Sustainable School Feeding Programmes

A Guidance Note to Develop a National Sustainability Strategy
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAADP</td>
<td>Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme</td>
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<td>CEC</td>
<td>Community Education Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>FTI</td>
<td>Fast Track Initiative</td>
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<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>HDNED</td>
<td>Human Development Network, Education Department</td>
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<td>HGSF</td>
<td>Home Grown School Feeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>P4P</td>
<td>Purchase for Progress</td>
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<td>PCD</td>
<td>The Partnership for Child Development</td>
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<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers</td>
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<td>SABER</td>
<td>Systems Approach for Better Education Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHN</td>
<td>School health and nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDAF</td>
<td>United Nations Development Assistant Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>United Nations World Food Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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Acknowledgements

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Purpose

In 2009, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the World Bank and The Partnership for Child Development (PCD), initiated a partnership to support governments to transition from externally-supported projects to nationally-owned sustainable and cost-effective school feeding programmes.

The Guidance Note is intended to guide national governments and their partners to elaborate a National Sustainability Strategy for school feeding through a systematic and participatory approach.

The approach presented in this Guidance Note builds on the experience from countries already engaged in the preparation of a Sustainability Strategy, especially Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria. It should be adapted to local needs and will be context-specific, where objectives and content will be distinctive to each country and defined by the government, in consultation with the main stakeholders.

The Guidance Note may be useful for government staff in charge of school feeding, staff from relevant ministries (e.g. education, agriculture, health, and social welfare), and for partners wishing to support governments with school feeding.

Structure

The Guidance Note follows the following Structure:

- **Section 1** explains school feeding and the rationale for governments to establish nationally-owned sustainable school feeding programmes.

- **Section 2** explains the purpose, goals and core components of a Sustainability Strategy.

- **Section 3** explains how to prepare an evidence-based national Sustainability Strategy for school feeding in a participatory manner.

- **Section 4** provides an example of an outline of a Sustainability Strategy and discusses the content to be included under each section.

- **Annexes** provide additional materials that will assist governments to develop a national Sustainability Strategy in their own country.
In its simplest form school feeding is to provide food to schoolchildren through the education system. There are many different types of school feeding modalities that can be grouped in two broad categories: school meals and take-home rations.

School meal provision is not a new public intervention, with early examples of school feeding dating back many decades. For instance, in England and Wales school meals and milk first began distribution in 1906, in India school feeding commenced in the 1920’s, and in Brazil the national programme began in 1955.

As described in the WFP/World Bank joint publication Rethinking School Feeding (Bundy et al., 2009), recent food, fuel and financial crises have highlighted the importance of school feeding programmes both as a social safety net for children living in poverty and food insecurity, and as part of national development goals – in particular educational policies and plans. School feeding programmes provide a resource transfer to households of the value of the food distributed. It offers an incentive for households to send their children to school and invest in education. Once the children are in school, the programmes can contribute to their ability to learn, through avoiding hunger and enhancing cognitive abilities – allowing children to reach their full and equal potential. These effects may be enhanced by complementary interventions, especially deworming and micronutrient fortification.

School feeding programmes can generate a structured and predictable demand for food products that can benefit farmers by building the market and the enabling systems around it. This is the concept behind Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF), included in pillar four of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) – a programme of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), and identified by the Millennium Hunger Task Force as a quick win in the fight against poverty and hunger.

Image courtesy of Francis Peel, PCD.
Transition to Sustainability and National Ownership

Where school feeding need is the greatest – in terms of hunger, poverty and poor social indicators – the programmes tend to be the smallest, often relying on external funding and implementation. Increasingly national governments are recognizing the value of school feeding, taking steps to intensify their responsibility and to transition from externally-supported projects to nationally-funded and implemented programmes. As governments’ capacity and ownership develop, they may assume greater responsibility for school feeding programmes. However, the process is not linear and a country may make progress in one aspect while capacity gaps remain. *Rethinking School Feeding* draws three main conclusions regarding this transition. First, programmes in low-income countries exhibit large variations in cost. This means that important opportunities for cost containment exist. Second, programmes become relatively more affordable with economic growth, which argues for focused support to help low-income countries to move through the transition. Third, moving towards sustainable national programmes requires mainstreaming school feeding in national policies and plans, national financing, and national implementation capacity (Bundy et al., 2009). These capacity requirements often go beyond those already existing in the line ministries – such as education or local government – in charge of the programme. They range from expertise in large-scale food procurement and transportation, to managing frequent disbursements of funds, food preparation, ensuring nutritional quality and safety standards of food, and monitoring and evaluation, for example.

Countries that have made this transition have often become less dependent on external sources of food by linking the programmes with domestic agricultural production. In fact, low-income countries transitioning toward government-funded implementation of school feeding programmes provide an opportunity to strengthen links between school feeding, agriculture and community development.

Experience shows that countries benefit from having a clear understanding of the duration of donor assistance, and a strategy or plan with timeframes to transition to national ownership and to strengthen institutional capacity to design and manage school feeding programmes.
Section 2:
What is a School Feeding Sustainability Strategy?

A Sustainability Strategy is a government document that explains where school feeding is coming from, where it is going, and what needs to be done to ensure national school feeding policies and programmes are put in place and strengthened.

Core components of the Sustainability Strategy include an analysis of the school feeding situation in the country, capacity needs, and a roadmap with milestones, objectives, timelines and responsibilities.

A government Sustainability Strategy, developed in partnership with stakeholders, indicates a way forward for developing and strengthening national school feeding policies and programmes and the government capacity to implement them. This will therefore, ensure that increased responsibilities are being matched with the required capacity. The document also offers a means of advocating for support to the wider community, by presenting opportunities for engagement in a structured and coordinated manner.

Sustainability Strategy Goals

The goals of the Sustainability Strategy are:

1. To build a shared understanding of the current situation of school feeding in the country, based on recognized Standards of best practice.
2. To provide a practical path or roadmap to reach government vision on school feeding. This will gradually strengthen the quality and move towards a more sustainable, nationally-owned and resourced programme.
3. To present existing programme resources and gaps where programme owners may need support and sets priorities for capacity development.
4. To provide a mechanism for coordinated partner engagement. The process will lead to consensus building and strengthening partnerships.
5. To provide baseline information that can be used to measure progress towards sustainability goals.
6. To offer opportunities to advocate for support and mobilize resources.

Sustainability Strategy Core Phases

Although the name, scope and objectives of the Sustainability Strategy will vary from one country to another, there will be core phases undertaken in each country. These core phases (see also Figure 1) include:

- **Phase 1 Pre-Development and Process:** A prerequisite to the Sustainability Strategy is for government aspirations on school feeding to be understood and political commitment made apparent. Government sectors and main stakeholders will need to agree on how the Sustainability Strategy will be developed (i.e. scope, objectives, and timeframes etc.).

- **Phase 2 Assess Current School Feeding and Stakeholder Mapping:** Knowledge and shared understanding of existing in-country school feeding programmes will enable the Sustainability Strategy to be designed to respond to context-specific needs and challenges within the country. Stakeholders will need to be defined and their role and contributions to the school feeding programme listed.

- **Phase 3 Identify Priority Areas and Develop a Roadmap:** To identify priority areas and to recommend next steps, through stakeholder workshops, can bring the programme to a higher stage of quality and sustainability. The development of a roadmap will outline specific objectives or milestones in the medium-term to strengthen national capacities, policies and programmes increasing the quality and sustainability of school feeding.
- **Phase 4 Validation**: The Sustainability Strategy needs to be endorsed by the government and relevant stakeholders.

- **Phase 5 Review and Update**: Mechanisms to coordinate and review implementation need to be agreed and established.

**Figure 1: Sustainability Strategy Core Components.**
Section 3:
How to Develop a Sustainability Strategy

How the Sustainability Strategy is developed is as important as the document itself. This section describes how to develop an evidence-based Sustainability Strategy in a participatory manner, using the five Standards of best practice for school feeding identified in *Rethinking School Feeding* as a framework (Bundy *et al.*, 2009).

Sustainability Strategy Framework

*Rethinking School Feeding* (Bundy *et al.*, 2009) identifies five internationally-agreed Standards of best practice for school feeding. These are presented in Table 1, a more detailed description of each standard can be found in Annex 1.

National governments and their partners may adapt and complete the framework with other factors they think are critical for the development of their school feeding Sustainability Strategy.

The basic definition of capacity used here is from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): “the ability of people, organizations and society... to manage their affairs successfully” (OECD, 2012). This notion clearly goes beyond the knowledge, training and technical skills of individuals. Capacity at individual-level, although important, depends on the organizations in which people work. In turn, the enabling environment influences the behaviour of organizations and individuals. The framework proposed in this Guidance Note addresses capacity at individual-, organizational- and institutional-levels.

Table 1: Summary of Five Standards for Sustainable School Feeding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 1: Policy frameworks</th>
<th>A policy basis for school feeding helps strengthen its potential for sustainability and the quality of implementation.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Standard 2: Financial capacity</td>
<td>Programmes need sufficient and stable resources from the government to be able to operate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 3: Institutional capacity and coordination</td>
<td>The implementation of a school feeding programme is generally the responsibility of a specific government institution, which needs the appropriate set-up, resources and capacities to carry-out all the activities related to the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 4: Design and implementation</td>
<td>School feeding programmes should be designed based on a correct assessment of the situation, have clear objectives, an appropriate food basket, targeting criteria and cost-effective supply chains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 5: Community participation</td>
<td>School feeding programmes that respond to community needs, are locally-owned, and incorporate some kind of parental contribution are normally the strongest and most sustainable.</td>
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Source: Bundy *et al.*, 2009.

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1This approach is also in line with the Education for All (EFA) – Global Partnership for Education (GPE – ex-Fast Track Initiative [FTI]) Guidelines for Capacity Development in the Education Sector. The summary definitions of capacity and capacity development have been adapted from these (FTI, 2008).
Government ownership, leadership and steady commitment are at the centre of successful national school feeding programmes and change management. Therefore, as a prerequisite to the development of the Sustainability Strategy it is important that government aspirations for school feeding be shared and political commitment at decision making-level apparent. There is no blueprint to assess political commitment and leadership at different levels of the government. As a strong indicator, school feeding should have been identified as an adequate strategy by the government to meet its development goals. Other indicators include clear direction provided by government appointed programme managers or existing government plans to meet national objectives, or government resources allocated to school feeding.

Therefore, preparatory activities (i.e. consultations, advocacy events, and studies) may be needed before engaging in the development of the Sustainability Strategy. The development of the Sustainability Strategy itself, with different sectors of the government, can strengthen political ownership and leadership, including cross-ministerial dialogue and engagement.

During the initial stages it is important that different sectors in the government and main stakeholders agree on how the Sustainability Strategy will be developed – that is: the scope, the objectives, the timeframe, who to engage, and how.

The specific name, scope, objectives and content of a Sustainability Strategy will depend on national priorities, where the country is in the transition towards sustainable national school feeding and the ongoing processes related to school feeding in the country (for instance, a review of the national education plan or a decentralization reform).

The development of the Sustainability Strategy should occur within a reasonable period of time (about 3 months) to prevent the risk of losing momentum and partners’ engagement, should the process be too lengthy.

An important decision to make in this respect, at the beginning, is the scope and timeframe of the Sustainability Strategy.

Some countries, where dialogue on school feeding is already well engaged, may opt for a long-term comprehensive strategy for a full transition to a sustainable national programme. Such a strategy would have a long-term timeframe.

In other countries, reaching the national vision and meeting all five Standards of best practice could be unrealistic in the foreseeable future, especially in terms of funding. As such, the objectives should be achievable under real-life constraints, and the strategy may focus on the priorities for the next few years.

**In such a case, defining a more comprehensive strategy** to guide the government’s long-term efforts towards a full transition to a sustainable national programme may be suggested as a next step.

In any case, it is recommended to build up the Sustainability Strategy in time segments, and limit the specific objectives to what can be achieved in the medium-term of a few years.

Experience shows that the formulation of a strategy itself contributes to developing the capacities of different stakeholders. Therefore, the process of formulating the Sustainability Strategy should be empowering and include adequate consultation, joint analysis and strategic planning.

In every case, the government should lead and coordinate the development of the Sustainability Strategy in collaboration with development partners. A committee can be established to play this leadership role and to oversee development of the Sustainability Strategy. It is recommended that existing structures –

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**Phase 1: Pre-Development and Process**

**Questions to consider when establishing the process for Strategy development:**

- Who is going to coordinate dialogue between the lead unit/ministry and other stakeholders at different levels?
- How to draw from existing evidence and key national documentation?
- Who is going to write the Sustainability Strategy document?
- Who is going to collect/compile the information?
- Is the process manageable (is the level of commitment required from different stakeholders – especially in terms of time – acceptable)?
such as an existing School Feeding Committee – be used before establishing new ones.

A Sustainability Strategy will benefit from the involvement of different sectors of the government, development partners, civil society and the private sector from the offset. The process of developing a transition strategy will draw upon the diverse skill sets and resources from these actors, and will in-turn establish consensus and broad ownership.

Before moving forward: a check-list:

- Verify long-term commitment and consistent leadership.
- Identify the key stakeholders and allocate space and time to involve or consult with them (a more comprehensive stakeholder analysis should be conducted as part of the preparation of the Sustainability Strategy).
- Define the mechanisms, timeframe, facilitating resources, and tools for preparing the National Sustainability Strategy – making sure that the approach is consistent with other relevant processes.

In order to design strategies that respond to the country-context, needs, and challenges, it is important to build knowledge and a shared understanding of the existing school feeding programme(s) within a country. It is suggested to conduct the assessment around the five Rethinking School Feeding Standards, reflecting on achievements (what works well) and challenges (Bundy et al., 2009). The assessment will help identify strengths and weaknesses, main priorities for change, and opportunities for partner support.

Analytical tools available to support the assessment include:

- **Assessing school feeding against quality standards (Annex 2):** This provides guiding questions for each Standard and can be used as a starting point.

- **SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results)-School Feeding Framework (Annex 3):** SABER offers a framework along the five School Feeding Standards of good practice, against which countries can rate themselves and track policy progress over time (Bundy et al., 2009).

- **Cost analysis:** This tool provides a methodology to determine the current costs of school feeding programmes. The methodology is still under development; support can be provided by WFP Headquarters and PCD teams.

- **An analysis of school feeding needs and coverage:** Or an estimate of how many schoolchildren in need are in the country and how many are being reached, can be used for setting a shared vision.

It is recommended to start with a Desk Review, so that the assessment takes into consideration existing analyses, studies and evaluations of school feeding in the country. The Desk Review can help identify missing information and focus the discussions with stakeholders. Key documents should be identified with stakeholders and may include:

- The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), public sector reform plans, political and economic assessments, United Nations agencies’ assessments.

- Education and food-security related policies and sector plans, sector review documentation.

- Budget allocations and eventual pooled funding; GPE-FTI Catalytic Fund, multilateral funding streams (World-Bank-International Development Association funding, Regional Development Bank, WFP), bilateral funding and budget support allocations.

- Capacity development needs assessments, if any, related to education in the country.

- Strategy documents related to school health and nutrition (SHN) and school feeding in the country, project documents, plans and implementation guidelines.

- Analyses, assessments and evaluations related to school feeding.

**Country Example: Haiti**

In Haiti, as a first step, a comprehensive assessment of school feeding in the country was conducted by the government with support from partners. A consultant was hired to coordinate this assessment. However, a participatory process was adopted at every stage, including the Desk Review. Government officials from the unit in charge of school feeding identified key documents relevant for the assessment. The documents were jointly reviewed and assessed, together with the consultant.

Additional information can be gathered through structured interviews.

Very likely, the assessment will find information gaps and areas that cannot be covered in the timeframe allocated to this exercise or that require specific expertise. For further analysis, Terms of Reference can be developed as a next step. In Ghana for instance, it was identified that further analysis and understanding was required on ration pricing and expected returns for
caterers responsible for food preparation, as such an evaluation was undertaken in partnership with a Ghanaian and international academic centre.

The purpose of the stakeholder mapping is to provide a clearer understanding of the key stakeholders and their contribution with regards to the school feeding programme. The stakeholder mapping can also be used to identify in-country partners that could support implementation, provide technical assistance, support capacity development and conduct research related to school feeding. It is critical to identify who contributes the financial resources (i.e. government, or national and development partners), and what drives their funding decisions. Potential opponents to change should be identified as well, as their resistance could be mitigated if they are engaged at an early stage.

If school feeding is embedded in SHN, the mapping can be broadened to include key complementary interventions. It could include public actors, civil societies, private sectors, universities, research bodies, and development partners including donors and media.

**Country Example: Kenya**

In Kenya, successful stakeholder mapping was completed through multiple workshops. In Kenya two school feeding programmes exist under the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture, both presenting agricultural objectives of improved market access for farmers. Therefore, stakeholder mapping exercises facilitated partnerships between stakeholders without prior history of collaboration.

A participatory process is important to ensure trust and transparency.

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**Phase 3: Identify Priority Areas and Develop a Roadmap**

As the strength and sustainability of national programmes is determined at multiple-levels, meetings on technical issues should be accompanied by broader political consultations for consensus building. Therefore, multiple engagements between policymakers and programme experts should occur to ensure comprehensive and consistent decision making. Analytical tools previously mentioned (see Phase 2) can provide the necessary information for decision making.

A stakeholders’ workshop can provide a framework within which different sectors in the government and partners can discuss and analyse the current situation of school feeding.

A workshop can also identify the priority areas to be addressed, and recommend next steps in the short- and medium-term to bring the national programme to a higher stage of quality and sustainability. In this sense, it paves the way to formulate the detailed roadmap – including capacity development activities. WFP has developed workshop materials that can be useful for this purpose (WFP, 2012).

For the long-term vision to be reached, steps must be taken. The Sustainability Strategy should be broken down into achievable segments that will deliver early results and keep the enthusiasm and momentum. It is important to develop a roadmap that outlines specific objectives or milestones to be achieved in the medium-term to strengthen national capacities, policies and programmes that will in turn increase school feeding quality and sustainability.

The roadmap outlines the medium-term objectives and specific activities, timelines, and roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. Therefore, it is time bound. Additional consultations will be needed to ensure the roadmap is realistic and gains broad buy in.

Thus, the roadmap may include further assessments and studies to inform the future of the programme – such as a food market study, or an analysis of existing food processing capacities, supply chain analysis, and modelling. The implementation of a pilot project to test the feasibility and effectiveness of new modalities may be included in the plan as well to inform future decision making.

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2The School Feeding stakeholders’ workshop manual and toolkit is available on WFP’s on-line Programme Guidance Manual (WFP, 2012).
The fourth phase of the Sustainability Strategy requires validation where it needs to be endorsed by the government and partners. This helps ensure that there is political commitment to focus government and donor resources in implementing the Sustainability Strategy.

**Country Example: Ghana**

In Ghana, validation of the Sustainability Strategy was undertaken by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development. An official televised signing of the document was undertaken by the Minister, which proved fundamental in catalysing government and partner commitment to policy and programme development, achieved through the Sustainability Strategy titled ‘Technical Assistance Plan’.

**Phase 4: Validation**

The government leads the implementation of the endorsed Sustainability Strategy, with the support and commitment of technical partners and stakeholders. Planned activities – in particular capacity development ones – must be incorporated into government and development partners’ work plans and projects.

Implementation must be monitored to keep track of progress and to identify areas where more capacity development is needed. Therefore, mechanisms to coordinate and review implementation need to be agreed and established. Especially as with time the Sustainability Strategy will become dated and thus, require up-dating to address the current challenges.

**Phase 5: Review and Update**
Section 4: What Does a Sustainability Strategy Document Look Like?

This section proposes a sample outline for a school feeding Sustainability Strategy document, and provides an indication of the content of each section. It is by no means prescriptive: in fact, the specific objectives, structure and detail of content of a transition strategy will be specific to each country situation and needs.

Outline Example of a School Feeding Sustainability Strategy

1. **Introduction**: This includes the country background and rationale for the Sustainability Strategy.

2. **Country overview**: This provides the country-context in which school feeding operates through:
   a. A country-context overview and main development indicators related to school feeding.
   b. Ongoing processes in the country such as the formulation of PRSP, education plan, decentralization process, and partner strategies.

3. **School feeding overview**: This section can include the vision for and objectives of school feeding in the country.

4. **Assessment of current school feeding programmes**: This will involve the assessment of:
   a. The five Rethinking School Feeding Standards.
   b. Priority capacity needs.

5. **Stakeholders**: This will describe stakeholder roles and their capacity in school feeding.

6. **Roadmap**: This activity is central to the Sustainability Strategy outlining the future direction of school feeding, objectives to be achieved and the specific activities to achieve those objectives.

7. **Implementation arrangements**: This activity will describe how the Sustainability Strategy and roadmap will be implemented and monitored.

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**Introduction**

The introduction should include background information on school feeding in the country and the rationale for the Sustainability Strategy, spelling out the scope, specific objectives, the formulation process, methodology and the stakeholders involved.

**Country Overview**

The country overview sets the scene and embeds the school feeding Sustainability Strategy in the country-context and the ongoing national planning processes and public sector reforms. It also identifies opportunities and constraints in the environment that may influence school feeding. The environment within which a current or future school feeding programme exists informs how the programme may function, how it can be strengthened and the form of support to be provided. A discussion on school feeding will be more focused and fruitful if it is based on an analysis of the political, economic and social factors. Analysing how the country’s ongoing reforms and planning processes relate to school feeding is important.

The country-context overview is not exhaustive and can focus on capturing the issues that are relevant to school feeding from existing documents, such as:

- Socioeconomic development indicators, such as poverty, human development, nutrition, food security and agriculture, education, gender, factors that increase children’s vulnerability and regional disparities regarding these indicators.

- The processes, at national- and sector-levels, supporting, accompanying or underlying the school feeding strategy – such as the formulation of a new PRSP or education plan, decentralization, a new social protection policy, internal crisis, and partner strategies. It is also important to explain the links between the Sustainability Strategy and other processes and documents that also relate to technical
assistance and capacity development (such as the United Nations Development Assistant Framework [UNDAF], the PRSP or the national education plan).

- The striking features of the country in terms of individual, organizational and institutional capacity (for instance, literacy, emigration, trained teachers, statistical capacity and data, connectivity, and governance indicators), sector budget allocation, recent conflict or crises that cause capacity constraints in implementing school feeding.

- A summary table with key development indicators.

School Feeding Overview

This section specifically articulates the country’s existing school feeding landscape and programme, such as where school feeding fits in the government development agenda and policy framework, the features of existing programmes, and the main stakeholders.

Issues to consider when over viewing school feeding:

- What is the current medium- or long-term vision (+/-10 years) of the government for school feeding in the country? How does the government view the future of school feeding, including its role, programme purpose and guiding principles¹, coverage, and transition from external to government ownership?

- Is there a role for school feeding in the country? If so, what is it? What rationale is behind the national school feeding programme or the government’s intention to establish such a programme? How does school feeding contribute to national education, social protection or poverty alleviation strategies?

- How is school feeding articulated in existing policy documents and operational plans? Do school feeding objectives include agricultural development objectives?

- What are the current modality(ies) of school feeding; what are the current programme(s), coverage and number of beneficiaries? Where is school feeding being provided? Who are the beneficiaries?

- How much does school feeding cost currently? Which sources does funding come from?

- What is the role of the government in managing and delivering the programme? Which actors support the government? How is the community involved?

- What are the impacts of the school feeding programme (if evaluated)?

Assessment of Current School Feeding Programmes

This section describes shared understanding of the current situation of school feeding within a country. It is recommended to build the analysis around the five Rethinking School Feeding Standards (Bundy et al., 2009), reflecting on achievements and challenges. It can build on a participatory analysis which forms two parts.

Assessment Against the Five Rethinking School Feeding Standards

The first part of the participatory analysis assesses current school feeding policies and programmes in the country against the five Rethinking School Feeding Standards: policy frameworks; financial capacity; institutional capacity and coordination; design and implementation; and community participation. Annex 2 provides guiding questions to be covered under each Standard. Achievements and challenges should also be identified under each Standard.

Country Example: Nicaragua

In Nicaragua, the findings of the assessment for each Standard were used to build a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of the school feeding programme. Findings for each Standard were therefore classified under Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

The SABER – School Feeding framework can be used to assess each Standard. The core of the assessment tool is the SABER framework-rubric. For each of the five Rethinking School Feeding Standards there are policy levers, which indicate progress towards achieving the strategic goals of the programme. Linked to each policy lever are a set of indicators, which have four stages of development that have been identified and standardized, delineating steps that a government can take to improve its policy framework. These four stages are latent, emerging, established, and advanced:

1) Latent: Very little policy implementation.
2) Emerging: Policy implementation between the levels of latent and established.
3) Established: Minimum policy implementation.

³Examples of principles include community ownership, decentralization, universal coverage based on a rights-based approach, or on the contrary a targeted programme to the most vulnerable as a sound safety net.
Using diagnostic tools developed for SABER-School Feeding to determine a country’s progress in implementing each policy action can provide a snapshot of the developmental status of school feeding policy in the country. The SABER-School Feeding framework-rubic is provided in Annex 3.

**Assessment of Priority Capacity Needs**

Informed by the previous exercise, the second part of the participatory analysis assesses the capacity needs of school feeding in the country under each Standard. This is completed by identifying what change and action is required to further the transition to national ownership and achieve the stated vision. Under each Standard, consider what changes are necessary for school feeding, including the requirements of individuals, organizations and the enabling environment. Relevant experts could be drawn upon to provide quality analysis and gap identification of all Standards within the country-context. Issues to consider may include:

- Does the current policy framework adequately support school feeding and the government vision for school feeding?
- Are the current funding sources sustainable and able to meet the demands of school feeding also in the event of programme scale-up?
- Is the current institutional set up and capacity for implementation adequate? What kind of capacity development (i.e. government at different levels, private sector, and communities) is required to allow school feeding to develop and move progressively under the government’s responsibility?
- Is programme design adequate to meet government objectives, highest levels of cost-effectiveness and manageability by government?
- How can community engagement in programme implementation be improved, considering (future) programme design, management and implementation?

The results can be summarized in the form of an assessment matrix (see Annex 4).

**Stakeholders**

This section describes the stakeholders’ capacity, and roles in school feeding. It builds on the stakeholders analysis described in Phase 2 (Section 3).

After the identification of capacity development needs (under ‘Assessment of Priority Capacity Needs’ above), the stakeholder mapping will identify the actors that can provide technical assistance and help the government build its capacity in school feeding.

The Sustainability Strategy can indicate the role of stakeholders, their role in school feeding, their current capacity and comparative advantage/strengths, and how stakeholders coordinate at country-level. Existing partnerships, current research related to school feeding and ongoing capacity development activities should also be reflected upon, including a review of completed work.

Annex 5 proposes a template for stakeholder mapping.

**Roadmap**

This section is the core of the document. It outlines the future direction of school feeding, the objectives to be achieved in the medium-term and the specific activities required to achieve these objectives. Wherever possible, it is recommended to include a timeline and a description of responsibilities.

In this section, the elements explored in the previous stages of the process are incorporated in a plan of action. The aspects included in the roadmap include the government’s long-term goals, the medium-term objectives (in terms of expected changes in the programmes and policies), the activities and the responsibilities of the different stakeholders. See Annex 6 of an example roadmap.

Relevant and up-to-date medium-term objectives and activities can be incorporated in the work plan for all stakeholders involved.

It is possible that the country would like to prioritize certain quality standards over others. Below is an example of a country that plans to establish a national school feeding project, initially with donor support.

**Country Example: Establishing a National School Feeding Programme**

The mid-term plan will have a two-year timeframe and focus on:

- Developing a school feeding policy and mainstream it in national strategies
  - Activities 1, 2 and 3 (including timeframe and stakeholders).
- Developing institutional capacity at central-level for planning and targeting
  - Activities 1, 2 and 3 (including timeframe and stakeholders).
- Developing implementation guidelines with a focus on resource management, monitoring and reporting
  - Activities 1, 2 and 3 (including timeframe and stakeholders).
- Establish a legal framework for national funding by creating a budget line with the relevant ministry
  - Activities 1, 2 and 3 (including timeframe and stakeholders).
This section could also describe the pre-conditions that have to be in place without which the planned activities cannot take place. The risks can also be spelled out.

**Implementation Arrangements**

This section describes how the Sustainability Strategy and roadmap will be implemented and monitored.

This section also aims to provide information on how the efforts to promote the relevant school feeding policies and programmes may occur over a given timeframe, therefore, making the roadmap operational. This section explains:

- Who/which entity will be in charge of coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Sustainability Strategy.
- Who/which entity will be responsible for specific tasks.
- A set of progress indicators.
- The process to review and update the Sustainability Strategy, and the role of different stakeholders in this process, including communities.

Successful implementation requires strong leadership. Ideally, the parties who were involved in developing the Sustainability Strategy would also be involved in its implementation – possibly through the same committee (or an alternative body).
References


This Guidance Note follows a set of five Standards developed in Rethinking School Feeding. These five Standards are widely regarded by the international community to be benchmarks of good practice, or what school feeding programmes need to have to achieve good quality (WFP, 2009).

The Standards are broad enough to cover programmes in a variety of contexts. However, the framework does not pretend to be exhaustive: national governments and their partners may adapt and complete it with other factors and issues they think are critical for the development of their school feeding strategy.

Policy Frameworks: The degree to which school feeding is articulated in national policy and legal frameworks varies from country to country, but in general, a policy basis for the programme helps strengthen its potential for sustainability and the quality of implementation. In all the cases where countries are implementing their own national programmes, school feeding is included in national policy frameworks. Indeed, the largest programmes have the highest level of politicization, for example, in India where the programme is supported by a Supreme Court Ruling and in Brazil where it is included in its Constitution.

In many developing countries, school feeding is mentioned in the countries’ poverty reduction strategies, often linked to the agriculture, education, nutrition, or social protection sectors, or in sectoral policies or plans. National planning should ensure that the government has identified the most appropriate role for school feeding in its development agenda. With donor harmonization efforts underway, it is increasingly important that, if made a priority, school feeding is included in sector plans, which form the basis for basket funding or sector-wide approaches that determine the allocation of donor resources.

Financial Capacity: Governments plan and budget for their priorities typically on an annual basis based on a national planning process. With a general move toward decentralization, the planning process starts with village-level priority setting, which becomes translated into local government (district) development plans. These plans form the basis for budgeting at national-level, making sure there is compliance with the national poverty reduction strategy and sectoral plans. The degree to which school feeding is included in this planning and budgeting process will determine whether the programme receives resources from the national budget and whether it benefits from general budget support allocations. In most countries with external support, funding for the programme comes from food assistance channelled through external agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and from government in-kind or cash contributions. As the programme becomes a national programme, it needs to have a stable funding source independent of external support. This may be through government core resources or through development funding (sector-wide approaches, basket funds, FTI funding). Stable funding is a prerequisite for sustainability.

Institutional Capacity and Coordination: The implementation of a school feeding programme is generally the responsibility of a specific government institution or ministry. Best practice suggests that school feeding programmes are better implemented if there is an institution that is mandated and accountable for the implementation of such a programme. It also has to have adequate resources, managerial skills, staff, knowledge, and technology at central- and sub-national-levels to correctly implement the programme.

Design and Implementation: School feeding programmes should be designed based on a correct assessment of the situation in a particular country. It is important that the programme clearly identifies the problems, the objectives, and the expected outcomes in a manner that corresponds to the country’s specific context. It is also important that the programme targets the right beneficiaries and chooses the right modalities of food delivery and a food basket of the right quality. Complementary actions such as food fortification and deworming should be a standard part of any school feeding programme. School feeding requires a robust implementation arrangement that can procure and deliver large quantities of food to targeted schools, ensure the quality of the food, and manage resources in a transparent way. Countries and partners should carefully balance international, national, and local procurement of food to support local economies without jeopardizing the quality and stability of the food pipeline.

Community Participation: School feeding programmes that respond to community needs, are locally-owned, and that incorporate some form of parental or community contribution, whether cash payment or in-kind, for example, through donated food or labour, tend to be the strongest programmes and the ones most likely to make a successful transition from donor assistance. Programmes that build this component in from the beginning and consistently maintain it have the most success.

ANNEX 1: The Five Rethinking School Feeding Standards for School Feeding

4The five Rethinking School Feeding Standards have been further developed into eight quality Standards in the WFP School Feeding Policy (WFP, 2009). However, WFP recommends using the five Rethinking School Feeding Standards as a common framework for policy dialogue.
POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Key sources of information:
- Policy and strategy documents related to school feeding and SHN in the country, project documents and operational plans, implementation guidelines, assessments and evaluations.
- Interviews with government officials at policymaking-level in relevant key line ministries (i.e. education, health, and social protection), donors and development partners.

Guiding Questions and/or Issues to Consider

✔ National-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy as well as sectoral policies and strategies (education sector plan, nutrition policy, social protection policy) identifying school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, clearly defining objectives and sectoral responsibilities.

- Does the country have a national-level poverty reduction strategy or similar framework? Is school feeding mentioned in it? If so, under which of the sectors is it mentioned?
- Are SHN and school feeding mentioned in the education sector plan? What goals do they have? How specific is the education sector plan on school feeding – does it have objectives, targets, and specifics on the implementation of the programme?
- Is there any other policy that mentions school feeding? Examples may be the nutrition policy, the social protection policy, or other strategies and guidelines for education.
- If school feeding is mentioned in any of these, what are the vision and the objectives stated for school feeding?

✔ An evidence-based technical policy related to school feeding outlines the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the programme and comprehensively addresses all four other domains (institutional capacity and coordination, financial capacity, design and implementation, and community participation).

- Is there a SHN policy or strategy? If yes, does it mention school feeding?
- Is there a specific national school feeding policy and/or strategy? Do the objectives and targets of school feeding correspond to those stated in the policy frameworks analysed above? Does it specify the design of the programme, targeting principles, scope, implementation strategy, and responsibilities and funding arrangements? Is it implemented? This document can serve as common ground during the whole process of capacity development dialogue.
- Is there a formal programme to implement the national school feeding policy?
- Is there an information and advocacy strategy to ensure broad understanding and support?

To further the analysis and facilitate the assessment, other aspects can be considered:

✔ School feeding is linked to other school health, nutrition and social protection activities or programmes.

- Does the policy/strategy make links between school feeding, health and nutrition? With agricultural production? Does it clarify the roles of different line ministries involved?
- To what extent the design of the school feeding programme is made in consultation with government and partners who deliver (or have the role to deliver) complementary activities?

FINANCIAL CAPACITY

Key sources of information:
- Policy and strategy documents related to school feeding and SHN in the country, project documents and operational plans.
- Interviews with policymaking government officials at national- and sub-national-levels in relevant key line ministries (i.e. education, health, and social protection), donors and development partners.

Guiding Questions and/or Issues to Consider

✔ National budget line(s) and funding are allocated to school feeding; funds are disbursed to implementation-levels (national, district and/or school) in a timely and effective manner.

- Does the government, through its line ministries, have provisions in the national budget to allocate
resources to school feeding? What is the funding modality applied by the government for school feeding (sector budget, special fund or other)?

• If the government allocates (cash and in-kind) resources, how much are they as a percentage of the total programme requirements? As a share of the education budget? How has the amount evolved in recent years? What is the budgeted cost per child per year?

• Overall, what is the capacity of the government to finance the programme (whether from its own resources of from external funds)?

• How is the government planning to finance the programme in the future? Have there been conversations with partners on a possible government increase in financial responsibility?

• How does the national planning cycle work? How advanced is the decentralization process in the country?

• Do districts have a budget for school feeding to manage? Do district authorities plan and budget their needs and request resources from central-level?

• Overall, how embedded is school feeding in national- and local-level planning and budgeting processes?

• Has the national school feeding unit the capacity for budgeting and accounting?

To further the analysis and facilitate the assessment, another aspect can be considered:

✓ Donor funding is stable and multi-year where possible, to ensure that the needs of school feeding programmes are covered without breaks in the food supply.

• Who are the main donors for school feeding in the country (bilateral – multilateral foundations, or the private sector)? Do they provide multi-year funding? Do they coordinate their efforts to support national SHN strategies?

• Do donors provide funding for school feeding to the government? Have donors increased their contribution to the national programme (if any)?

• Is school feeding part of a sector-wide approach or a basket fund of the education, social protection, or agriculture sectors? Are there any donors financing the programme through one of these mechanisms – for instance the EFA-FTI?

✓ Policy and strategy documents related to school feeding and SHN in the country, project documents and operational plans, implementation guidelines, and Memorandum of Understandings.

• Capacity development needs assessments, if any, related to education in the country.

• Interviews with government officials at national- and sub-national-levels in relevant line ministries (i.e. education, health, and social protection) at policymaking- and operational-levels, development partners implementing school feeding, local education group, donors (to assess donor-level coordination).

Note: The required location of the capacity will depend on the degree of decentralization. For assessing available staff and resource-levels, it is necessary to first understand the institutional arrangements in place and to map roles and responsibilities related to school feeding at central-, sub-national- and school-levels.

A centralized school feeding programme, with food commodities procured in the capital, will need a larger, more capable unit at central-level dealing with procurement, quality control and logistic issues. A more decentralized programme, where resources are channelled to the regions or districts for the purchase of food locally, will need a lighter structure at central- and national-levels and with more capacity at local- and sub-national-levels for managing procurement and delivery processes

Guiding Questions and/or Issues to Consider

✓ Multisectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy.

• Is school feeding discussed in national-level coordination bodies (technical working group, task force, or the like) that deal with education, health, agriculture, nutrition issues, or special cross-cutting issues (social protection and gender)? If so, how often do these bodies meet? Who participates in these bodies (are they inclusive)?

• For each relevant group –does it have a work plan that it reports on? Is school feeding included in this work plan?

• Is there a national-level coordination body specifically for school feeding or SHN that is operational and brings all stakeholders together regularly? Who leads it? Who is missing?

• What is the purpose of the coordination mechanism? Does it meet its purpose? Is this coordination mechanism effective in making decisions for the programme?

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND COORDINATION

Key sources of information:

The programme is designed and implemented in partnership with all relevant sectors, international agencies, NGOs, the private sector and local business representatives.

- Has the national school feeding programme any formal agreements with external stakeholders?
- What technical resources such as universities, regional institutions, South-South cooperation, bilateral and multilateral technical assistance and technical cooperation could be mobilized to accompany and support the national school feeding programme?
- Is the national programme a member of any school feeding network or initiative?
- To what extent is the private sector involved?

National school feeding management unit and accountability structures are in place, coordinating with school-level structures.

- Is there a specific ministry or institution mandated with the management and implementation of school feeding? If it is not the Ministry of Education, does that institution have appropriate contact and communication with the Ministry of Education?
- Is there a specific unit in charge of managing the programme? Has the school feeding unit a leadership role at national-level, in the sense that staff actively plan and make decisions for the programme, or they mostly depend on development partners in planning for the programme?
- Are there clear institutional arrangements, structures, budget and responsibilities at regional-, district- and school-levels? Have managers developed plans of action to achieve the objectives? Are there clear implementation guidelines for the school feeding programme that can be used for implementation and training?
- Is the government transparent and accountable for expenditure and effectiveness of school feeding programmes?
- Do the units in charge of implementing school feeding at different-levels have a sufficient amount of staff to fulfil their responsibilities? Working full-time on school feeding? Is the staff trained and knowledgeable on school feeding issues? Are supervision and support available?
- Are resources allocated among the organization’s units in line with school feeding implementation strategies? Are there adequate resources at central- and sub-national-levels to perform the assigned tasks and responsibilities (i.e. computers, office space, cars, and fuel etc.)?

School-level management and accountability structures are in place.

- Are there specific school-level management and accountability structures in place?
- Are there clear implementation arrangements at school-level? Do these rely mostly on the teachers or do they also include parents and the community?

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Key sources of information:

- Policy and strategy documents related to school feeding in the country, project documents and operational plans, procurement guidelines, implementation guidelines, assessments and evaluations, monitoring and evaluation plans.
- Cost analysis of school feeding programmes (source: WFP, the World Bank, and government).
- Poverty Reduction Strategy, Education Sector Plan, Social Protection Policy or Strategy, Food Security and Agriculture policies and strategies (including CAADP).
- Relevant studies on HGSF and local food sourcing (such as WFP/Purchase for Progress [P4P] assessments).
- Interviews with policymaking government officials at national- and sub-national-levels in relevant line ministries (education and agriculture), donors, communities and school personnel implementing school feeding and development partners (the World Bank, WFP/P4P, PCD, relevant agricultural actors in the country such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, and NGOs).

Guiding Questions and/or Issues to Consider

A functional monitoring and evaluation system is in place as part of the structure of the lead institution and used for implementation and feedback.

- Is there a monitoring and evaluation system for the school feeding programme? Are there clear indicators to measure? Does the system include data collection tools, analysis, reporting format and feedback? Are there guidelines?
Are there national resources allocated to the monitoring and evaluation system? Is there a specific budget line for monitoring and evaluation within the school feeding budget?

Is there capacity in the school feeding unit, at national- and sub-national-levels, for data collection, data analysis and report writing? Is there a programme entity/member in charge of data collection and management? Where do the periodic monitoring reports originate (from the government or from external partners)?

How is information about the programme stored, analysed and managed? Is there a proper information management system in place for school feeding at central-level (including a database)? How frequently are progress reports produced for the programme? Are there any problems in monitoring outputs?

What is the methodology applied for impact evaluation, if any? Is there a baseline for the programme? Mid-term or end-of-term evaluation?

Is the monitoring plan integrated into national education sector management information systems? Is the information on the programme reported at any national- or local-level coordination mechanism (i.e. working group or task force etc.)?

Programme design identifies appropriate target groups and targeting criteria corresponding to the national school feeding policy and the situation analysis.

Is there an explicit targeting strategy (targeting criteria and methodology) that is consistent with the programme’s objectives? To what extent the government is involved in defining the targeting criteria?

Does the school feeding programme effectively target programme resources to the poorest, most vulnerable people (food insecure areas)?

Are the food modalities (on-site meals, snacks and take-home rations) and food basket designed in line with the objectives of the programme, the duration of the school day and the feasibility of implementation?

If school meals or snacks are provided, are there clear guidelines regarding the food basket and ration, its nutritional content and the food quality?

Does the design of the school feeding programme include elements to improve the health and nutrition of schoolchildren such as micronutrient fortification, deworming, potable water and sanitation etc. (the Essential Package [WFP and UNICEF, 2005]).

Costs: Are annual costs per child estimated and monitored? If so, what is the cost per child per year of the programme? Is the value of contributions from communities estimated?

What is the national capacity to design effective school feeding programmes?

Procurement and logistics arrangements are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline.

Are the food procurement processes and the food chain management (i.e. logistics and warehouse management etc.) established and efficient? Are national procedures and guidelines for food procurement, food management and food quality and safety available?

Food modalities and the food basket correspond to the objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to the World Health Organization’s [WHO's] guidelines), and nutrition content requirements.

Is there a project document with implementation guidelines? Does the project design specify the implementation (centralized, decentralized, school-based or a combination of these)?

Are the food modalities (on-site meals, snacks and take-home rations) and food basket designed in line with the objectives of the programme, the duration of the school day and the feasibility of implementation?

If school meals or snacks are provided, are there clear guidelines regarding the food basket and ration, its nutritional content and the food quality?

Does the food basket consider local habits and includes in as much as possible locally produced foods? Are elements of the food basket not available in the country (for example corn-soya blend in some countries)? If so, why were they chosen?

Costs: Are annual costs per child estimated and monitored? If so, what is the cost per child per year of the programme? Is the value of contributions from communities estimated?

What is the national capacity to design effective school feeding programmes?

Efficient process = a process that ensures outputs are delivered according to plan, budget and schedule; a process that ensures that inputs are used to produce the planned outputs.
Is the food procurement process transparent? Are there guidelines to govern the procurement process, available to the public in a clear and systematic manner? Are they being implemented?

Are there logistic guidelines to govern food transport and storage – including guidelines to procure logistic services? Are the guidelines being implemented?

Is there adequate infrastructure at sub-national- and school-levels (storage capacity at all-levles, kitchen and cooking facilities, access to water, cooking and eating utensils)?

What are the arrangements in place, if any, to ensure quality and safety of food?

Are there national food specifications and safety regulations? Does food procurement process for school feeding follow these regulations?

What are the main risks of shifting to locally produced food and how will they be mitigated during the initial stages – so as to not jeopardize the quality and stability of the food supply?

If the school feeding programme would be sourced locally, how would that affect the costs of the programme?

Has there been an attempt at procuring more food locally? If so, what were the advantages, challenges and constraints in procuring locally? Are there guidelines at national- and provincial-levels on how to engage small-scale farmers in the supply of school feeding?

Are there systems in place to organize small-scale farmers in more structured and sustainable groups? Do the systems enable small-scale farmers to meet the requirements of the tendering and procurement process?

Is there a system in place to sensitize small-scale farmers on the opportunity to sell their commodities in the "school feeding market"? Are there guidelines for small-scale farmers on producing food for school feeding programmes?

Can the private sector be involved or could it be involved in making the connection between the farmers and market mechanisms (i.e. warehouses, associations and co-ops etc.)?

What percentage of the total food requirements of the existing programme(s) are sourced from small-scale farmer associations/community groups? Local markets? National markets? In-kind food aid or international or regional procurement?

Are elements of the food basket that are not available in the country (i.e. corn-soya blend in some countries)? Why were they chosen? Could the food basket be modified to include more local food without sacrificing the nutritional content?

Could more of the commodities be purchased from small-scale farmers? What are the foods currently produced in the country (and normally used by the population), which could be appropriate for school feeding?

How can local processing and fortification be included in the food-supply chain? Is there locally processed food or local businesses that might be able to supply fortified foods for the programme?

To further the analysis and facilitate the assessment, another aspect can be considered:

☑️ There is a policy and strategy in place to link school feeding with agricultural development and link in small farmers – based on an assessment.

Does the national policy/strategy include HGSF? Is agricultural development indicated as a specific objective of the school feeding policy? Does the programme define a fixed target for the amount of food to be procured locally and/or from a specific type of supplier?

Is there a joint strategy between the school feeding unit, the Ministry of Agriculture and other key line ministries on school feeding with coordination at national- and central-levels?

Has a feasibility study on connecting small-scale farmers to markets – and more specifically school feeding markets – been conducted in the country?

Have there been discussions with the government on procurement modalities for school feeding that can be more appropriate to procure from smallholder farmers, including the possibility of linking procurement with agriculture-related activities (i.e. local-level support to small-scale farmers)? Have there been any discussions on linking WFP’s P4P activities with the school feeding programme?

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Key sources of information:

- Education Sector Plan, school feeding policy/strategy, and implementation guidelines.
- Existing evaluations of school feeding.
- Interviews with government officials at national- and sub-national-levels in the school feeding unit, development partners implementing school feeding, interviews with headteachers, parents, beneficiaries, representatives of Community Education Committees (CECs), for example, parent-teacher associations, school management committees, village education committees, school feeding committees (if possible, through focus groups).
Note: This assessment is aimed at providing a broad picture of the status of community participation to date. A deeper assessment may be needed; references and materials are provided in this document (see References and Annex 7 Useful Resources).

Guiding Questions and/or Issues to Consider

- Are there community education committees and/or food management committees established? How inclusive are they – do they include representatives of the community, parents, teachers, and students? Have steps been taken to ensure that women’s groups are equally represented?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of CECs/food management committees and local school officials defined? Are their roles distinct? Are these organizations statutorily recognized and legally registered?
- What capacities do they have? In what areas does their capacity need strengthening? Are there local community-based organizations, and/or NGOs with educational experience that can help?
- Are there community education committees and/or food management committees established? How inclusive are they – do they include representatives of the community, parents, teachers, and students? Have steps been taken to ensure that women’s groups are equally represented?

☑ Community participates in the design, implementation, management and evaluation of school feeding programmes and contributes resources (in-kind, cash or as labour).

- Do school-based programmes use participatory approaches to ensure the needs of communities are correctly identified and met? For instance, has the community been involved in deciding which products are provided in the food basket?
- Are there any community-level structures that are used to establish communication regarding school-based interventions and education (village councils, traditional authority structures, village elders, and the like)?
- Is there a communication plan for communities on project objectives and implementation and their roles and responsibilities? Is there a process by which communities can hold government (central, provincial, and/or local) accountable?
- Does the committee act as an interface between the community and the school, manage and monitor the school feeding programme, and ensure good utilization of the food in the school? Have the CECs/food management committees been provided with the necessary tools and resources to assume monitoring and evaluation responsibilities?
- How much authority does it have regarding the implementation of school feeding?
- Are school-level implementation arrangements efficient enough to not take up teaching time during school hours? Do implementation arrangements explicitly avoid involving children in the cooking or management of the food (especially girls)?
- Does the community contribute food in-kind for the programme? Does it provide other forms of in-kind contributions (labour, firewood and food transportation)?
- Does the community contribute cash resources for the programme? What is the cash contribution used for (e.g. to pay the cooks, condiments, or for firewood)?
- Overall, how significant is the community’s contribution? Is it within households’ means or is it burdening them excessively? What other contributions could they make that do not burden them?
- Has the community been consulted on possible challenges to meeting the minimum requirements for school feeding and supported with strategies to overcome the challenges? Are there mechanisms in place to ensure all children have access to school feeding even if they cannot afford the contribution?
29 June 2012

The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) for School Feeding is part of a larger exercise by the World Bank’s Human Development Network, Education Department (HDNED), which aims to benchmark all of the education subsystems. Geared towards improving the advice and operational support offered by the World Bank to its partner countries, this exercise seeks to provide a standard of good practice against which countries can rate themselves. The expectation is that such a resource will facilitate comparative policy analysis, identify the key areas to focus investment, and assist in disseminating good practice.

In determining “what matters” for the School Feeding subsystem, the following framework-rubrics have been developed. For each of the five Rethinking School Feeding Standards there are policy levers, which indicate progress towards achieving the strategic goals of the programme. Linked to each policy lever are a set of indicators, which have four stages of development that have been identified and standardized, delineating steps that a government can take to improve its policy framework. These four stages have been standardized across the policy actions according to levels of implementation: latent being very little implemented, emerging being implementation between the levels of latent and established, established being minimum implementation, and advanced being comprehensive implementation. These framework-rubrics have built on experience from benchmarking other education subsystems, existing international consensus5, as well as advice from an advisory committee of experts6.

As a high-level, general assessment, this document is aimed at stimulating dialogue and identifying key areas for focusing support for school feeding within a country’s basic education system. These areas themselves may have more in-depth tools that can be utilized in strategic planning moving forward. Another next step might be a survey of country activities, the details of which these framework-rubrics are not aimed at capturing.

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5 Guiding principles have included the Joint World Bank and WFP publication Rethinking School Feeding (Bundy et al., 2009) and the Standards therein.
6 Including representatives of GlaxoSmithKline, International Food Policy Research Institute, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, PCD, Save the Children, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, WFP, and WHO.
## Policy Goal 1: Policy Frameworks

### Overarching policies for school feeding – sound alignment with the national policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Lever</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Latent</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy as well as sectoral policies and strategies (education sector plan, nutrition policy, social protection policy) identify school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, clearly defining objectives and sectoral responsibilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School feeding discussed by members and partners during preparation of national-level poverty reduction strategy, equivalent national policy, or sectoral policies and strategies but not yet published.</td>
<td>School feeding included in published national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national policy (including specifications as to where school feeding will be anchored and who will implement); published sectoral policies or strategies have clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities.</td>
<td>School feeding included in published national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national policy (including specifications as to where school feeding will be anchored and who will implement) and accompanied by targets and/or milestones set by the government); published sectoral policies or strategies have clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities, including what school feeding can and cannot achieve, and aligned with the national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An evidence-based technical policy related to school feeding outlines the objectives, rationale, scope, design, and funding and sustainability of the programme and comprehensively addresses all four other policy goals (financial capacity, institutional capacity and coordination, design and implementation, and community participation). | There is recognition of the need for a technical policy related to school feeding, but one has not yet been developed or published. | A technical policy and situation analysis under development by the relevant sectors that address school feeding. | A technical policy related to school feeding is published, outlining the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the programme and covering some aspects of all four other policy goals, including links with agriculture development. | A technical policy related to school feeding is published, outlining the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the programme and comprehensively covering all four other policy goals with a strategy for local production and sourcing, including links with agriculture development and smallholder farmers; policy is informed by a situation analysis of needs and aligned with national poverty reduction strategies and relevant sectoral policies and strategies. |

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30 SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES – A GUIDANCE NOTE TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Lever</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Latent</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance of the national school feeding programme – stable funding and budgeting.</td>
<td>National budget line(s) and funding are allocated to school feeding; funds are disbursed to the implementation-levels (national, district and/or school) in a timely and effective manner.</td>
<td>There is recognition of the need to include school feeding in the national planning process and national funding is stable through a budget line but unable to cover all needs; the government is fully reliant on external funds and does not have provision in the national budget to allocate resources to school feeding; there is recognition of the need for mechanisms for disbursing funds to implementation-levels, but these are not yet in place.</td>
<td>School feeding is included in the national planning process and national funding is stable through a budget line; all ministries involved in programme implementation have a budget line or funds allocated; budget lines also exist at regional- and school-levels; school feeding funds are disbursed to implementation-levels intermittently.</td>
<td>School feeding is included in the national planning process and is fully funded through a national budget line; all ministries involved in programme implementation have a budget line or funds allocated; budget lines also exist at regional- and school-levels; school feeding funds are disbursed to implementation-levels in a timely and effective manner.</td>
<td>School feeding is included in the national planning process and is fully funded through a national budget line consistent with the school feeding policy and situation analysis including options for engaging with the private sector; budget lines and plans also exist at regional- and school-levels, sufficient to cover all the expenses of running the programme; school feeding funds are disbursed to implementation-levels in a timely and effective manner; and implementers have the capacity to plan and budget as well as request resources from central-level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any multi-sectoral steering committee coordination efforts are currently non-systematic.</td>
<td>Sectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy.</td>
<td>Multisectoral steering committee from at least two sectors (e.g. education, social protection, agriculture, health, local government, and water) coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy.</td>
<td>Multisectoral steering committee from at least three sectors (e.g. education, social protection, agriculture, health, local government, and water) coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy; this government-led committee provides comprehensive coordination (across international agencies, NGOs, the private sector and local business representatives as well) and is part of a wider committee on SHN.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Lever</td>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Latent</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Management and accountability structures, including staffing - strong institutional frameworks for implementation.</strong></td>
<td>National school feeding management unit and accountability structures are in place, coordinating with school-level structures.</td>
<td>A specific school feeding unit does not yet exist at national-level; coordination between the national-, regional-, local- (if applicable), and school-levels is lacking.</td>
<td>A school feeding unit exists at national-level, but it has limited resources and limited staff numbers and lacks a clear mandate; while coordination mechanisms between national-, regional-, local- (if applicable), and school-levels are in place, they are not fully functioning.</td>
<td>A fully staffed school feeding unit with a clear mandate exists at national-level, based on an assessment of staffing and resource needs; coordination mechanisms between national-, regional-, local- (if applicable), and school-levels are in place and functioning in most instances.</td>
<td>A fully staffed school feeding unit exists at national-level, based on an assessment of staffing and resources needs, with a clear mandate, and pre- and in-service training; coordination mechanisms between national-, regional-, local- (if applicable), and school-levels are in place and fully functioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School-level management and accountability structures are in place.</strong></td>
<td>Mechanisms for managing school feeding at school-level are non-uniform and national guidance on this is lacking.</td>
<td>National guidance on required mechanisms for managing school feeding are available at school-level, but these are not yet implemented fully.</td>
<td>Most schools have a mechanism to manage school feeding, based on national guidance.</td>
<td>All schools have a mechanism to manage school feeding, based on national guidance, with pre- and in-service training for relevant staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy Goal 4: Design and Implementation**

| Quality assurance of programming and targeting, modalities, and procurement design, ensuring design that is both needs-based and cost-effective. | A functional monitoring and evaluation system is in place as part of the structure of the lead institution and used for implementation and feedback. | The importance of monitoring and evaluation is recognized, but government systems are not yet in place for monitoring and evaluation of school feeding implementation. | A government monitoring and evaluation plan exists for school feeding with intermittent data collection and reporting occurring especially at national-level. | The monitoring and evaluation plan for school feeding is integrated into national monitoring or information management systems and data collection and reporting occurs recurrently at national-, regional- and school-levels; analysed information is shared and used to refine and update programmes; baseline is carried out and programme evaluations occur periodically. |

<p>| Programme design identifies appropriate target groups and targeting criteria corresponding to the national school feeding policy and the situation analysis. | The need for targeting is recognized, but a situation analysis has not yet been undertaken that assesses school feeding needs and neither targeting criteria nor a targeting methodology has been established as yet. | Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology is being developed corresponding to the national school feeding policy; a situation analysis assessing needs is incomplete as yet. | Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology exists and is implemented corresponding to the national school feeding policy and a situation analysis assessing needs. | Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology exists and is implemented corresponding to the national school feeding policy and situation analysis (including costing for various targeting and designs); monitoring and evaluation information is used to refine and update targeting and coverage on a periodic basis. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Lever</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Latent</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food modalities and the food basket correspond to the objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements.</td>
<td>There is recognition of the need for national standards for food modalities and the food basket, but these do not exist yet.</td>
<td>National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to two or more of the following: objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements.</td>
<td>National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements; monitoring and evaluation information is used to refine and update food modalities and food basket on a periodic basis.</td>
<td>National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Procurement and logistics arrangements are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline.</td>
<td>There is recognition of the need for national standards for procurement and logistics arrangements, but these do not exist yet.</td>
<td>National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on three or more of the following: procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline.</td>
<td>National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline; monitoring and evaluation information is used to refine and update procurement and logistics arrangements.</td>
<td>National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy Goal 5: Community Participation**

<p>| Community participation and accountability – strong community participation and ownership (teachers, parents, children). | Community participates in school feeding programme design, implementation, management and evaluation and contributes resources (in-kind, cash or as labour). | Systems and accountability mechanisms are not yet in place for consultation with parents and community members on the design, monitoring and feedback of the school feeding programme. | A school feeding management committee exists but parent and community member participation could be strengthened and awareness on the opportunity to monitor and feedback on the school feeding programme is lacking. | The school feeding management committee comprises representatives of teachers, parents, and community members and communities have accountability mechanisms to hold school feeding programmes accountable at school-level. | The school feeding management committee comprises representatives of teachers, parents, and community members and has clearly defined responsibilities and periodic training. Accountability mechanisms are in place by which communities can hold school feeding programmes accountable at school-, regional-, and national-levels. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Policy Action Benchmark Level (SABER)</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Capacity Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Frameworks</strong></td>
<td><strong>Emerging:</strong> School feeding discussed by members and partners during preparation of national-level poverty reduction strategy, equivalent national policy, or sectoral policies and strategies but not yet published.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Capacity</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Capacity and Coordination</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Design and Implementation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The number of Policy Actions or issues considered as important to assess the status of school feeding policies and programmes in a country can be increased as relevant.*
ANNEX 5:  
Stakeholder Mapping – Suggested Matrixes

1. Stakeholder Engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy and Governance</th>
<th>Financial Capacity</th>
<th>Design and Implementation</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Other Roles</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>★★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★★★</td>
<td>★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>Deworming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President’s Office</td>
<td>★★★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>Community mobilization</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development Partners (United Nations Agencies, NGOs, and Donors etc.)


Civil Society, Research Institutions and Private Sector (United Nations Agencies, NGOs, and Donors etc.)


High ★★★  Moderate ★★  Low ★

2. Stakeholder Influence and Contributions to School Feeding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Of Influence</th>
<th>Resources Provided To School Feeding</th>
<th>Resources That Could Potentially Be Offered</th>
<th>Factors That Could Compromise Commitment</th>
<th>Other Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ministry of Education     | • Coordination and management of the programme.  
                           | • Monitoring and evaluation.  
                           | • Health and hygiene in schools.  
                           | • Coordination of educational services.  | • Technical.  
                           | • Financial.  
                           | • Human.  
                           | • Coordination.  | • Statistical information on education.  | • Decentralization without matching funding at sub-national-levels.  |
|                           | • Expanding access to education at all-levels.  
                           | • Teachers’ training.  
                           | • Policymaking on education.  |             |
| Ministry of Health        | • Specific mandate to monitor the country health status.  
                           | • Advice on health policies and legislation.  
                           | • Formulation and implementation of health strategies, including school health.  | • Technical.  
                           | • Financial (deworming tablets).  
                           | • Human.  | • Policy/coordination: support links with nutrition policy.  
                           | • Training of school staff on hygiene and nutrition.  |             |
|                           | • Policymaking on health.  |                                      |                                          |             |

Development Partners (United Nations Agencies, NGOs, and Donors etc.)


Civil Society, Research Institutions and Private Sector (United Nations Agencies, NGOs, and Donors etc.)


### ANNEX 6:
Example Extract of an Initial Roadmap Towards a National Sustainable Home Grown School Feeding Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Results (Next 5 Years)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Responsible for Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy validated and disseminated.</strong></td>
<td>Complete the validation of the School Feeding Policy document.</td>
<td>Put in place an inter-sectoral technical committee on school feeding</td>
<td>Feb 2012</td>
<td>Technical Review Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organize foras at all-levels (central and sub-national).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Validate by technical review committee and ministry.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disseminate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consensus on the state of the programme.</strong></td>
<td>Organize a national stakeholders workshop.</td>
<td>Develop Terms of Reference.</td>
<td>June 2012</td>
<td>Multisectoral Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create stakeholder dialogue at country-level (World Bank/WFP/PCD).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organize the workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthening coordination.</strong></td>
<td>Institutionalize the multisectoral group on school feeding programme.</td>
<td>Develop Terms of Reference.</td>
<td>Jan 2012</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agreed protocol.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Division of roles.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Functional multisectoral group in place.</strong></td>
<td>Develop and bring consensus on multisectoral strategic plan for school feeding.</td>
<td>Develop Terms of Reference.</td>
<td>Sept 2012</td>
<td>Consultant, Multisectoral Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appoint a consultant who will join Technical Review Committee personnel.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Circulate Strategic Plan with the multisectoral group.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Undertake validation workshop.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare annual plan of action.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 7:
Useful School Feeding Resources

Publications

- Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector (Bundy et al., 2009).

- Home Grown School Feeding and Social Protection (Devereux et al., 2010).

- Food Provision in Schools in Low and Middle Income Countries: Developing an Evidence Based Programme Framework (Gelli, 2010).

- Home Grown School Feeding: Linking Smallholder Agriculture to School Food Provision (Gelli et al., 2010).

Toolkits


- Capacity Development Tool Kit (WFP, forthcoming 2012).
  http://go.wfp.org/web/wfpgo

- School Feeding Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines (WFP and PCD, 2011).

Country Strategies, Reports and Case Studies


  http://hgsf-global.org/kenya/

  http://hgsf-global.org/kenya/


• Namibian School Feeding Programme Case Study (PCD, forthcoming 2012).

• Osun State Home Grown School Feeding and Health Programme Case Study (PCD, 2011).


Websites

• Home Grown School Feeding: www.hgsf-global.org

• WFP Centre of Excellence on Hunger: www.wfp.org/centre-of-excellence-hunger/

• WFP on School Meals: www.wfp.org/school-meals
Further information and resources on school feeding can be found at www.hgsf-global.org and www.wfp.org