federation which allowed for the development of school feeding activities with a regional scope.

WFP is also actively working to ensure that school feeding programmes are framed and leveraged as social protection and safety net interventions that contribute to stabilizing complex situations, including in conflict affected areas. This approach has allowed school feeding to become a catalyst for wider social and economic stabilization, as well as for early recovery and development efforts in the region.

As it implements its school feeding programmes in the RBC region, WFP promotes a broad set of often inter-linked objectives, including: combating inadequate nutrition and lack of diversity in children's diets; increasing girls' school attendance and retention; promoting local production and creating markets for local farmers which provide jobs for women and ensure protection for the most vulnerable families.

Key features



Photo: WFP Kyrgyzstan

Working in areas of conflict and supporting childhood education and nutrition: In the RBC region, WFP plays an increasing role in targeting school children exposed to protracted instability and the consequences of conflict. By doing so WFP contributes to the protection of children and the preservation of human capital, while promoting educational and nutritional outcomes.

In **Syria**, part of the **Lost Generation** campaign, WFP launched a school feeding programme in August 2014 to boost enrolment and attendance rates, while contributing to an improved micronutrient intake. Starting with an initial 1,500 children in the summer school clubs, the programme has significantly scaled-up to reach 111,500 children in Aleppo, Hama, Rural Damascus and Tartous. Children receive a daily snack of 80 grams of micronutrient fortified date bars on each school day. In 2015, the school feeding programme aims to reach 500,000 pre-primary and primary school children in districts with a high concentration of internally displaced persons, high food insecurity and low education indicators. Participating schools are selected in coordination with UNICEF to ensure a comprehensive package of support.

In **Palestine** and **Sudan** WFP is conducting similar interventions with the objectives of improving access to basic services to alleviate short term hunger, contributing to learning and creating an enabling environment that promotes gender equality and enhances students' concentration levels.

Promotion of girls' education: WFP RBC supports girls by means of school meals and take-home rations. The incentive is designed to encourage girls' enrolment in primary schools and keep them attending class regularly. One successful example of this initiative in the region is the use of take-home rations as a means to promote girls' education among refugee children in **Iran**, as well as in the countries of **Sudan** and **Yemen**, where educational gender gaps are high.

Fighting Child Labour In Egypt: WFP signed a cooperation agreement with the European Union for a 60 million euro four-year project, "Enhancing Access of Children to Education and Fighting Child Labour," in July 2014. The project will reach up to 100,000 children and 400,000 family members annually, and is being rolled out in areas where poverty and food insecurity are the highest.

Improving school age children's nutritional status: Whenever the opportunity arises, WFP strives to support governments in promoting a stronger school feeding - nutrition nexus.

In **Sudan** and **Yemen**, WFP has been actively engaged with government authorities in addressing inadequate nutrition among school age children through various strategies. With technical support from the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

WFP in **Yemen** is looking into the most appropriate ways to address nutritional needs by providing school snacks and meals as well as other complementary activities in areas of health, washing, and

food security while identifying appropriate strategic partnerships which could contribute to the Yemen *Scaling Up Nutrition* priority investments.

In **Sudan**, micronutrient powders have been provided through WFP's school feeding programme to address micronutrient deficiencies while fortifying WFP food baskets in a cost-effective manner.



Photo: WFP Sudan

Home Grown school feeding programmes and locally sourced meals: Enabling home grown and locally sourced school feeding has been shown to be a “win-win” strategy in the RBC region for children and farmers alike. It provides farmers including smallholder farmers with access to markets, boosts local agricultural production and enables country ownership and sustainability. At the same time this approach ensures that children are receiving healthy, nutritious meals.

A variety of practices, including local production of fortified date bars, adoption of local menus, baking local bread and home grown school feeding, integrated with local production and/or procurement, have been adopted in projects in **Armenia, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kyrgyz Republic, Palestine, Sudan and Tajikistan.**

Capacity development and technical assistance: School feeding programmes in the RBC region have an orientation towards capacity development initiatives in support of governments with a view to enhancing quality and technical standards, strengthening policies and implementation strategies aimed at the sustainability of national programmes, and framing school feeding, part of the broader national social safety net systems. Nearly all school feeding programmes in RBC incorporate a capacity development component. In 2013, RBC launched specific development programmes in **Tunisia** and **Morocco**, focusing on capacity development in support to national programmes enhancement.



Building partnerships at scale

Partnerships and collaborations with UNICEF, UNESCO and FAO: RBC invested in strengthening partnerships with UNICEF in order to achieve school feeding objectives in a holistic way, aligned with overall support provided to the education sector. Partnerships with UNICEF are ongoing in support of joint advocacy, design and implementation of programmes in **Algeria, Egypt, Palestine, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.** WFP engaged UNICEF in newly launched school feeding programmes in **Iraq** and **Yemen** and is now working on establishing active partnerships with UNICEF in **Armenia, Jordan** and **Sudan.**

Partnership with the Russian Federation:

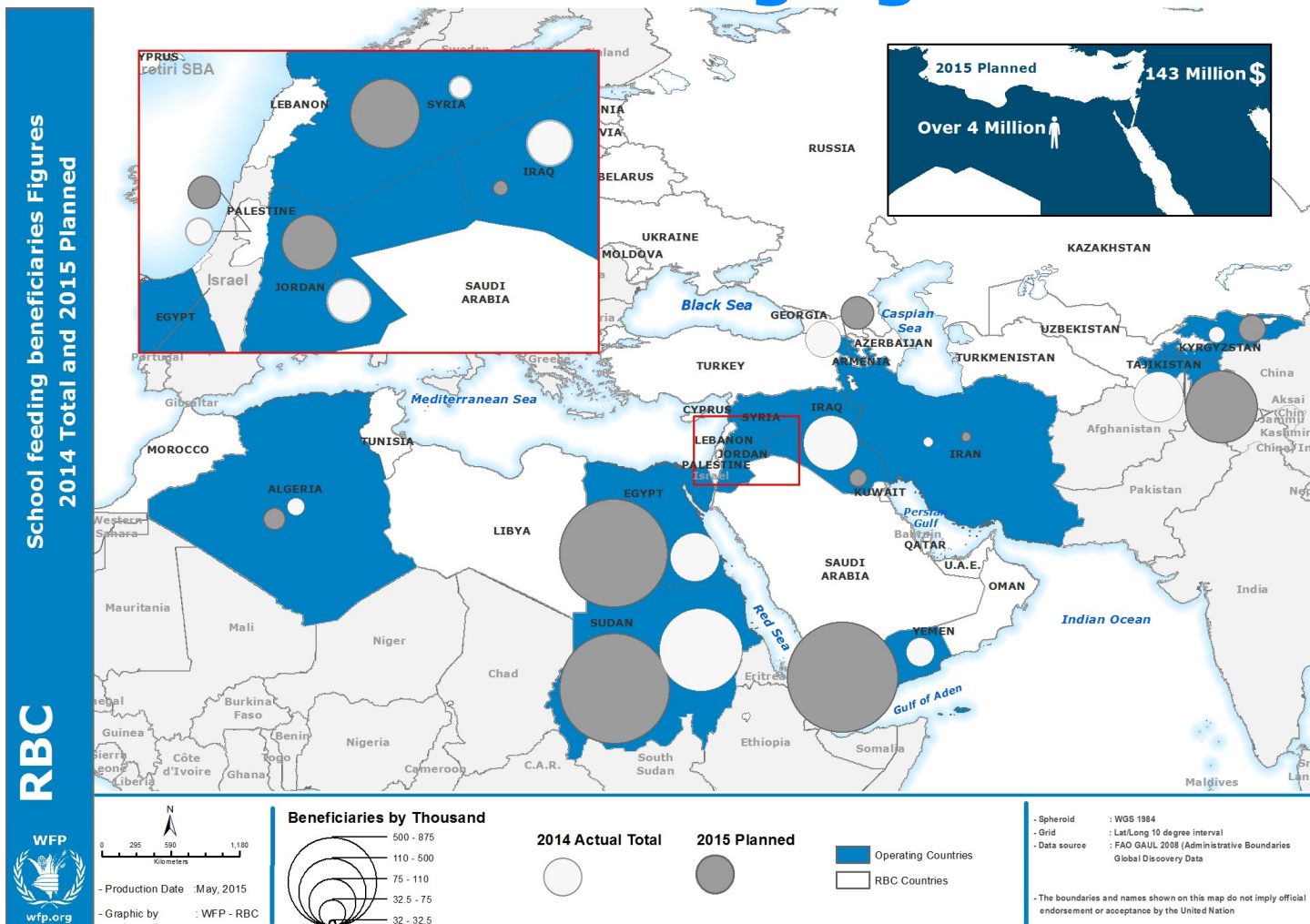
Over several years RBC has successfully negotiated a donation of US\$56 million with the Russian Federation to implement and strengthen school feeding programmes in six countries in the region. This donation, which covers the 2010-2016 period, benefits children in **Armenia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Tajikistan** and **Tunisia**, ensuring that children are able to receive high quality meals at school.

The partnership allows WFP to assist national governments in the development and implementation of the sustainable school feeding strategies with technical support provided by the Russian Federation. The successful collaboration of the Russian Federation and the RBC in the countries of the school feeding partnership has served as a catalyst for a proposal to create a **Center of Excellence** in Moscow, in 2016, which will provide a platform to share Russian expertise in school feeding and social protection.



Photo: David Furst

School feeding figures



World Food Programme Fighting Hunger Worldwide

WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in around 75 countries.

In 2015, WFP plans to reach and assist about 25 million vulnerable women, children and men in the RBC region.

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