



COMMEMORATION OF THE 4th AFRICAN DAY OF SCHOOL FEEDING

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

1st March 2019

COMMUNIQUÉ

INTRODUCTION

Guided by the African Union Assembly Decision 589 XXVI, the African Union Commission, its Member States, and partners commemorated the 4th African Day of School Feeding (ADSF) on 1st March 2018 in Abidjan, under the patronage of His Excellency, Dr. Amadou GON COULIBALY, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

The Member States recognize that school feeding initiatives contribute to the attainment of Agenda 2063 by empowering communities to ensure that all children, specially girls, can access education from early childhood to completion of secondary level. School feeding, when relying on home-grown food chains, also supports that the children have adequate and more nutritious meals while promoting local economies' inclusive growth.

Reaffirming its commitment to food and nutrition security and sustaining peace, the African Union Assembly/AU/Dec.707(XXXI) has declared the 4th African Day of School Feeding's theme as *The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa*. Conscious to contribute to this thematic discussion, the 4th African Day of School Feeding discussed how home-grown school feeding programmes can promote the humanitarian-peace-development nexus because of their social protection effects.

The 4th African Day of School Feeding received substantial support from the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and UNESCO-International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (UNESCO-IICBA), the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Children

Fund (UNICEF) and private sector. At the official ceremony, 23 Member States were represented, including 13 Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

The Ceremony was officially opened by His Excellency, Dr. Daniel KABLAN DUNCAN. Other speakers during the ceremony were the Mayor of the Cocody Council, the Representative from Centre of Excellence, Mr Daniel BALABAN, FAO Representative, Mr Sanou DIA, the Minister of National Education of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency, Dr. Kandia CAMARA, Commissioner of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Department of the African Union Commission, Her Excellency, Dr. Sarah Anyang Agbor. More than 320 participants from Member States, stakeholder institutions, UN Agencies, including pupils, teachers, support staff and parents from selected schools, private sector, were in attendance.

During the celebrations, the Continental Home-Grown School Feeding Cluster official instruments were launched: including the Terms of Reference, Strategy, and Reporting Mechanisms. The Cluster's instruments counted on the coordination role and on technical support of WFP Centre for Excellence in Brazil, WFP Africa Office and WFP Country Office in Côte d'Ivoire. Hard copies were distributed to participants.

A report of AU Annual Survey on progress in school feeding in member states was presented, demonstrating significant increase in numbers of children being fed and the involvement of local communities.

The following are the outcomes of the meeting:

KEY MESSAGES

The 4th African Day of School Feeding celebration recognizes that:

1. The School Feeding Cluster is a useful platform to ensure partnerships and collaboration among all key-stakeholders and to facilitate experience sharing. It is an entry point for all Member States to present their needs for partners, to share and search for information in school feeding programmes. The Cluster will interact with initiatives in the continent, such as the recently created Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Cote d'Ivoire.
2. An annual survey report to be presented during the AU Heads of State summit in January will be an important piece of demonstration of how countries are advancing in their national programmes. School feeding focal points shall be more effectively integrated with the CESA School Feeding Cluster. They are the assigned ones to assure that the annual AU Survey information is collected and shared with the cluster for analysis.

3. RECs have important coordination and facilitation role in their respective regions in advancing the effective implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding.
4. A holistic view of school feeding with emphasis on the entire value chain needs to be adopted to appreciate its full benefits.
5. There is need for a multi-stakeholder platform operational at country-level to advance the harmonization of activities towards national, regional, and continental goals.
6. The role of private sector needs to be harnessed in order to upscale school feeding programmes. Public-Private Partnership is useful for successful HGSF.
7. There is a need for more investments in national school feeding programmes and governments and partners need to work together towards innovative finance mechanisms.
8. The importance of partnership to continuing advance school feeding in the continent.
9. South-South dialogue and networks are key tool to support countries to continue moving forward in school feeding in the continent.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Member States need to link the School Feeding Cluster strategy with their national strategies to facilitate coordinated continental experience sharing.
2. All African governments should be urged to ensure effective implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding in their respective countries. Member States need to work towards allocating significant budgets to school feeding in order to strengthen national ownership and control.
3. Member states are encouraged to provide feedback to the annual surveys and submit reports on the progress of implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding at the country level. A report will be produced annually by the cluster, which will be taken to the heads of state summit.
4. Considerable emphasis should be given to communication and advocacy, highlighting the huge importance of Home-Grown School Feeding programmes.
5. Continental and regional initiatives and platforms should be created and sustained for sharing experiences and peer learning.

6. Strengthen involvement of multiple partners in national HGSF Programmes, including key UN Agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP and FAO, as well as Civil Society, Community-Based Organisations and Private Sector.
7. The African Union Commission is requested to follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations in this and the previous Communiqués, in consultation with the key Development Partners and through the School Feeding Cluster.

Done in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 1st March, 2019.