



AFRICA DAY OF SCHOOL FEEDING

Celebrating School Meals in Africa

1 March, 15:00 - 17:00

WFP Auditorium, Rome



African Union



World Food Programme



Africa Day of School Feeding

Home Grown School Feeding: a Conduit for Africa's Sustainable Development

The 1st of March School Feeding Day involved 54 African countries and was also an important day for WFP as a key partner. The first edition of this event was held in Niamey, Niger, and WFP hosted a celebration in Rome to mark the day with representatives from many countries.

This event was moderated by Mr. Peter Rodrigues, Deputy Director of WFP's Center of Excellence in Brazil.

Opening Remarks, by Mr. James Harvey, Chief of Staff, WFP, on behalf of the Executive Director Ertharin Cousin

Jim Harvey represented the Executive Director at the event and acknowledged "the unprecedented steps taken by the African Union and its 54 member states for the first of March event" to celebrate the Africa Day of School Feeding.

He said that this is an opportunity "to reflect" and gives momentum "to ensure every child gets the education, food and nutrition to learn and strive."

"Each school day 45 million children in African Union countries get school meals, 10 of them are assisted with WFP food." Mr. Harvey called for the world to "redouble efforts" for meals in schools. He said, "Fifty-nine million children

still are left out of school, half of whom are in Sub-Saharan Africa."

He said, "Girls are particularly affected. In Sub-Saharan Africa nearly 17 million are not in school and 9.3 million may never enter a classroom."

He said school meals are part of a much wider process of supporting education and highlighted the emphasis in home-grown school feeding laid by the African Union in declaring the Africa Day of School Feeding.

Mr. Harvey pointed out WFP cost-benefit analysis showing that for each dollar invested in school feeding programmes, the average return is 5.5 dollars.

"WFP's aim is to support country governments in developing and sustaining school meals programmes to reach the children furthest behind," he said.

African Union (AU)

H.E. Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga, African Union Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology (video message)

The most important development programme is to feed the population, and school feeding is known to be a major safety net in our countries.

School feeding has several benefits. The first of them is education: "an empty stomach has no ears". The second is a complete shift in paradigm, as we will much more involve local producers from now on. Home Grown School Feeding will allow smallholder farmers, including women, to increase their income and to contribute to their own children's education.

School feeding can really boost agriculture in Africa, by leveraging the scarce resources that we have to give incentive to African farmers instead of importing food from abroad.

The role of the African Union is to engage all states in this process and to encourage the sharing of experiences and expertise.

Niger

[H.E. Amina Djibo Diallo, Permanent Representative](#)

There is a great political commitment from Niger for school feeding. The Importance of political commitment of Niger for school feeding is linked to challenges facing the country: demographic growth, the surge in youth, low human development index. Food security is important for the country and it is necessary to have strong community involvement. There needs to be an investment in human development, especially in education. Home Grown School Feeding approach needs to be pushed at the inter-ministerial level.

Côte d'Ivoire

[Ms. Kandia Camara, Minister of Education \(video message\)](#)

School feeding has been taking place in the country since 1989. It has had a strong impact on education. For the past five years there has been an increase in political commitment for school feeding and funding has increased as well as links and support for farmers. The objective in the long term is the One School – One Canteen initiative with the impacts on education boosting enrolment, attendance, greater achievement and girls' education becoming a priority.

[Ms. Wroly Danielle Sepe Sery, Alternate Permanent Representative](#)

Côte d'Ivoire expresses its willingness to share its experience with other countries. Côte d'Ivoire chose a gender-based approach for school feeding, which is not only about sending more girls to schools but also empowering women agricultural producers, as they are coached to become managers and

economic players. Women are at the center of the school feeding programme, she said.

Kenya

[Mr. Fabian S. Muya, Alternate Permanent Representative](#)

The country introduced a comprehensive legal framework ensuring that all children, in all provinces and from all communities have access to education. Currently, the entire country is covered by school meals programmes led by the Government of Kenya and/or WFP, along with parents-teachers associations. Kenya implemented a Home Grown School Meals Programme, also in semi-arid and arid areas. WFP's support for these programmes is highly appreciated, he said, and the Government of Kenya is looking to further develop this partnership.

South Africa

[Ms. Anna-Marie Moulton, Alternate Permanent Representative](#)

The South African school feeding scheme was introduced by President Mandela in 1994. It was aimed at reducing short-term hunger, which prevents children from learning properly. The programme mainly targets free, public primary and secondary schools. Capacity building workshops were held on financial management, sustainable food production, meal planning and preparation, etc. In 2014, South Africa hosted the Global Child Nutrition Forum, which was a venue for further dialogue on school feeding. Although one can never do enough to invest in school feeding, we do as much as we can to ensure that no child is left behind.

Egypt

[Mr. Khaled El Taweel, Alternate Permanent Representative](#)

School feeding as a safety net provides one of the highest return on investment that any government can expect to achieve. School feeding in Egypt is a state priority, and is carried out through the partnership of Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Social Solidarity and Foreign Affairs. It covers 13.5 million students on a conditional basis: children must attend at least 80% of the school days to receive school meals, and to entitle their families to receive further assistance from the government. Despite this high coverage, the programme also faces some challenges: it only covers 50% of the school days, although Egypt intends to extend

this coverage to the whole school year. We also seek to develop strong linkages with local communities, in order to leverage the multiplier effect of local procurement. The third challenge is to achieve not only food security, but also nutrition security. Investing in school feeding programmes in Africa is one of the highest priorities, and all African countries should consider investing more on school feeding.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

Mr. Haladou Salha, Senior Adviser

In 2003 NEPAD with partners (WFP, UNICEF and FAO) and the Millennium Hunger Task Force developed the home grown school feeding concept. In 2008, following soaring food prices, 12 countries were targeted for a pilot phase. The challenges have been high level political leadership, sustainability, lack of resources, coordination, ownership and empowerment by local communities, technical capacity, coherent harmonization. The link between the cost benefit analysis and school meals and the study of the impacts of the school feeding programme show the importance of what has been achieved and what is to come. We strongly suggest establishing a logical link between the studies on cost-benefit analysis of school meals by WFP, the review of the impacts of school feeding programmes by IFPRI and the ongoing cost of hunger in Africa study (AUC/NEPAD, WFP, UNECA, UNICEF and further partners) and to use the outcome/findings and recommendations of these studies as an advocacy/"education" tool, along with mobilizing further funding at the national level.

Following the panellists' interventions, three presentations were made:

- **"The School Feeding Investment Case"**, by Mr. David Ryckembusch, Officer in Charge, WFP Safety Nets and Social Protection Unit
- **"A review of the Impacts of School Feeding Programs"**, by Mr. Daniel Gilligan, Deputy Director of the Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division, IFPRI



African Union



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- **"Purchase from Africans for Africa"**, by Ms. Florence Tartanac, Senior Adviser, FAO, and Mr. Francesco Slaviero, PAA Coordinator, WFP

The slideshows for these presentations have been shared with the participants and are available on request.

Brazil

Mr. Antonio Otavio Sá Ricarte, Deputy Permanent Representative

The Brazilian school feeding programme was established in 1955 to promote health and education. It reaches 42 million students, now under a decentralized model. Its management involves representatives of the civil society, teachers, students, parents, and public officials. Since 2009, every school is required to procure at least 30% of the food from local smallholder farmers. New challenges have appeared, such as obesity, which Brazil is addressing by designing new policies.

Brazil was asked to share its experience with other countries, in the frame of South-South cooperation. This exchange was made particularly successful thanks to the support provided by WFP's Center of Excellence against Hunger, which provided technical assistance to 17 countries so far. PAA Africa was also inspired by the Brazilian experience.

Discussion

A fruitful dialogue developed amongst the audience, including comments from H.E. Ms Janine Tagliante Saracino (Ambassador of Côte d'Ivoire to Italy and Permanent Representative to FAO, IFAD and WFP), H.E. Mr. Abreha Ghebrai Aseffa (Deputy Permanent Representative of Ethiopia), Ms. Nancy Walter (Global Coordinator REACH and Co-Facilitator of the UN Network for the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, WFP), Mr. Edouard Nizeyimana (Senior Programme Adviser, WFP P4P), Ms. Kawinzi Muiu (Director of Gender, WFP), H.E. Mr. Andrzej Halasiewicz (Permanent Representative of Poland), Mr. Shantanu Mathur (Manager UN RBA Partnerships, Office of the Associate Vice-President, Programme Management Department, IFAD) and Ms. Alessia Polidori (National and International Advocacy, UNICEF Italy) among other participants.

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