



World Food Programme

Two minutes to learn about: School Meals

WFP's Vision

- No child should attend school hungry. This is the goal WFP has set itself for 2015. WFP is working with its government partners, NGOs and donors to achieve this goal.
- WFP calculates that US\$3.2 billion is needed per year to reach all 66 million hungry school-age children. Of this, US\$1.2 billion would allow WFP to reach 23 million children in Africa.
- Over the past 45 years, 37 countries have taken over school meal programmes from WFP. The last country to take over a WFP school meal programme was Cape Verde in 2010.
- WFP has developed strategies with other governments to allow them to continue WFP-funded programmes themselves and to create and run their own school meal programmes.

Basic Facts

- Studies show it is more difficult for children to learn without adequate food and nutrition.
- There are 66 million primary school-age children who attend classes hungry across the developing world, with 23 million in Africa alone.
- There are 67 million school-age children who do not attend school. Poor households must often choose between sending their children to school or to work the fields.
- A daily school meal provides a strong incentive to send children to school and keep them there and allows the children to focus on their studies, rather than their stomachs.
- Just US\$0.25 will fill a cup with porridge, rice or beans and give a monthly ration to take home. With US\$50 a child can be fed for an entire school year.



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What Are School Meals?

- **In-school meals.** Children are fed breakfast, lunch or both in school. Meals can be prepared at the school, in the community or be delivered from centralized kitchens. Some programmes provide complete meals, others provide high energy biscuits or snacks.
- **Take-home rations.** Entire families receive food provided their children attend school regularly. Like conditional cash transfers, the rations' value compensates for the costs of sending the child to school. For particularly vulnerable students, such as girls or orphans, in-school meals can be combined with take-home rations for greater impact.
- As far as possible, food is procured locally in developing countries, which in turn benefits local development efforts and small farmers.

Why School Meals?

- **Nutrition.** When combined with de-worming and micronutrient fortification school meals offer important nutritional benefits.

- **Social Protection.** School meals can break the cycle of hunger, poverty and child exploitation in the world's poorest areas. They can also reach children affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans, the disabled and former child soldiers.
- **Education.** School meals encourage poor households to send children to school and keep them there. Programmes often target girls, enabling them to gain an education even in societies that traditionally exclude them from schooling.
- **Supplementary benefits.** Schools are the centre of many villages and communities. School meals connect teachers, parents, cooks, children, farmers, and the local market.

WFP's presence

- In 2011, WFP provided school meals to 25.9 million children in 60 countries.
- In 2011, WFP also provided take-home rations to 2 million girls and 0.8 million boys.

WFP School Meals coverage

Source: DACOTA, 2011 actual school meals beneficiaries

