



global child nutrition



World Food Programme  
Centre of Excellence  
against Hunger



## The XX Global Child Nutrition Forum

### National School Meal Programs for Food and Nutrition Security and Multiple Social Benefits

#### Communiqué

The twentieth Forum was organised by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation in partnership with the World Food Programme Centre of Excellence against Hunger and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tunisia, with support from WFP country office in Tunisia.

The Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF) brought together 363 participants (197 women), from 59 countries, including 30 high-level government officials, different governments, donors, private sector, NGOs and media institutions.

The present Communiqué recalls the theme of the 2017 Global Child Nutrition Forum held in Montreal, Canada: 'Bridge to Sustainable Development through School Meal Programs: Engaging Local, National, Regional, and Global Communities'.

The Forum acknowledges the importance of the establishment of the School Feeding Cluster by the African Union Commission. It also acknowledges the adoption of the Tunis Declaration under the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Initiative during the Tunis Dialogue on the Centrality of School Feeding for Education, Inclusive Development and Stability.

The twentieth Global Child Nutrition Forum **recognizes** that:

1. School feeding is a vital cross cutting agenda contributing to achieving countries' socio-economic sustainable development goals including Goals 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health & Well Being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 17 (Partnership to achieve goals) among others;
2. High-level political will and inter-ministerial integration among the governments is important to implement sustainable school feeding programmes at national level;
3. Nutrition-sensitive school feeding programmes serve as an important gender equality, equity and inclusion strategy to support adolescents, students with disabilities and children from marginalized groups to access school;
4. School feeding programmes should be designed to meet the needs of children from early childhood and beyond;
5. Nutrition-sensitive school feeding programmes are strong service delivery platforms to address micronutrient deficiencies through proven fortification strategies and a diversified food basket, including biofortified, fresh and locally produced foods;

6. It is important to pay more attention to shock-responsive, school feeding programmes to provide social protection and other safety net mechanisms in non-crisis and crisis situations;
7. For sustainable and stable national school feeding programmes it is important to ensure robust organisational arrangements and institutional architecture and to strengthen capacities and institutional knowledge management systems;
8. School feeding programmes should be included in the national development agenda and relevant existing platforms and sectoral policies such as education, health, nutrition, agriculture, social protection and others;
9. Coordination and harmonization are key guiding principles to avoid fragmentation in the process of successful school feeding programmes;
10. It is critical to catalyze multi-sectoral partnerships for successful, transformative school feeding programmes, strengthening private sector participation and empowering community, civil society, academia and the media;
11. South-South cooperation is an effective means to share learnings and enhance sustainable school feeding programmes with links to nutrition and local agriculture production;
12. Well-designed home-grown school feeding programmes provide considerable benefits for smallholder farmers and enhance local economies.

The Forum **recommends** that:

- ❖ Governments take ownership of national school feeding programmes and gradually provide sufficient and regular funds, from national budgets or other sources to reach all children and adolescents.
- ❖ Government and partners make deliberate efforts to promote local procurement to ensure school feeding serves as a market for smallholder farmers and for small food enterprises, benefiting local economies.
- ❖ Country-specific legal frameworks and comprehensive strategies for school feeding programmes are created and enabled.
- ❖ Context-specific food and nutrition education are integrated into all grade level curriculum including a focus on skill development and behaviour change.
- ❖ School feeding programmes have robust nation-led Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) systems that inform decision making and enhance quality and accountability.
- ❖ School feeding programmes be based on country national development plans and policies and strategies;
- ❖ Food served in school feeding programmes are diverse, nutritiously adequate, and meet quality standards.
- ❖ Micro-nutrient rich foods are integrated into programmes.
- ❖ Countries should map their achievements against their commitments on School Feeding annually and report at the Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF).
- ❖ Countries complete the School Feeding Global Survey.