



ABOUT “LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE”

The UN World Food Programme has 45 years of experience in school feeding. This collection of good practices and lessons learned, *Learning from Experience*, has harvested existing knowledge on the topic, drawing from 134 evaluations, case studies, an ongoing consultation process and operational experience.

The study makes available institutional memory as a tool for practical use in the field. This work will serve as a guide and a building block for governments, WFP and NGO partners to design and implement high-quality, feasible, sustainable and cost-effective school feeding programmes.

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PAKISTAN GIRLS’ EDUCATION ON THE FRONTLINE

COUNTRY OVERVIEW	
Children enrolled in primary school	16,688,000
Girls enrolled in primary school	42%
Out-of-school children	6,821,000
Gross enrolment ratio	84%
Survival rate to last grade	70%
Repeaters (all grades)	2.2%
WFP ASSISTANCE In 2008	
Beneficiaries (girls)	1,258,000
Beneficiaries (boys)	1,309,000
Girls receiving take-home rations	420,000
Vegetable oil distributed (mt)	11,000
Assisted schools	3,000

OVERVIEW

The government of Pakistan is launching its *School Nutrition Programme for Girls in Primary Schools*, budgeted at US\$225 million over five years. Thanks to a public-private partnership, locally made and fortified biscuits will be provided for an annual cost of US\$20 per child per year.

The programme, starting with a pilot in 9 districts, will reach 10 million beneficiaries in 90 districts. The budget is expected to be approved by parliament in mid 2009. Funding was solicited and secured in the Friends of Democratic Pakistan Meeting in Tokyo, April 2009.

This confirms that the government's interest in school feeding remains high, even after the previous unsuccessful attempt to launch a national school feeding programme called *Tawana Pakistan*, which aimed at improving girls' enrolment and attendance rates by providing cooked food to girls in selected primary schools.

WFP supported school feeding since 1994. Currently, 2,900 schools are assisted in 28 districts, aiming to increase girls' enrolment and ensure retention until completion of full primary cycle.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKBOX	
Sound alignment with national policy framework	√√
Stable funding and budgeting	√√
Evidence-based programme design	√√√
Strong institutional and implementation arrangements	√√
Strong partnerships and inter-sector coordination	√√
Strong community participation and ownership	√√√

GOOD PRACTICES

School feeding in the policy framework

- **Including school feeding in the Education Strategy:** school feeding was not mentioned or included in the Education Policy as of early 2009. Efforts undertaken by the WFP country office and sensitization thanks to a stakeholder workshop raised awareness on the topic; a review of the National Education Sector Strategy Plan took place in March 2009. School feeding has now been specifically included in the Education Policy, currently being discussed in Parliament.

Targeting

- **Improving girls' and teachers' attendance through take-home rations:** girls attending school for at least 20 days a month receive a 4-litre tin of oil each month throughout the school year. Regular and voluntary teachers also receive the same incentive, conditional upon a minimum of 22 days presence at school, per month. Overall enrolment grew by 135 percent from 1998-99 to 2003-04 according to a WFP study¹. All parents of primary school age girls included in the sample are now sending at least one daughter to school; before the programme, 48 percent did not send any.

¹ WFP, *Assistance to girls' primary education in Pakistan*, 2004.

Staff training and capacity building

- **Building capacity to design and implement the programme:** WFP trained more than 4,800 teachers and storekeepers in commodity handling, distribution and reporting. Project Implementation Units staff have also been given training in programme design and monitoring.

Distribution arrangements

- **Training teachers to ensure proper distribution:** WFP field staff trained teachers to ensure that eligible pupils receive the tin of oil even if not present on the day of distribution. This solved resentment among the parents and the community, caused by some girls not receiving the entitlement in spite of having attended school for the minimum required 20 days a month.

Community involvement

- **Developing awareness on the reliability of the oil:** in the North-West Frontier Province and Balochistan rumor was spread that WFP oil contained contraceptives. The problem was solved through Beneficiary Contact Monitoring and regular meetings with Parent Teacher Associations.

LESSONS LEARNED

Partnerships

- **Partnering with other agencies to enhance quality of service:** the oil incentive will not reach its full potential unless it is coupled with a programme that provides adequate school facilities and quality of education. WFP should widen the range of partnerships with agencies that work on quality issues such as provision of teaching staff and essential school infrastructure, community participation in school management, etc.

Targeting

- **Appropriate targeting to avoid the pull factor:** the pull factor - decrease in enrolment in non-WFP schools due to migration towards WFP-assisted ones – was reported in both Balochistan and Sindh; to avoid this problem, all schools which fall in the same catchment area should be assisted. To this end, the number of districts assisted may be decreased by phasing out from areas where other food incentive are already provided, or where the enrolment rates are already high relative to other districts.
- **Finding solutions for isolated schools:** targeting criteria exclude from the programme isolated schools, away from the paved road and belonging to possibly more vulnerable communities. Parent-Teacher Committees could be made responsible for retrieving rations at selected distribution points, or co-operating with NGOs to cover isolated areas.

Logistics

- **Developing awareness on the quality of WFP food:** oil cans often do not show the expiry date, which raises quality and safety concerns. Recordkeeping and commodity tracking should be improved and streamlined.