

Republic of Namibia
Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

NAMIBIA SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY 2019



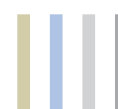


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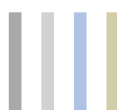
CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviation	V
Foreword	VII
Acknowledgements	VIII
Executive Summary	IX
1. Introduction	1
1.1. A SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY FOR NAMIBIA	1
1.1.1 Methodology of the NSFP Policy	1
1.1.2 Organization of the NSFP Policy	2
1.2. BACKGROUND	2
1.2.1 The Economy	2
1.2.2 Education	3
1.2.3 Food and Nutrition Security	3
1.3. THE SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT	4
1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY	5
PILLAR 1: ENHANCED SCHOOL PARTICIPATION	5
FIGURE 1: THE SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY FRAMEWORK	5
PILLAR 2: ENHANCED HEALTH AND NUTRITION	6
PILLAR 3: SUPPORT TO SMALLHOLDER PRODUCERS	6
PILLAR 4: STRENGTHENED COORDINATION AND SECTORAL LINKAGES	6
1.5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES	6
1.6 POLICY DIRECTION	7
2. Policy Strategy	8
3. Implementation Framework	10
3.1 ELIGIBILITY FOR SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME	10
3.2 TARGETING	10
3.3 THE SCHOOL MEAL	10
3.4 SCHOOL FEEDING INFRASTRUCTURE	10
3.5 FOOD STORAGE, HANDLING AND PREPARATION	11
3.6. COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES	11
3.6.1 Health, Hygiene and Nutrition Education	11
3.6.2 Water and Sanitation	11
3.6.3 Micronutrient Supplementation	11
3.6.4 Control of worm infestation in children	12
3.6.5 HIV and AIDS Education	12
3.6.6 School gardens	12
3.6.7 Psychosocial Support	12
4. Policy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation	13
4.1 COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT	13
4.2 DECENTRALISATION OF NSFP FUNCTIONS	14
4.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS	15
4.3.1 Role of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture	15
4.3.2 Role of divisions and units in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture	15
4.3.3 Roles at decentralised levels	17
4.3.4 Roles of other ministries	17
4.3.5 Partnerships	19
4.4 RESOURCE MOBILISATION	20
4.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION	20
4.6 ADVOCACY AND DISSEMINATION	20
5. Conclusion	21
ANNEX 1: BENEFITS OF THE SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY	22
ANNEX 2: BIBLIOGRAPHY	23



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
COHA	Cost of Hunger in Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DATS	Advisory and Training Services
DSPS	Special Programs School Division
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FAO	Food Agriculture Organisation
FENSI	Friends of Education in Namibia Special Initiative
FNSMS	Food and Nutrition Security Monitoring System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHI	Global Hunger Index
GNI	Gross National Income
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HPP	Harambee Prosperity Plan
HPSI	Health Promoting School Initiative
HGSF	Home Grown School Feeding
LMIC	Lower Middle Income Country
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoEAC	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MPAT	Management Planning, Appraisal and Training
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
NAB	Namibian Agronomic Board
NAR	Net Attendance Ratio



NAFIN	Namibian Alliance for Improved Nutrition
NDHS	Namibia Demographic Health Survey
NamVAC	Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NASIS	Namibia School Feeding Information Management System
NDP	National Development Plan
NDP4	Fourth National Development Plan
NDP5	Fifth National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NHIES	Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey
NER	Net Enrollment Rates
NSFP	Namibian School Feeding Programme
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PCD	Partnership for Child Development
PQA	Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SABER	System Approach for Better Education Results
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
TIPEEG	Targeted Intervention Programme for employment and Economic Growth
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNTAG	United Nations Transitional Assistance Group
UNU	United Nations University
UMIC	Upper Middle Income Country
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

FOREWORD



Hon. Katrina Hanse-Himarwa
Minister of Education, Arts and Culture

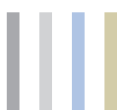
The Government of the Republic of Namibia is committed to ensure quality and inclusive education for all children. School Feeding Programme is one of the vehicles that has been embraced by the Government to contribute towards the achievement of the vision of education for all Namibian children. Namibia's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG2 – Ending Hunger; SDG 4 on Equitable Quality Education) and its adherence to several continental education protocols and the existence of a supportive national policy environment, serves to strengthen its zeal to invest in programmes such as school feeding that help promote education. Since its inception in 1991, the school feeding programme has quadrupled in size to reach over 330,000 learners in 1,400 schools in all 14 regions of Namibia. This represents a coverage of 80 percent of all pre-primary and primary schools in the country.

The School Feeding Policy provides a framework that will strengthen the efficient and effective management of school feeding in Namibia. The guidelines and the clarification of different roles and responsibility articulated in the policy will improve communication, coordination and overall programme delivery.

The goal of this policy is to provide a framework for improving access to quality and inclusive education for all children in Namibia, delivered by a school feeding programme that promotes the consumption of locally produced food from smallholder producers; enhances health and nutrition of learners while providing social protection to beneficiary households. This policy seeks to contribute to food security, poverty reduction and local economic development, and provides guidance on how to address short-term hunger among school children. To ensure sustainability, the policy provides for linkages between school feeding and smallholder farmers in order to access locally produced foods, supporting not only the beneficiary children but also the development of markets and the livelihoods of smallholder producers. Owing to the significance of school feeding, the policy touches on the expansion of school feeding to secondary schools and Early Childhood Development Centers (ECDs). It also highlights the significance of having conducive learning environments with adequate water and sanitation facilities to promote good health and hygiene in schools as well as suitable physical infrastructure for cooking and eating. It re-echoes the importance of inter-sectoral coordination as a critical factor in the success of school feeding.

This policy was developed through an extensive literature review coupled with widespread national and sub- national consultations. A cross-section of actors and entities were consulted to provide their views on what they envisaged the Namibian School Feeding Policy to address. At the sub-national level; schools, parents, learners, local leaders, private sector actors and regional directorates were consulted. While at the national level, discussions were held with various Ministries, UN Agencies, Civil Society and the private sector. All the input from the different stakeholders resulted in a well-rounded and conceptualized document.

As school feeding becomes increasingly engraved as one of the important safety net programmes in Namibia, the Ministry will look to integrate innovative means of improving its delivery and management. Work with the private sector will be enhanced under the framework of the Friends of Education in Namibia Special Initiative (FENSI), as will efforts to increase the participation of communities, civil society and other actors in school feeding. A sustainable school feeding will require that we work together with all actors to optimize our respective expertise and resources in order to ensure a better learning environment and provide equal opportunity for our children to attain quality education.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The development of the Namibian School Feeding Policy went through a rigorous consultative process with various stakeholders at the national and sub-national level. The policy was subjected to a stakeholder validation exercise to ensure both relevance and adequacy of the policy. This policy will help consolidate collective efforts by all relevant stakeholders to strengthen the implementation of school feeding in Namibia, resulting in a programme that is well coordinated and that ensures all learners in pre-primary and primary schools, especially those from vulnerable communities, benefit from a nutritious school meal each school day.

Sincere appreciation goes to the coordination team from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC): Ms. Edda Bohn: Director Programme and Quality Assurance (PQA), for her leadership during this process supported by Ms Joy Mamili: Deputy Director, Management, Planning, Appraisal and Training (MPAT), PQA.

Utmost appreciation goes to Ms. Jennifer Bitonde: Country Representative (former) of World Food Programme (WFP), Namibia for her overall coordination and guidance in the formulation of this policy; Mr. Baimankay Sankoh: Country Representative of WFP, for following through the completion of the policy; Dr. Sithabiso Gandure: WFP Consultant for drafting the policy; Ms. Joy Mamili: Deputy Director, MPAT, PQA Directorate, MoEAC, for her technical support and participation in the field level consultations; Ms. Agnes Mukubonda: Senior Administrative Officer, MPAT, PQA, MoEAC for participation in field level consultations. Further, we recognize the significant role played by the Regional Directorates of Education, Circuits, School Boards, Parents, School Principals and teachers as well as learners during the consultation phase of the policy.

Special recognition for technical support, guidance and administrative coordination goes to: Mr. Elvis Gonza Odeke, Programme Coordinator for School Feeding, WFP Namibia attached to PQA, MoEAC as well as Ms. Gloria Kamwi, Programme Officer in charge of Social Protection, the Communications and Administration team at WFP. Finally, appreciation to the National Planning Commission for their technical guidance during the policy formulation and approval process. Lastly, we greatly acknowledge and appreciate the technical support and overall coordination by the UN World Food Programme towards the completion of this very important initiative.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Introduction

This policy lays down the mandate, goal and objectives of school feeding in Namibia and establishes the principles governing the planning, implementation and management of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP). It sets out the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in Government, private sector, civil society and the local communities. The over-arching goal of the policy is to contribute to improved equitable access, quality learning and education for all children in Namibia. It establishes school feeding as a significant safety net, that addresses hunger especially for food insecure households and lays emphasis on the role of school feeding in addressing health and nutrition of learners through the provision of a diversified nutritious diet, which contributes to their ability to concentrate in class. In the long term, it has the potential to contribute positively to strengthening the human development capacity of the nation by improving education, increasing chances of children attaining rewarding employment and significantly reducing socio-economic inequalities.

To ensure sustainability, the policy advocates for the linkage of the NSFP to locally produced foods thereby bringing diversity to school meals while increasing income for smallholder producers. The specific objectives of the policy are: (1) Enhance access, retention and learning outcomes through timely access to diverse nutritious food in schools; (2) Enhance nutrition and health of learners through provision of balanced and fortified meals; (3) Support smallholder producers by linking them to the Namibia School Feeding Programme and; (4) Strengthen coordination and sectoral linkages in the management, implementation and monitoring of the Namibia School Feeding Programme.

This policy situates the NSFP within international best practices and agreements and within regional and national strategic frameworks such as Namibia's Vision 2030, National Development Plans (NDP 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) and the Namibian Zero Hunger Strategy and Roadmap, as well as other national policies especially those relating to education, poverty and social safety nets, food and nutrition and vulnerable children. These frameworks collectively advocate for the right of a child to education and recognize school feeding as a key driver of increasing access to education, especially for children from vulnerable communities. In 1994, the Government of Namibia and WFP carried out an impact study on school feeding that revealed positive impacts of school feeding in eliminating absenteeism; improving concentration, overall school attendance, and passing rates. Today, teachers attest to the positive benefits of school feeding on attendance and concentration levels of learners owing to the expansion of school feeding which now reaches over 330,000 learners in all 14 regions, covering 80% of children in need.

2. Policy Strategies

The objectives of the school feeding policy will be attained through numerous strategies as outlined below. These strategies will be implemented in close collaboration and coordination with relevant stakeholders within Government, UN agencies, Civil Society, the private sector and the school community through collaborative efforts with the MoEAC. The policy Implementation Action Plan (2019-2024) will guide the execution of the policy. The MoEAC will take a lead in coordinating the implementation of these strategies and ensuring robust systems to monitor, account and report on the progress of their implementation to stakeholders.

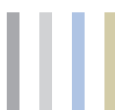
A total of 13 strategies have been identified to drive the implementation of this policy.

Under policy objective 1: Enhance access, retention and learning outcomes through timely access to diverse nutritious food in schools; the following strategies will guide implementation: (a) Ensure timely delivery of food to schools; (b) Expand and upgrade school feeding infrastructure; and (c) Scale up school feeding programme to secondary schools and Early Childhood Development Centers (ECDs).

Under policy object 2: Enhance nutrition and health of learners through provision of balanced and fortified meals; the following strategies will guide implementation: (a) Explore/ensure the diversification of nutritious meals in schools; (b) Enhance health, hygiene and nutrition education in schools; and (c) Promote and strengthen food quality and safety.

Under policy objective 3: Support smallholder producers by linking them to the Namibia School Feeding Programme; the following strategies will guide implementation: (a) Promote diversification of school meals through sourcing of locally produced and available foods; (b) Strengthen the capacity of smallholder producers to supply locally produced and available foods to schools; and (c) Strengthen the capacity of regions, circuits and schools to procure locally available foods.

Finally, under policy objective 4: Strengthen coordination and sectoral linkages in the management, implementation and monitoring of the Namibia School Feeding Programme; the following strategies will guide implementation: (a) Accelerate the decentralization of NSFP; (b) Enhance monitoring, evaluation and reporting; (c) Strengthen multi-sectoral coordination and partnerships for school feeding; and finally, (d) Strengthen advocacy for school feeding.



3. Policy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Office of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will provide overall policy guidance, technical oversight and coordination on school feeding. It will pursue and promote multi-sectoral programmes with links to agriculture, water and sanitation, health, nutrition and social protection. The NSFP will be coordinated and managed within the Department of Formal Education in the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) and the Division of Management Planning Appraisal and Training (MPAT). Strategic engagements on the NSFP at the national level shall take place within the Food and Nutrition Security Council, which is chaired and over-seen by the Office of the Prime Minister.

At the regional level, school feeding will be discussed within existing platforms that have relevant key Ministries responsible for agriculture, water and sanitation, fisheries, poverty, forestry, gender, health and nutrition and rural development. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has delegated various educational functions to the Regional Councils, including the implementation and management of school feeding programme. As such, the policy advocates for the decentralization of procurement of school feeding supplies and services to the regions, and school level. Further, it strives to ensure that at least 75% of food used in school feeding is locally sourced from smallholder producers and particularly from women groups.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture:

The implementation of the school feeding programme is multi-sectoral in nature given its diverse needs. As such, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will play a significant role in coordinating and ensuring the participation of other actors in the execution of the school feeding programme. At the national level, the MoEAC will provide overall strategic guidance and management of the programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and serve as the primary channel of communication on NSFP matters.

While the Regional Education Directorates will be responsible for overall coordination, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school feeding, including the procurement of school feeding supplies, Circuits on the other hand, will coordinate and supervise the implementation of school feeding in and at the school level, working through school feeding focal points. The policy further advocates for an active role of the school boards in the management of school feeding, including in the procurement of school feeding supplies, management of monies raised for school feeding and strengthening of community participation. Community participation will be strongly enhanced to foster ownership.

Roles of other Ministries and Government Institutions:

The policy strongly advocates for the active participation of other line Ministries in complementing school feeding along their respective mandates. It emphasizes the establishment of strong partnerships amongst development partners, the private sector and civil society organisations. The policy also recognizes the importance of sustainable funding as an assurance of quality school feeding and therefore advocates the widening of the MoEAC's resource base by engaging a range of partners including the private sector as well as development partners.

Conclusion

Healthy, well-fed children learn better. School feeding programmes help get children into school and help to keep them there, resulting in reduced absenteeism and through addressing short-term hunger enhance cognitive abilities for children. In the long-term, school feeding has the potential to contribute positively to strengthening the human development capacity of the nation, by improving the education level of the population thereby increasing their chances of attaining rewarding employment and significantly reducing socio-economic disparities. The MoEAC will coordinate the management and implementation of the Namibian School Feeding Programme, while working in close collaboration with sister Ministries, the private sector, civil society, regional councils, UN agencies, schools and communities. By embracing a multi-sectoral approach, this policy expands the ownership and implementation responsibilities of school feeding to all sectors hence strengthening sectoral commitment.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. A School Feeding Policy for Namibia

This policy provides the mandate, goal and objectives of school feeding in Namibia. It establishes the principles governing the planning, implementation, monitoring and management of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP), and sets out the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in government, private sector, civil society and the local communities. The policy situates NSFP within international best practices and agreements and within national strategic frameworks in particular, Namibia's Vision 2030, National Development Plans (NDP 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), the Education Act (Act No. 16 of 2001) and other national policies especially those relating to education, poverty and social safety nets, food and nutrition and vulnerable children.

The policy aims to improve the equitable access, improved learning and education for all children in Namibia. It provides guidance for addressing short-term hunger among school going children and emphasises the role of school feeding as a social safety net particularly for food insecure households. Further, the policy provides guidance for improved health and nutrition of learners through the provision of a diversified nutritious diet which contributes to improved school attendance, participation and completion. To ensure sustainability, the policy provides for linkages between the NSFP and locally produced foods, supporting not only the beneficiary children but also the development of markets and the livelihoods of smallholder producers.

This policy draws on the extensive international and regional support for school feeding which is provided for in various policies and declarations. Internationally, these include the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1990. Article 24 states every child's right to good quality health care, clean water and nutritious food while article 28 explains every child's right to an education.

The Education for All (EFA) declaration of the Dakar Framework for Action, which was signed at the 2000 World Education Forum and endorsed at the 2007 Dakar High-Level Group on Education for All, calls for intensified efforts towards school feeding as an important multi-sectoral approach and safety net for building inclusive education systems. In addition, school feeding addresses the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, 4 and 5 on ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture; ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, as well as promoting gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

The development of this policy also fulfils one of the internationally agreed standards of good practice deemed essential for effective school health and school feeding programmes, laid out in the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER). The school health and school feeding frameworks are mutually reinforcing - for example, delivery of micronutrients and deworming, provides a supportive environment for the delivery of school feeding. This school feeding policy is informed by the general school health framework and the Namibia School feeding SABER exercise conducted in 2012. Both frameworks provide a strong foundation that strengthens and improves the quality of implementation of the NSFP.

At a continent-wide level, school feeding is receiving increasingly high level political support and commitment. In 2003, the Comprehensive Africa Development Programme (CAADP) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme, raised the importance of linking school feeding to local production and purchases through Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF). In this way, school feeding has potential for stimulating local economies and providing local farmers and businesses with a structured market for their goods and services.

The Malabo declaration signed by the African Union in 2014 through one of its goal "Ending hunger in Africa by 2025" also promotes the consumption of locally produced foods and school feeding programmes that source foods from local farmers and producers. Further, in January 2016, African Ministers of Education adopted the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025), as the framework for transformative education and training system in Africa and endorsed the adoption of Home Grown School Feeding as a "strategy to improve education, boost local economies and smallholder agriculture and advance the SDGs." As such, March 1st of each year was instituted as the Africa Day of School Feeding by the Assembly of Heads of State and government during the 26th AU summit in 2016.

This policy is also informed by the findings of Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA) studies led by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency and supported by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP)¹. COHA was initiated to raise the profile of malnutrition in Africa by demonstrating the social and economic impact of child undernutrition on health, education and labour productivity. As part of other government interventions, this school feeding policy will contribute to addressing undernutrition and thereby assisting in reducing the costs to the health and education sectors and the Namibian economy in general.

1.1.1 Methodology of the NSFP Policy

This policy was developed based on a rigorous desk review of documents ranging from national, regional and international frameworks and policies around food security, hunger and social protection. It also entailed extensive consultations with a range of stakeholders at the national, regional and school level in which discussions were held with various ministries, Government institutions, Government programmes, Regional Councils, Regional Education Directorates, School Administration and Management, School Boards, parents, learners and the private sector in all 14 Regions of the country, to establish what they wished to be addressed in the school feeding policy. The methods used to gather information included: An inception meeting with key stakeholders, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observation. After these consultations, a multi-stakeholder validation workshop was held to review the policy. Participants in this workshop that took place in October 2016, included senior officials of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, representatives from line Ministries, UN agency representatives, private sector, Institutes of higher learning, Government programmes and forums such as NAFIN, and Regional Education Directorates.

1.1.2 Organisation of the Namibia Social Feeding Programme (NSFP) Policy

The NSFP aims to drive interventions that relieve short-term hunger, improved health and access to education of school learners, these are interventions that are believed to have the potential to contribute positively to strengthening the human development capacity of the nation, by improving the education level of the population, increasing their chances of attaining rewarding employment and significantly reducing socio-economic inequalities.

- Chapter one provides the background to the economic, education, and food and nutrition security in Namibia, highlighting a reflection of what status is on the ground. In addition, the policy context, rationale and guiding principles of the NSFP are explained in this chapter.
- Chapter two paves the policy direction by narrating the vision, mission, overall goal and specific objectives of the policy.
- Chapter three captures the policy strategies through a reflection of the eligibility and targeting measures for school feeding and the programme operations. In this chapter, the policy recognizes the role for complementary services that are needed to maximize the impact of the school feeding programme, these ranges from health and hygiene to psychosocial support.
- Chapter four provides an overview of how the policy will be implemented, coordinated, monitored and evaluated. This goes into highlighting the roles and responsibilities of the various relevant stakeholders involved in implementing the NSFP. In addition, the chapter ends with how resources will be mobilized to fund the policy in addition to advocacy and dissemination mechanisms for the policy. The policy then ends with conclusion and biography.
- And finally, the policy has an Implementation Action Plan that outlines strategies, expected outputs and activities with corresponding actors and anticipated timelines of achievement. The activity plan is also costed.

1.2. Background

1.2.1 The Economy

The Namibian economy has been growing steadily since independence, maintaining an average growth rate of 5% per year since 2009². It is however, expected to slacken to 4.5 percent and 4.3 percent for 2015 and 2016 respectively³ mainly due to the El Niño induced drought. Nonetheless, growth is expected to be strong and rise to 5.9 percent in 2017 supported by the mining industry, recovery of the agriculture sector and stronger performance from the service industries. Namibia is classified as an upper-middle income country but with a Gini coefficient estimated at 0.5971, the country manifests one of the most unequal income distributions in the world.⁴

Significant progress has been made in reducing poverty over the past decade, although the outcomes are uneven across the country. Poverty declined significantly between 2001 and 2011 from 37.9 percent to 26.9 percent with a largest decline under severe poverty from 23 percent to 15.3 percent⁵ largely due to the country's comprehensive policy on social safety nets. Poverty is still deep and widespread, largely concentrated in the rural areas at 26.9 percent compared to 10 percent in urban areas. It is also estimated that one in three children in Namibia grow up in households that are poor and of the 15.3 percent of the population in severe poverty, 18.3 percent are children⁶. Poverty has long lasting impacts on the lives of children in Namibia particularly in terms of their health and education. The impact of poverty also extends to the children's emotional and psychosocial well-being.

The Namibian Government has made significant achievements in addressing the overall social and economic dimensions of health, education and improving people's general standards of living. It is for this reason, that Namibia had a Human Development Index of 0.628 in 2014, which is an increase from the 0.578 recorded in 1990, and was ranked 126th out of 188 countries.⁷ This means that Namibia has made impressive improvements in access to health and life expectancy, which is now estimated at 64.8 years. Access to education, however, has grown at a slower rate. The adult mean years of schooling of 6.2 are still low and a reflection of a country that lacks a sufficiently educated workforce. Unemployment has remained high at 28.1 percent and tends to be concentrated amongst the youth (15–34 years) at 39 percent and women at 32 percent compared to 24 percent among men.

Although, Namibia's economic growth has helped contribute to poverty reduction, the effects have been uneven. Vision 2030 and the National Development Plans (NDPs) are the main vehicles for bringing positive change in the economy and people's well-being. Since independence, the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN), has implemented a number of interventions targeted at employment creation and economic growth such as the Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth (TIPEEG 2011/12-2013/14) which particularly focuses on youth employment.

Further, Namibia has one of the most comprehensive social safety net programmes in Southern Africa meant to address poverty and inequalities. Within this context, the school feeding policy contributes to various initiatives and especially those aimed at poverty reduction, employment creation and revitalization of local markets.

¹ The World Bank

² Bank of Namibia Economic Outlook

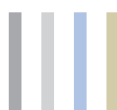
³ Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (2013); Sector Policy on Inclusive Ed

⁴ National Statistics Agency, 2013: 2009/10 National Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES)

⁵ Namibia Poverty Mapping, 2015

⁶ National Statistics Agency, 2013: Child Poverty in Namibia – a Child Centred Analysis of the NHIES 2009/10

⁷ Human Development Report, 2015



1.2.2 Education

Namibia's commitment to improving education is clearly reflected in the constitution and attendant policies. Education is a right and primary school attendance compulsory and free until completion of secondary levels. Investment in education has been very high with the share of education in the national budget being consistently one of the highest at about 22 percent. These investments, which have enabled provision of basic school infrastructure and learning materials as well as school feeding, have led to the attainment of high levels of access at primary level.

The primary net enrolment rate in 2012 for Grade 1-7 was very high at 99.7%⁸. However, the high level of access at primary school is not reflected at the secondary level. There is a trend of non-retention of primary- phase learners through to the secondary phase, where the net enrolment was 57.8% in 2012⁹. Survival rates suggest that 40% of girls and 39% of boys reached grade 12 in 2012¹⁰. Net Enrolment Rates (NER) are lower in rural areas than urban areas; generally, increase with increasing wealth of household but show an even distribution between boys and girls reflecting gender parity at both primary and secondary levels throughout the country¹¹. In addition to enrolment, the extent to which learners attend school regularly and consistently is important for academic achievement. The Net Attendance Ratios (NAR) for primary and secondary levels also displays similar high levels of 90% in primary and low levels of 50% in secondary¹².

Non-retention of learners in secondary levels is a challenge for the country as it means more children are dropping out or do not have access at this level. There is little drop-out before grade 7 but it increases strongly in grade 8 and again in grade 10 with the frequency higher for boys than girls¹³. This shows that a growing number of adolescents are out of school and those of senior secondary school age (17-19 years) are almost twice more likely to be out of school than those in junior secondary (14-16 years). Those most likely to drop out are the educationally marginalised children affected by physical location and distance to school, orphans, children affected and impacted by HIV/AIDS, children with special needs, children in informal settlements, children living and working on the street and teenage mothers¹⁴. Despite the learner pregnancy policy in Namibia, many school girls still drop out due to pregnancy. Daily school meals are generally a strong incentive for children to remain at school.

Related to high drop-outs, are high repetition rates (18%, 21% and 30%) observed among grade 1, 5 and 8 respectively¹⁵. Girls were found to have lower repetition rates than boys up to grade 8 while the situation was reversed in the higher grades. High levels of drop-out and repetition reflects a system that is struggling with providing quality education and poses significant financial and education costs to the Namibian economy. According to Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ III) results, the general competence level of learners is still low compared to other southern and eastern African countries. Besides poverty, the quality of education is influenced by other diverse socio-economic and cultural factors including protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse and having learners who are healthy and well-nourished and ready to learn and develop skills in areas such as gender, health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS¹⁶. In response, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture put in place a number of strategies to guide implementation of programmes aimed at providing holistic quality education. Among these are the Strategic and Annual Plans, the national school safety programme, the integrated school health programme and the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) which have been implemented with great success in certain areas of the education system.

The expansion of school feeding is included in the ETSIP in component four on meeting the needs of orphans and vulnerable children, in the sub-program on HIV and AIDS. As early as 1994, the impact study conducted by the Government of Namibia and WFP highlighted the positive impact of school feeding on children aged 17. The study revealed positive impacts of school feeding in terms of eliminating absenteeism, improving concentration, overall school attendance, and passing rates. Today, teachers attest to the positive benefits of school feeding on attendance and concentration levels of learners. As such, the government has trebled the size of the leaners during the past 5 years to over 330,000 recorded in May 2016, covering 80% of children in need. Hence, school feeding is an important intervention for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture that contributes to optimal learning and helps ensure that children who attend school remain healthy and participate productively. This school feeding provides a framework for increasing access to food as a meansto enhance school attendance and retention of learners.

1.2.3 Food and Nutrition Security

The food security situation in Namibia is characterised by extreme variability in levels of food production, dependency on large volumes of food imports, disparity in household income levels, high food prices and high levels of child undernutrition¹⁸. Food insecurity is also linked to structural poverty compounded by recurrent natural disasters with cyclical droughts and floods severely affecting people's livelihoods. In 2016/2017 season due to the El Niño phenomena, the Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (NamVAC) estimated that 729 134 people were in need of food and livelihood assistance compared to an estimated 578 480 people in 2015/2016 season. In 2016, Namibia had a Global Hunger Index (GHI) score of 31.4 that indicates a 'serious food problem' and was ranked 103th out of 118 countries assessed¹⁹. This is showing a worsening hunger situation due to the growing prevalence of undernourishment observed since 2000.

⁸ Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (2013): Sector Policy on Inclusive Ed

⁹ ibid

¹⁰ 1EMIS 2012, table 32

¹¹ UNICEF, 2014: Regional Education Analysis for Namibia

¹² Namibia Demographic Health Survey, 2013

¹³ UNESCO, 2015: School Drop-Out and Out-of-School children in Namibia: A National Review December 2015

¹⁴ Namibia's National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children (2000)

¹⁵ UNICEF, 2011: Improving Quality and Equity in Education in Namibia: A Trend and Gap Analysis

¹⁶ UNICEF, 2000: Defining Quality in Education

¹⁷ UNICEF and Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture, 2002: Educationally marginalized Children in Namibia: An Inventory of Programs, Interventions and Data <http://www.streetchildrenresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/educationally-marginalised-namibia.pdf>

Undernutrition is caused by a number of factors but the most immediate is inadequate intake of food in terms of either quantity or quality of nutrients, as well as poor utilization of nutrients due to infections or other illnesses, or a combination of these factors²⁰. A lack of access to adequate, diversified diet and infection result in various forms of nutrition problems. Food insecurity, poor hygiene and sanitation and lack of access to health care are part of the underlying causes of malnutrition. Malnutrition in early childhood results into stunting that affects cognitive development, low intelligent quotient and poor academic performance. In the school going children, poor nutrition affects concentration, attendance and academic performance.

The basic diet in Namibia is inadequate in terms of diversity and quality; the insufficiency includes both macronutrients such as protein, fats and carbohydrates as well as micronutrients like iron, vitamin A, zinc and iodine. Therefore, interventions such as school feeding, food fortification, dietary diversification and micronutrient supplementation are essential in mitigating the occurrence of malnutrition in children.

The Government has put in place a number of measures to improve agriculture productivity particularly of smallholder farmers; improve food access and address nutrition challenges. These range from research and development of drought resistant crop and livestock varieties; fortification initiatives; implementation of the Green Scheme Programme and others. To address malnutrition in particular, Namibia joined the Scaling Up Nutrition movement in 2011 following the formation of the Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition (NAFIN). Multiple micronutrient supplementation programmes have been delivered to address micro-nutrient deficiency among children. Through the school-feeding programme, children also have access to food fortified with micro-nutrients necessary for their growth and well-being.

This school feeding policy enhances and strengthens ongoing initiatives that are intended to ensure food and nutrition security in Namibia. To stimulate agriculture production and improve access to food, the policy establishes and recommends pathways for linking school feeding to smallholder farmers, ensuring them a guaranteed market and income flow. This linkage provides for a source of diversified food for the school feeding programme at local level. Further, the policy provides mechanisms and guidelines for the provision of nutritious meals rich in micro-nutrients including vitamin A, iodine and iron, thus improving the learning abilities of children. Adolescents and especially girls who are at risk of micro-nutrient deficiencies and key to reversing the cycle of hunger and malnutrition receive special attention in this policy. Hence, the policy gives guidance for extending NSFP to secondary schools so that the adolescents are covered.

1.3. The School Feeding Policy in the Context of National Policy Development

The national School Feeding Policy is supported by various national policy documents that advocate for school feeding. Article 95, section j of the constitution of the Republic of Namibia defines as one of its principles the need for adopting policies aimed at “consistent planning to raise and maintain an acceptable level of nutrition and standard of living of the Namibian people and to improve public health.” Similarly, Vision 2030, foresees, “A healthy and food-secured nation.” On this basis, the National Development Plans (NDP 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) emphasise enhanced quality of life ensuring that all Namibians enjoy a high standard of living. National Development Plan 5, in particular, advocates for the reformation and expansion of school feeding programme. The 1995 food and nutrition policy for Namibia also recognised the role of the school feeding programme in improving access to food to children in schools. This policy is also in line with the 2015 Namibia Agriculture Policy objectives, that seeks to increase incomes and improve household food and nutrition security, as well as promote food safety.

Many of the food and nutrition insecurity challenges in Namibia are largely a result of poverty exacerbated by climate risks. Extreme events such as droughts are endemic in Namibia and cause significant impacts on people’s livelihoods. Through the National Drought Policy and Strategy of 1997, the Government promotes school feeding as a social and nutrition safety net and pledges financial support for scaling up the NSFP during drought emergencies. The Education Sector Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children of 2006 notes that poor nutrition among school children is a major contributing factor to learning performance and acknowledges the NSFP as an ideal vehicle for supplementing learners’ nutrition, allowing them to benefit fully from educational opportunities.

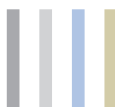
The National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children, 2000 acknowledges that learners, who walk a long distance to school, often without having eaten any breakfast before leaving home in the morning, find it difficult to concentrate on school work during the day, and sees the school feeding programme as the main incentive for children from poor families attending school. The National Policy for School Health, 2008 provides for a Comprehensive School Health Programme that recognises the importance of school feeding in relieving short-term hunger and being a source for nutritious meals.

Similarly, the National Policy on HIV/ AIDS for the Education Sector, 2001 calls on Heads of Educational Institutions where necessary, to facilitate the access of Orphans and Vulnerable Children to school feeding schemes. Likewise, the National Plan of Action for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (2006-2010) requires the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare to ensure adequate provision of meals to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) attending schools and Early Childhood Development. Namibia’s National Agenda for Children (2012 - 2016) has, as its first key commitment that “all children are healthy and well nourished.” One of the priority strategies (2.2.7) is therefore to, “Expand and improve the quality of school feeding programmes.” This school feeding policy therefore promotes good health and nutrition in schools and in particular, among vulnerable girls and boys.

¹⁸ Government of Namibia, 2016: The Food and Nutrition Security Strategic Review Report

¹⁹ IFPRI, 2016: 2016 Global Hunger Index Report

²⁰ DFID, 2011: The neglected crisis of undernutrition: Evidence for action



The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture Ministerial statement of intent in May 2015 entered a contract and promise to the public for the next five years in which the Minister prioritised expansion and improvement of the school feeding programme as a means for enhancing access to education in Namibia. More broadly, the school feeding policy contributes to the Government's strategy for ending hunger and achieving inclusive economic growth through creation of meaningful employment and reducing income inequalities. As such, the contribution of school feeding to a vision of a Namibia without hunger is elucidated in the country's Zero Hunger Road Map (2016-2020) for the next five years.

Similarly, the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP), launched in March 2016 emphasises the importance of targeted safety nets including school feeding in addressing hunger and poverty.

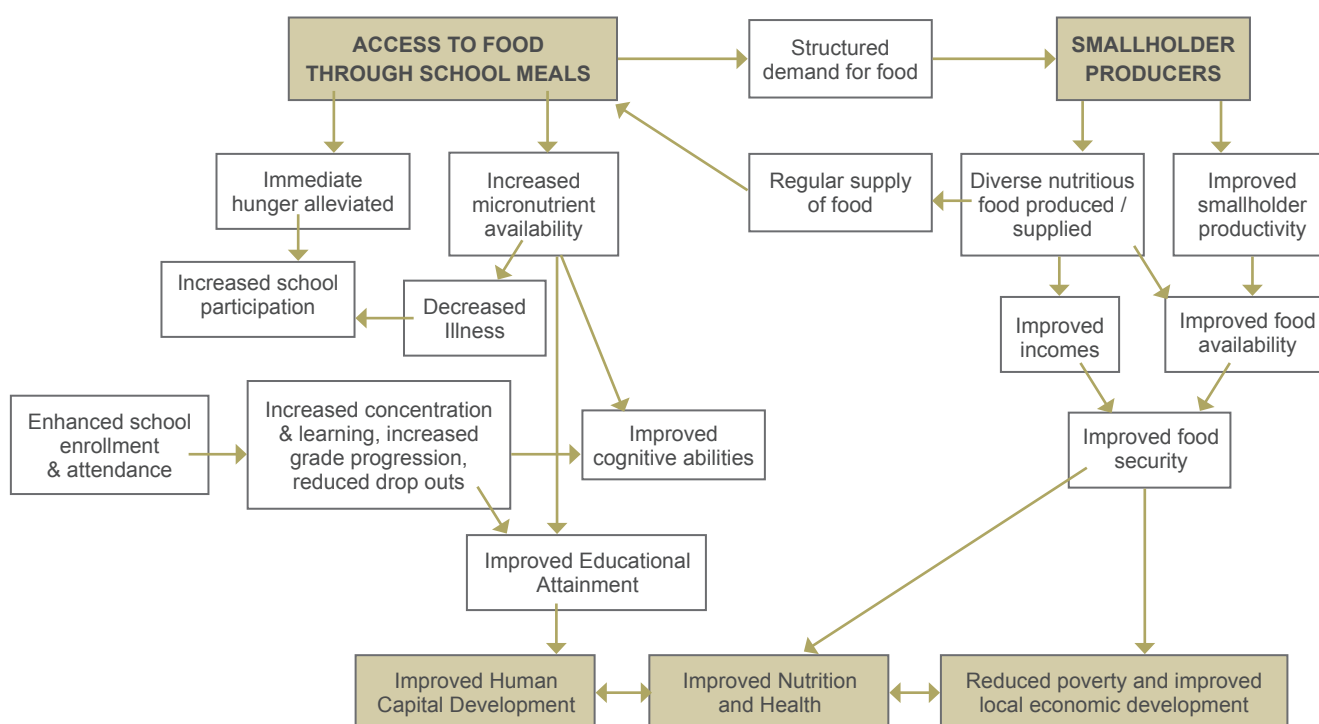
1.4. Rationale for the School Feeding Policy

The school feeding policy defines Namibia's long term approach to school feeding. In the immediate period, school feeding relieves short-term hunger and contributes to improved health of school learners and their access to education. In the long term, it has the potential to contribute positively to strengthening the human development capacity of the nation, by improving education level of the population, increasing their chances of attaining rewarding employment and significantly reducing socio-economic inequalities. The main benefits of school feeding are grouped into four pillars and reflected in figure 1 to include:

PILLAR 1: ENHANCED SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Access to food by children enrolled in school and particularly, those who are poor and food insecure, alleviates their immediate hunger thereby increasing their concentration and attention span. This contributes to improved school participation in terms of enrolment and attendance as well as learning achievement and cognitive development. Studies have found particularly strong association between school feeding and net primary school attendance. Evidence has shown that school feeding help to get children into school and helps to keep them there through enhancing enrolment and reducing absenteeism and once in school, they contribute to their learning achievement and cognitive abilities²¹. There are potential benefits on children's cognitive abilities and educational achievement when the food provided is fortified and combined with deworming²². This policy promotes enrolment, attendance and learning achievement by ensuring the NSFP provides nutritious and balanced meals. In addition, the policy strengthens the efforts towards integration of deworming into the school feeding programme. The combination of these strategies will contribute to improved academic performance and educational attainment.

Besides food access and education benefits for the children, school feeding has a multiplier effect at household level. School feeding plays an important role as a social safety net by transferring resources to households of the value of the food given to children enrolled in school. By so doing, school feeding increases household food availability. Acting as a safety net, it reduces household vulnerability and risk by providing protection against shocks and preventing them from engaging in risky coping strategies such as selling of household or productive assets and/or withdrawing children from school.



Complementary Services: School health and nutrition education, hygiene, water and sanitation, deworming, HIV/AIDS education, micronutrient supplementation, gardens, psychosocial support.

PILLAR 2: ENHANCED HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Nutritional and health status have a strong bearing on a child's learning and performance in school. Research has shown that children deficient of certain nutrients in their diet, particularly iron and iodine, or suffering from parasitic infections or other diseases perform far less than healthy and well-nourished children²³. Weak health and poor nutrition among school-age children diminish their cognitive development either through physiological changes or by reducing their ability to participate in learning experiences or both²⁴.

The school feeding policy will aim to enhance the nutrition and health of learners by improving the diversity and quality of diets and providing foods that have been fortified with essential micro-nutrients. This will contribute to better health and improved resistance to infections and sicknesses that would otherwise prevent children from attending school. Nutrition education through existing curricula is another important area under this pillar. It will provide children with the knowledge, skills and motivation to make good decisions on diet and lifestyle choices thus promoting a strong basis for a healthy and active life. The nutrition education can also be used to educate future mothers (and fathers) about the importance of nutrition in the first thousand days of a child's life.

PILLAR 3: SUPPORT TO SMALLHOLDER PRODUCERS

Apart from the educational and nutritional benefits of learners, evidence has shown that school feeding can help create a stable demand for food at the local level, which in turn has multiplier effects on the local economy, food security and poverty reduction at household and community levels²⁵.

The school feeding policy promotes the linkage of the NSFP to smallholder producers through the procurement and use of locally and domestically produced food. This will create a guaranteed and structured market for smallholder producers and in turn, will increase the availability of local fresh produce in the school menu. There are additional benefits for all actors involved along the school feeding value chain from production, transportation, processing, and preparation of food which can include employment creation, increased income generation opportunities particularly for women.

PILLAR 4: STRENGTHENED COORDINATION AND SECTORAL LINKAGES

Internally, the policy lays emphasis on strengthening coordination and management of the school feeding programme, particularly within the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture structures at various levels. Additionally, the school feeding policy promotes multi-sectoral coordination and building of partnerships. It promotes efforts towards mobilisation and collaboration among various school feeding stakeholder groups (e.g. government, civil society, private sector, community and traditional authorities) and sectors (e.g. education, health, agriculture, water, rural development) to jointly achieve the policy outcome. By engaging multiple sectors, partners will leverage knowledge, expertise, reach, and resources, benefiting from their combined and varied strengths as they work toward the shared school feeding programme goal. The Ministry of Finance will be a critical partner particularly in ensuring the sustainability of the NSFP.

Effective multi-sectoral coordination and sectoral linkages will eliminate policy implementation barriers and promote policy coherence, facilitate scale-up, and increase the impact of the school feeding programme.

1.5. Guiding Principles

The School Feeding Policy upholds the principles of:

a. Accountability and transparency at all levels

The school feeding programme will be implemented in a transparent manner and all stakeholders will be accountable for their role and inputs into the programme. Essential information about the programme will be accessible to all people including those from poor and marginalized areas and communities. The NSFP monitoring and evaluation system will be strengthened as a means of ensuring accountability and transparency in the implementation of the programme at all levels. The information that the NSFP Monitoring and Evaluation system generates will be used for raising awareness and promoting transparency and efficiency of the programme.

b. Efficient and quality delivery of school feeding services

Efficiency in delivery and provision of school feeding services will be the responsibility of all stakeholders involved in the school feeding programme. The quality of services will be based on health and nutrition standards that are aligned to the national policy frameworks related to health, nutrition, food safety, water and sanitation and environment.

c. Social equity and gender considerations

The school feeding programme will contribute to social equity and address gender and social inequalities in education through communities, parents and teachers. Special attention will be paid to marginalized and poor communities making sure the most disadvantaged children get most of the benefits. School feeding will be sensitive to the needs, rights and entitlements of the most disadvantaged children including children living with disabilities, those affected by HIV and AIDS, pregnant children and Orphans and Vulnerable Children. School feeding will be based on the principles of non-discrimination and inclusivity.

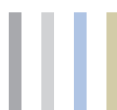
²¹ Bundy et al, 2009: Rethinking school feeding: social safety nets, child development and the education sector

²² Adelman, S; Gilligan, D O and Lehrer K, 2008: How effective are Food-for-Education Programs? A Critical Reassessment

²³ The Partnership for Child Development, 1999: School Feeding Programs: Improving effectiveness and increasing the benefit to education: A guide for program managers.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Bundy et al, 2009: Rethinking school feeding: social safety nets, child development and the education sector



d. Community participation and ownership

Communities will play an active part and have a significant degree of influence, involvement and decision making in the implementation of the school feeding programme. The policy will support interventions that promote community ownership of the school feeding programme in order to develop their confidence and skills to sustain the services delivered. This will include where possible, supporting initiatives that create partnerships with local businesses, civil society and faith-based organisations to strengthen school feeding. This policy advocates for infrastructure development in schools and raises awareness of school feeding in order to generate income to complement school feeding activities. Schools will become centres of excellence for communities, which will experience the benefits of being associated with development activities in the school setting/environment.

e. Adequate staffing and capacity building

The policy seeks to ensure that adequate staff is available for the implementation of the school feeding programme at all levels. It supports government and its partners to engage in robust capacity development initiatives and regular training in order to ensure that policy objectives are achieved. Institutional capacity development will strengthen the management of the school feeding programme and enhance service delivery.

1.6. Policy Direction

1.6.1 Vision

To create an enabling environment for learning by reducing hunger among school children, optimise their health and nutrition.

1.6.2 Mission

To support the provision of balanced and diversified meals at schools that promotes nutrition and health of learners.

1.6.3 Goal

To provide a framework for improving school attendance and retention, nutrition and health and learning outcomes of all children in Namibia.

1.6.4 Policy Objectives

The overarching objectives of the school feeding policy are to:

- Enhance access, retention and learning outcomes through timely access to diverse nutritious food in schools.
- Enhance nutrition and health of learners through provision of balanced and fortified meals.
- Support smallholder producers by linking them to the Namibia School Feeding Programme.
- Strengthen coordination and sectoral linkages in the management, implementation and monitoring of the Namibia School Feeding Programme.

2. POLICY STRATEGIES

The school feeding policy objectives will be attained through numerous strategies as outlined below. These strategies will be implemented in close collaboration and coordination with relevant stakeholders within Government, UN agencies, Civil Society, the private sector and the school community. The policy implementation action plan will guide the execution of the policy provisions. The MoEAC will take a lead in coordinating the implementation of these strategies and in ensuring robust systems to monitor, account and report on the progress of implementation of these strategies to stakeholders. Different entities in their respective mandated sectoral and technical capacities will support the execution of these strategies through collaborative efforts and arrangements with the MoEAC.

POLICY OBJECTIVE 1

Enhance access, retention and learning outcomes through timely provision of diverse nutritious food in schools.

Strategies

- 1.1 Ensure timely delivery of food to schools:** Timeliness in delivery of food to schools is fundamental because it ensures availability of food for learners throughout the term. The food supply chain will be strengthened through rigorous monitoring of procurement and food delivery processes resulting in timely delivery of food to schools.
- 1.2 Expand and upgrade school feeding infrastructure:** This strategy will ensure that all schools are equipped with the ideal school feeding infrastructure which includes: a kitchen equipped with adequate cooking stoves, eating utensils and a storage facility. The use of fuel saving stoves/techniques or other forms of energy that are environmentally friendly is encouraged. Schools are expected to have school feeding infrastructure that meets the basic food safety and hygiene standards of Namibia.
- 1.3 Scale up School Feeding Programme to Secondary Schools and Early Childhood Development centers (ECDs):** This policy recognizes the significance of expanding school feeding to secondary schools and ECDs. As such, assessments will be undertaken to establish the viability of the expansion. Schools in food insecure areas will be prioritized as most learners and children have limited access to food all year round.

POLICY OBJECTIVE 2

Enhance nutrition and health of learners through provision of balanced and fortified meals.

Strategies

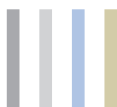
- 2.1 Ensure/explore means of diversifying school meals:** Diversification of school meals will contribute to increased dietary nutrition intake by learners, hence contributing to better health. This strategy will include the introduction of school gardens, purchasing of locally produced food and engaging the private sector and the local community to supplement the school meal.
- 2.2 Enhance health, hygiene and nutrition education in schools:** This strategy will include;
 - Integration of school-led total sanitation programme in all schools benefiting from school feeding. This will contribute to increased awareness and adoption of good sanitation and hygiene practices in schools and in the surrounding community.
 - Integrate deworming into school feeding programme as a means to address worm infestation among learners especially in areas where prevalence is high.
 - Enhance HIV/AIDS Education at the school level in order to increase awareness among learners. This is particularly critical given the high rates of teenage pregnancies in Namibia.
 - Education and sensitization of learners on alcohol and drug abuse in order to increase the awareness of learners on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse at an early stage thereby improving the decisions they make in that regard.
 - Integration of psychosocial support to learners that are faced with different forms of trauma. This will help address cases of children that are from abusive families or those affected by family discord.
 - Improve food preparation and hygiene standards in schools through continuous training of cooks and regular monitoring of the quality of food prepared for learners.
 - Ensure availability of clean and safe water, and adequate sanitation facilities in schools.
- 2.3 Promote and strengthen food quality and safety:** Systems that track and report on food quality and safety will be enhanced. This will be complemented with regular monitoring and testing of the quality of food at the supplier warehouses and at the school level to ensure that the food meets the required quality specifications.

POLICY OBJECTIVE 3

Support Smallholder producers by linking them to the Namibian School Feeding Programme.

Strategies

- 3.1 Promote the diversification of school meals through sourcing of locally produced and available foods:** Based on a feasibility study that was undertaken by the MoEAC (2016/2017), there is a potential for smallholder farmers to supply schools with a variety of fresh food. This strategy will support the development and implementation of a pilot project on linking schools to smallholder producers in line with recommendations from the feasibility study. Additionally, school meal menus will be tailored to local and nutritious food preferences.
- 3.2 Strengthen the capacity of smallholder producers to supply locally produced and available foods to schools:** This strategy will



support capacity strengthening of smallholder farmers to produce a variety of surplus food that can be supplied to schools. Capacity strengthening activities will include training of farmers in good agricultural practices, adoption of appropriate technology and marketing. Farmers will also be facilitated to access agricultural credit and quality inputs such as seeds and tools. Farmers will be encouraged to form groups as a means of strengthening collective marketing which helps them aggregate adequate volumes of food to meet the demand from schools.

- 3.3 Strengthen the capacity of regions, circuits and schools to procure locally available food:** The MoEAC is decentralizing the management of school feeding to regional offices. This strategy will support the decentralization of the procurement of food to the regions and to the school level since this brings the market closer to the communities and results in equitable distribution of market opportunities. School procurement guidelines will be developed to facilitate an efficient and effective procurement process. Accountability mechanisms will be established resulting in regular updates to relevant stakeholders including parents, the school boards, school management and the regional office.

POLICY OBJECTIVE 4

Strengthen coordination and sectoral linkages in the management, implementation and monitoring of the Namibia School Feeding Programme (NSFP).

Strategies

- 4.1 Accelerate the decentralization of NSFP:** This strategy will ensure full decentralization of the management of school feeding to the regional/school levels. The strategy will lay emphasis on empowering stakeholders, particularly those at the regional, circuit and school level, through relevant training/capacity building and exposure to successful school feeding programmes in the region. This will expand their knowledge and skills and facilitate the adoption of best practices and innovative ways of implementing school feeding.
- 4.2 Enhance monitoring, evaluation and reporting:** Existing mechanisms to monitor, evaluate, report and account for school feeding will be enhanced. Web-based reporting systems such as the Namibian School Information System (NaSIS) will be decentralized to the school level and linked to the Education Management Information System (EMIS) at the national level. Supply chain management will be strengthened through more robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- 4.3 Strengthen multisectoral coordination and partnerships for school feeding:** The strategy will improve partnerships and coordination for school feeding through advocating for the inclusion of school feeding as an agenda item in forums such as the Food Security and Nutrition Council and the School Health Task Force, and any other relevant forums at the Regional level and through promoting collaboration and partnerships with line Ministries such as Agriculture, Poverty, Health and Gender both at the national and regional level. Furthermore, deliberate efforts will be made to engage and leverage private sector partnership for school feeding under the framework of the Friends of Education in Namibia Special Initiative (FENSI).
- 4.4 Strengthen advocacy for school feeding:** Healthy, well-fed children learn better. School feeding programmes can help get children into school and help to keep them there resulting in reduced absenteeism and through addressing short-term hunger enhance cognitive abilities for children. Awareness raising of the benefits of school feeding is critical and will continue throughout the life-span of the programme. Stakeholders ranging from the national leadership, regional Councils, School Management and Communities will be involved in advocating for school feeding. TV documentaries, radio talk shows, workshops, national and international events such as the Africa Day of School Feeding which takes place on the 1st March of each year, will continue to be used as advocacy platforms for school feeding.

3. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

3.1. Eligibility for School Feeding Programme

The School Feeding Policy covers all children of school age in Namibia. The policy on all grades eligible for school feeding will be as follows:

- a. All learners enrolled for basic education in grades 0–12 in public schools qualify for school feeding, irrespective of age, gender and socio-economic status.
- b. All pre-primary and primary learners registered with the Government of Namibia are eligible for school feeding.
- c. All secondary day learners registered with the Government of Namibia are eligible for school feeding.
- d. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will consider assisting private schools on a case by case basis taking into account learner population, needs and education indicators.
- e. As the Early Childhood Development (ECD) expands to cover the majority of eligible children, the Government of Namibia will introduce a suitably adapted age sensitive feeding programme to cater for the ECD centres.

3.2. Targeting

The School Feeding Policy applies to all the geographical areas of Namibia. The following shall guide targeting:

- a. All public schools in all the 14 regions of Namibia are eligible to participate in the school feeding programme.
- b. All individual learners within the schools targeted are free to benefit from the feeding programme with an emphasis on learners from food insecure households.
- b. Eligible schools will be supported to meet the following minimum requirements:
 - i Adequate hygiene, adequate water and sanitation facilities
 - ii Adequate kitchen and storage facilities
 - iii Display community commitment
- d. Schools which do not meet the minimum requirements given above shall be supported by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and other partners to meet these standards.

3.3. The School Meal

Children at school shall be provided with meals. The ration provided per child shall depend on the length of time the child spends at school. The following shall guide the provision of meals:

- a. At least one nutritious meal shall be served per day in each school benefiting from school feeding.
- b. The meal shall be sufficient in quality and quantity to meet the nutrient requirements of the children based on their age.
- c. Meals shall be tailored to the local preferences of particular regions.
- d. Fortified foods shall be used in preparing school meals to enhance the micronutrient value of the meals.
- e. The composition and nutritional content of the meals will be informed by the food and nutrition guidelines for Namibia²⁶. The meals will be designed in consultation with nutritionists with knowledge of local conditions, habits and preferences and depend on the duration of the day.
 - f. For children that spend half-day at school, the ration shall provide 30–40% of a child's daily calorie requirement. This shall meet the following minimum energy equivalent of:
 - i 480–720 kcal for pre-primary
 - ii 600–900 kcal for primary
 - iii 887–1330kcal²⁷ for secondary
- g. Meals will be served at mid-morning, ideally from 10h00 to 11h00.

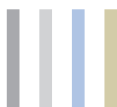
3.4. School Feeding Infrastructure

Ideal standards of NSFP facilities include adequate enclosed cooking shelter; covered eating shelter and well ventilated separate enclosed storeroom. The policy on school infrastructure will be as follows:

- a. School feeding infrastructure shall be constructed using the specifications provided by Ministry of Works and Transport.

²⁶ Republic of Namibia, 2000: Food and nutrition guidelines for Namibia- food choices for a healthy life

²⁷ WHO, FAO, UNU, 2004: Human Energy Requirements- Report of a Joint FAO/WHO/UNU Expert Consultation, Rome, Italy, 17–24 October 2001. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5686e/y5686e06.htm#bm06>



- b. Every new school shall be supported by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and partners in constructing adequate facilities built to specifications in (a) above that will have adequate, well ventilated storage space, proper cooking shelters, dignified serving and hygienic shelters.
- c. Existing schools will be supported by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and partners to upgrade the specified facilities in (a) as soon as possible and with the participation and support of communities.
- d. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture with support from other Ministries will continue to explore alternative fuel sources as a long-term strategy in environmental conservation.
- e. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will endeavour to improve food storage facilities in an effort to minimise food losses and waste. In situations of carry over stock, arrangements will be made with other food based programmes to ensure no food is wasted.

3.5. Food Storage, Handling and Preparation

In order to optimise child nutrition in schools:

- a. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture shall promote good food safety measures to minimise contamination and nutrient losses during preparation.
- b. The cooks shall prepare meals only when they are in a good healthy physical condition on the day they are scheduled to work.
- c. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will provide regular training to cooks on safe food handling and preparation of meals.

3.6. Complementary Services

This policy recognizes that school feeding is most effective when implemented with other services that support quality education, health, hygiene and nutrition. When combinations of complementary services are delivered as a package, they can maximise benefits on a child's education achievement. Hence, the school feeding policy recognises and supports existing efforts aimed at improving school health, hygiene and nutrition in schools implemented within the framework of the National Policy for School Health (2008). Among the objectives of the National Policy for School Health is to ensure that schools are implementing the Health Promoting Schools Initiative (HPSI), to provide education towards healthy behaviour, to increase awareness, prevention and treatment of childhood diseases and to ensure regular health surveillance.

3.6.1 Health, Hygiene and Nutrition Education

Nutrition and health education and promoting good nutrition practices in schools are known to have significant effect in fostering healthy eating habits. Schools provide an ideal setting to promote good nutrition as they reach a high proportion of children and adolescents and provide opportunities to demonstrate and practice production of nutrient rich foods, proper storage, handling and preparation. The knowledge and skills children acquire at school trickles down easily to households and community levels. Schools can contribute to reducing all types of nutrition problems by integrating nutrition in the school curriculum and integrating health interventions such as de-worming, vitamin A supplementation into routine school activities. In order to promote nutrition and health education in schools, the Government will:

- a. Ensure nutrition information is integrated in the curriculum of each grade to impart knowledge and skills to children on the importance of good nutrition in line with the School Health Programme and the Health Promoting School Initiative (HPSI).
- b. Promote the setup of nutrition demonstration gardens such as kitchen/back yard gardening at schools. This shall enhance children knowledge and skills on growing and consumption of micro-nutrient rich foods.
- c. Promote the production of diversified foods in school gardens and encourage participation of the children in the production of the food.

3.6.2 Water and Sanitation

Proper hygiene and sanitation coupled with access to clean and safe water is vital in proper growth and development of children. Compromised WASH in schools encourages the spread of infections and parasites that affect the health and nutrition status of the children.

To promote proper hygiene and sanitation in schools, the Government will:

- Ensure that every school has access to safe water and sanitation facilities to prevent the spread of infection and intestinal parasites.
- Ensure the training of teachers and children on proper hygiene and sanitation. The information on hygiene and sanitation will be integrated in the school curriculum to enhance an in depth understanding of the concepts.
- Ensure promotion of hand washing activities in schools.
- Promote establishment of hygiene clubs in schools to foster children participation in hygiene and sanitation related activities.
- Expand the School Led Total Sanitation Programme (SLTS).

3.6.3 Micronutrient Supplementation

School meals can provide both macronutrients and micronutrients – vitamins, minerals and essential trace elements necessary for enabling children develop physically and intellectually. Micronutrient deficiencies have an impact on cognitive growth, learning and mental development. Micronutrient deficiencies should be addressed by promoting good nutrition practices and encouraging a diversified diet in schools. In order to enhance micronutrient status of children, the Government will:

- a. Promote the consumption of fortified foods in schools in line with national standards.

- b. Support integration of micronutrient supplementation into school health interventions to eliminate all vitamin and mineral deficiencies for all children.
- c. Support activities towards food fortification in the country.
- d. Promote monitoring of the nutrition status of children including their micronutrient status.

3.6.4 Control of Worm Infestation in Children

Intestinal worms in children are caused mostly by poor hygiene and sanitation and affect their health and education. The intestinal worms feed on blood and cause malabsorption of nutrients resulting in iron deficiency, anaemia and inadequate dietary intake. The poor nutrient intake and depleted iron levels in the body result in malnutrition, poor concentration and attendance in class and reduced overall academic performance. One way of reaching out to children with such interventions is to integrate deworming into the school feeding programme. To achieve this, the Government will:

- a. Support the Ministry of Health and Social Services to undertake deworming campaigns in schools.
- b. Support the construction and use of sanitary facilities in schools.
- c. Improve access to clean and safe water in schools by linking schools to the national grid and construction of boreholes.

3.6.5 HIV and AIDS Education

Food security and good nutrition are critical for individuals, households and communities affected by HIV/AIDS. School feeding is an important intervention that supports children impacted by HIV/AIDS. It provides an effective platform for HIV/AIDS prevention education in schools and outreach to parents and other adults in the community. HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention education provides knowledge and skills for addressing behavioural changes among school children so that they can make informed decisions.

The policy supports initiatives on HIV/AIDS education as follows:

- a. Promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention education activities in the NSFP.
- b. Use of the NSFP as a platform to support HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention education campaigns by appropriate partners.

3.6.6 School Gardens

School gardens established near or close to schools are an important vehicle for promoting good health and nutrition. When linked to classroom lessons, the gardens are important in experiential learning – demonstrating to children how to grow a variety of foods and raise different small animals. The gardens can also be a source of diverse fresh foods (e.g. vegetables, fruits) for the school meal. The simple production methods used can be replicated at home, thus contributing to better health and nutrition at household and community levels.

In terms of school gardens, the policy supports:

- a. The establishment of school gardens and the participation of children in gardening activities at school level not as labourers with production targets, but as learners with learning objectives.
- b. The use of produce from the school gardens to supplement the school feeding programme or to generate income to support school feeding activities.
- c. Introduction of technologies such as hydroponics to promote the production of fresh vegetables in schools, hence promoting micro-nutrient intake by learners.

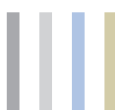
3.6.7 Psychosocial Support

Academic performance of learners is affected by both physical and psychological factors. In general, many factors influence the psychological state of learners, for example the death of a parent, lack of food, chronic illness and other poverty related conditions. Often under these situations teachers are able to identify the signs of psychological stress and most importantly can provide support to the affected learners. The NSFP addresses not only the physical needs but also provides psychosocial support ensuring that all children are able to concentrate and learn effectively. The policy provides for improvement and establishment of quality child-friendly schools and addressing psychosocial needs of school children.

²⁸ Bundy et al, 2009: Rethinking school feeding: social safety nets, child development and the education sector

²⁹ Republic of Namibia, 2015: Medium Term Expenditure Framework 2015/16–2017/2018

³⁰ The Namibian Agronomic Board passed a resolution stipulating that by 1st April 2017, food fortification will be a license requirement for all millers supplying flour to the public.



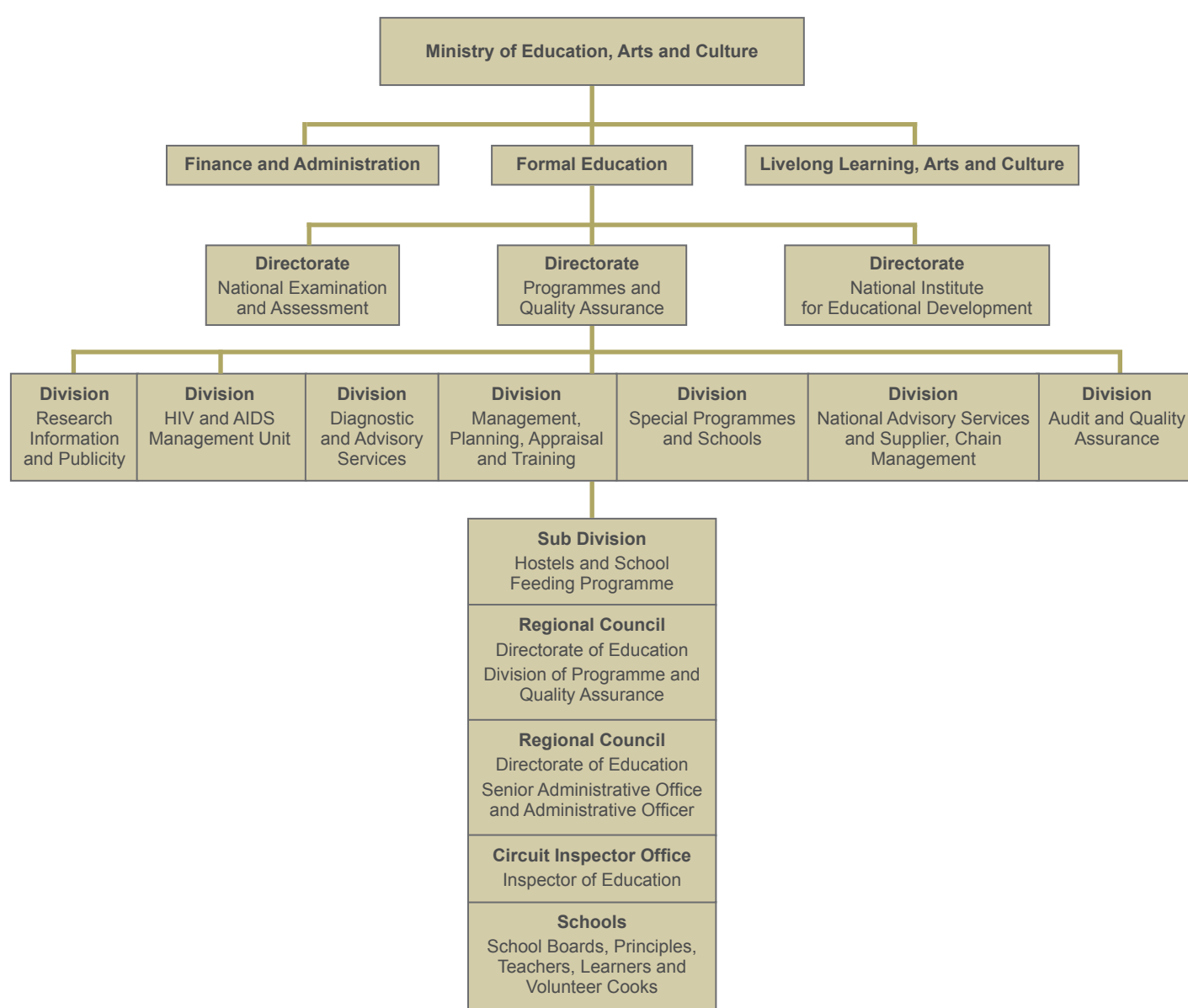
4. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This section sets out the policy provisions regarding the coordination and management structure; decentralisation of NSFP functions; roles and responsibilities of stakeholders; resource mobilisation; monitoring and evaluation of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP).

4.1. Coordination and Management

The Office of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will have the overall responsibility for making policy decisions, provide oversight and coordination and ensure implementation of the NSFP. The coordination and management of NSFP within the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is reflected in figure 2. This Government recognises that school feeding involves a number of cross-sectoral ministries and stakeholders. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will lead in the promotion of multi-sectoral programmes with links to agriculture, water and sanitation, health, nutrition and social protection, ensuring effective coordination of the NSFP.

FIGURE 2: Coordination and Management Structure of the NSFP



The policy sets the following provisions regarding coordination of the NSFP:

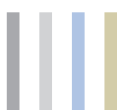
- a. NSFP will be coordinated and managed within the Department of Formal Education - Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA), Division of Management Planning Appraisal and Training (MPAT) and under the Sub-Division of School Feeding.
- b. The sub Division for the NSFP has four posts – one Control Administration Officer, one Senior Administrative Officer and two Administrative Officers. The sub Division head who is the Chief Control officer will act as the national school feeding coordinator.
- c. The policy proposes the strengthening of the sub division of school feeding through staff in-service training in nutrition, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation, procurement and logistics to ensure that the management, implementation and reporting on school feeding programme are coordinated efficiently at national level.
- d. At a regional level, NSFP will be coordinated by the Senior Administrative Officer supported by the Administrative Officer under the supervision of the Deputy Director for Programmes and Quality Assurance.
- e. The policy proposes a strengthening of capacity at regional level through a review of job descriptions, streamlining of duties and training in nutrition, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation, procurement and logistics. This will ensure that the management, implementation and reporting on school feeding programme are coordinated efficiently at regional levels.
- f. The focal person for NSFP at the school level shall be appointed by the School Administration with input from the school board.
- g. In-depth and strategic engagement on the NSFP at the national level shall take place within the soon to be established Food Security and Nutrition Council in the Office of the Prime Minister. The national coordinator shall attend relevant multi-sectoral task forces within the Food and Nutrition Council where technical issues including school feeding will be discussed.
- h. Establishment of a multi-sectoral School Feeding Technical Coordination Group (TCG) within the MoEAC in the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) to provide technical advice on the implementation of the NSFP. The Deputy Director of MPAT/the division managing school feeding, will be responsible for coordinating the development of the terms of reference for the TCG as well as organising and facilitating bi-annual school feeding coordination meetings, which will be chaired by the Director PQA with the Deputy Director as alternate chair. The proceedings of these meetings will be reported to relevant stakeholders, including existing platforms such as Food Security and Nutrition Council and its auxiliary sub-sectors such as the School Health Task Force, Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition (NAFIN) etc, through the office of the Permanent Secretary MoEAC. Reports will also be shared with the Cabinet Committee designated to over-see the activities of school feeding programme as well as Regional Councils.
- i. Establishment of multi-sectoral school feeding committees within existing platforms at regional level which have relevant key Ministries responsible for agriculture, water and sanitation, fisheries, poverty, forestry, gender, health and nutrition and rural development. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture under the leadership of the Deputy Directors, Programme Quality Assurance (PQA), in all 14 regions of Namibia will be responsible for organising and facilitating quarterly coordination meetings of the regional school feeding committees. The meetings will be chaired by the Deputy Regional Directors and proceedings of such meetings shared with the Technical Coordination Group through the Deputy Director in charge of MPAT.
- k. The policy promotes linkages of MPAT division with other divisions of PQA that deal with school health (Diagnostic, Advisory and Training Services (DATS), HIV and AIDS Management Unit (HAMU) Divisions) and marginalised communities (Special Programmes and Schools (DSPA) Division).

4.2. Decentralisation of NSFP Functions

Decentralised school feeding programmes allow greater room for creative implementation of activities that better respond to local needs and contexts, which in turn may foster local community involvement²⁸. This school feeding policy is in line with the Decentralization Policy of Namibia, 1997 and the Namibia Decentralisation Enabling Act of 2000, (ACT No. 33 of 2000), which devolves functions and resources of Ministries to either Regional Councils or Local Authorities accordingly. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has delegated various educational functions to the Regional Councils, to the schools and to state owned enterprises. The management at the regional level consist of the Director, supported by Deputy Director (PQA), Inspectors of Education and Education Officers. The schools are clustered and schools' clusters are organised into circuits managed by Inspectors of Education. In order to effectively monitor the delegation phase and to prepare for the devolution phase, Sector Specific Service Delivery Standards have been developed²⁹. Procurement measures are central to decentralisation of NSFP functions. This policy supports as far possible, procurement of school feeding supplies within Namibia and in particular, from local producers closest to the schools. It also recognises that a combination of these procurement modalities could be needed to achieve a maximum level of efficiency. The decentralised NSFP functions will be implemented by cross-sectoral Ministries, private sector, civil society and communities whose roles and responsibilities are outlined in this policy. Community participation and ownership of school feeding is central to the success of the programme, including performance of critical and regular functions such as cooking.

The policy on the decentralisation of NSFP functions is as follows:

- a. Procurement of school feeding supplies and services will be decentralised to the regions, and will be carried out according to existing laws and regulations.
- b. Where determined as feasible, and with the recommendations of regional offices, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will authorise, and provide guidelines and regulations for procurement at school levels.
- c. Effort should be made to ensure that 75% of the food used in school feeding is locally sourced from smallholder producers, particularly women's groups and this must guarantee an uninterrupted supply of food.
- d. The food sourced should meet specified nutritional requirements and health standards as guided by policies on health and nutrition.



- e. Food provided will be fortified with essential vitamins and minerals as per food fortification guidance provided by Namibian Agronomic Board³⁰.
- f. The NSFP will ensure food safety in the handling of food throughout the school feeding handling chain as guided by the 2014 Namibia Food Safety Policy.
- g. Quality Assurance and certification will be handled by the Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). Development through the Namibia Standards Institution responsible for regulating all standards in the country. This includes all standards on processing and processed foods, food additives or processing aids, food labelling and packaging materials.
- h. The procurement process shall uphold transparency, good governance and accountability at all levels and among all stakeholders.
- i. Decentralisation of adequate financial and human resources to enable effective management including monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP.

4.3. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

4.3.1 Role of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has responsibility for the policy implementation and management of the NSFP from the national to the school level and the coordination of other stakeholders.

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is the designated institution in charge of the overall management of the school feeding programme in Namibia. The specific roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture are to:

- a. Provide overall strategic guidance and management of the programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- b. Serve as the primary channel of communication on all issues related to the NSFP.
- c. Lead the multi-sectoral coordination on issues of school health and feeding at national, regional, circuit and school levels.
- d. Contribute to programme sustainability through the efficient management of essential resources.
- e. Provide non-food items as prescribed by this policy.
- f. Compile and analyse routine NSFP reports on a term and annual basis, collecting data on programme beneficiaries, food deliveries and utilisation, and any food losses and disparities.
- g. Establish and apply effective control measures on food production, food distribution and food quality and prevent any irregularities in the NSFP.
- h. Ensure the implementation of this policy and coordinate and provide guidance implementing and controlling the NSFP at central, regional, circuit and school levels.
- i. Facilitate annual medical exams to ensure each cook is healthy and physically fit to prepare the food.
- j. Continuous training, induction and sensitization of the NSFP and School Health Programme and other related programmes.

4.3.2 Role of Divisions and Units in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

SUB-DIVISION OF SCHOOL FEEDING

The sub division of School Feeding shall:

- a. Oversee the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP.
- b. Coordinate school feeding in all relevant units of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and ensure inter-sectoral collaboration among ministries involved in the NSFP.
- c. Represent the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture on the Namibia Food Security and Nutrition Council on issues of school feeding at national level.
- d. Conduct regular visits to regions and monitor NSFP food supply chain.
- e. Supervise regional monitoring, evaluation and the reporting activities.
- f. Compile regional reports and statistics.
- g. Facilitate timely communication of programme matters from national to regional levels.
- h. Support training of regional and circuit level staff on programme matters and support community awareness/sensitisation campaigns.
- i. Maintain oversight and conduct periodic checks of service providers.
- j. Develop monitoring and evaluation tools and systems for the NSFP.
- k. Ensure quality control and adherence to food quality standards.

REGIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING FOCAL POINT

The Regional school feeding focal point will be the Senior Administrative Officer under the supervision of the Deputy Director (PQA) or Chief Inspector of Education (where applicable). The specific roles and responsibilities of the Deputy Director (PQA) and Senior Administrative Officer will be the following:

The **Deputy Director** (PQA) / **Chief Inspector of Education** shall:

- a. Oversee the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP at regional level.
- b. Organise and facilitate quarterly coordination meetings of the regional school feeding management committees.
- c. Coordinate school feeding in all relevant units of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and ensure inter-sectoral collaboration among ministries involved in the NSFP at Regional level.

The **Senior Administrative Officer** shall:

- a. Coordinate and manage procurement of school feeding supplies at regional level as provided in this policy.
- b. Maintain oversight and monitoring of service providers at regional level.
- c. Ensure quality control and adherence to food quality standards.
- d. Review all reports and food orders received from Circuits on all NSFP schools, compile the information and enter the data in the NaSIS for access by central level and other MoEAC levels with internet connectivity.
- e. Support sensitisation and awareness campaigns with NSFP focal persons and School Feeding Sub-Committees at community level.
- f. Support schools in training community members (cooks, parents) on proper implementation of the programme.
- g. Ensure the NSFP is a standard agenda item at routine regional education meetings.

INSPECTORS OF EDUCATION

The inspectors of education shall:

- a. Coordinate and supervise the implementation of NSFP in all schools in the Circuit, in collaboration with the regional school feeding focal point.
- b. Review and approve all reports from school level, compile and summarise as appropriate and forward to the Regional Education Office.
- c. Support the regional school feeding focal point in routine monitoring of food supply and school feeding implementation.
- d. Conduct NSFP training at school level for principals, NSFP focal persons and teachers, and support community sensitisation and awareness campaigns.
- e. Facilitate timely communication on matters related to the NSFP to all circuit schools.
- f. Ensure the NSFP is a standard agenda item at routine circuit education meetings.
- g. Support schools in training community members.

SCHOOL BOARD

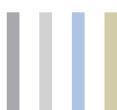
The School Board shall:

- a. Adhere to the general roles and responsibilities specified in the Education Act (Act No. 16 of 2001).
- b. Manage the NSFP at school level with guidance from inspectors of education and the regional school feeding focal point.
- c. Form a School Feeding Sub-Committee consisting of a NSFP focal person (typically a teacher) and parents and members of the community. A minimum of three meetings annually (one per term) will be held. The Sub-Committee will be directly responsible for the operations of the programme on a daily basis and will report to the School Board.
- d. Establish and maintain a separate school feeding account for all money generated for the NSFP through fund-raising activities. These funds will be used solely for the purpose of improving school meals at the school.
- e. Sensitise and mobilise community participation.
- f. Coordinate and manage procurement of school feeding supplies at regional level as provided in this policy.
- g. Through the office of the Principal, ensure that cooks meet the minimum health and hygiene requirements and that to the extent possible, they go through routine medical checks. The school will be responsible for expenses associated with such checks.

NSFP FOCAL PERSON AT SCHOOL LEVEL

The NSFP focal person shall:

- a. Oversee the day-to-day management of the NSFP at school level, i.e. reception of food deliveries to the schools, storage, recording of stocks, counter signing delivery notes and facilitating completion of standard NSFP reports. This role may be rotated with other NSFP trained teachers and/or community members as the School Board deems appropriate.
- b. Routinely supervise programme logistics, including cook schedules, food preparation, compensation for cooks, etc.



- c. Ensure and supervise the proper storage of food, release of NSFP commodities, preparation and service to beneficiaries on a daily basis.
- d. Complete and submit the NSFP School Level Report to the school principal at term's end. This report will be forwarded by the principal to Circuit level along with learner statistics.
- e. Attend School Board meetings as requested, participate in School Feeding Sub-Committee meetings and cooperate with members on matters related to the NSFP and its management.

4.3.3 Roles at Decentralised Levels

COMMUNITIES

The community shall:

- a. Nominate community members who will attend at least three meetings per annum (one per term), chaired by the School Feeding Sub-Committee to sensitise community members on issues related to the NSFP and to provide a forum for information exchange.
- b. Provide construction material when possible and physically construct and provide routine maintenance on the school cooking shelter/ kitchen and storeroom, in coordination with the School Board.
- c. Report to school officials any suspicious behaviour observed on and around the school premises and storeroom facilities.
- d. Participate in fundraising activities to support programme sustainability and to improve school facilities, such as storerooms, kitchens, water and sanitation, cooking fuel and other projects.
- e. Practice environmental conservation such as recycling, waste management etc.
- f. Assist with the school vegetable garden.
- g. The following additional activities will be supported by the community as requested by the School Board:
 - i Assist with the supervision of hand washing before and after meals.
 - ii Assist with the distribution of daily meals.
 - iii Assist with storeroom cleaning.
- h. Provide additional support to monitoring and evaluation as decided at school level.

COOKS

The Cook shall:

- a. Prepare and serve meals daily to the learners at school.
- b. Keep the kitchen and work areas clean.
- c. Wash the cooking equipment (pots, measuring devices, etc.) after serving food.
- d. Ensure cleanliness of self and that they practice good hygiene in food preparation and serving of the learners.
- e. Ensure enough fuel is available for the next day's food preparation.

SCHOOL LEARNERS

The School learner shall:

- a. Demonstrate orderly conduct (proper behaviour while queuing and during meal time), to ensure timely serving of food and consumption of the meal within the 30-minute break.
- b. Wash their hands before and after consuming the meal.
- c. Wash their plate/bowl and spoon after the meal (primary school children).

4.3.4 Roles of Other Ministries

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will lead the NSFP. Other ministries will collaborate with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to ensure harmonization of the provisions of this policy. The collaboration will be cemented by memorandum of understanding that will be signed with each ministry. The ministries involved shall include Ministry of health and Social Services (MOHSS), Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF), Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Ministry of urban and Rural Development, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGEWCW), National Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance (MOF).

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The Ministry of Health and Social welfare shall:

- a.** Have policy and implementation responsibility for the school health programme in all schools.
- b.** Ensure that health and nutrition education and de-worming activities are undertaken.
- c.** Ensure medical checks are made on cooks and diseases such as diarrhoea and suspected sicknesses linked to food poisoning are investigated.
- d.** Ensure nutrition screening of learners is undertaken.
- e.** Regulate consumer health relating to food safety. This will relate to regulations and standards on school meals and school feeding facilities.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry shall:

- a.** Support efforts to link the school feeding to smallholder farmers (this may include training of farmers, provision of agriculture inputs, aggregating farmers etc.), to ensure a regular supply of food for the NSFP.
- b.** Provide needed infrastructure including installation and construction of water and sanitation facilities.
- c.** Provide technical assistance and advice to schools on the establishment of school gardens.
- d.** Enforce food safety regulations at production and primary handling level, including silos, pack-houses and slaughter houses.

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources shall

- a.** Support aquaculture production among smallholder farmers.
- b.** Link aquaculture producers to the school feeding programme.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism shall:

- a.** Promote environmental conservation such as tree planting and reforestation projects, and climate smart technologies around schools and communities, where possible.
- b.** Promote energy saving lighting and cooking such as use of solar energy.
- c.** Facilitate conservancies in the supply of game meat to the school feeding programme.
- d.** Assist the MoEAC with the establishment of Environmental Clubs at School levels.

MINISTRY OF POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

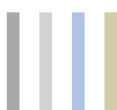
The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare shall:

- a.** Support the expansion and scale up of the NSFP as a social safety net. .
- b.** Support research, innovation and advocate for the programme within its larger poverty eradication strategy.
- c.** Support the integration of NSFP within the wider national social protection framework.

MINISTRY OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Ministry of Urban and Rural Development shall:

- a.** Support schools and communities establish school feeding facilities using Food for Work, Cash for Work or any other conditional social safety net schemes in the process providing job opportunities and contributing to the development of community assets.
- b.** Support the decentralisation of the NSFP to the Regional level by providing advisory services, technical support and capacity building.
- c.** Support the coordination of the NSFP and ensuring that school feeding is made visible and promoted within the regional Council coordination meetings.
- d.** Register and issue licenses to all food service and business operators within specific regional authorities.
- e.** Sensitize and engage traditional leaders about the school feeding programme and to allocate land for establishing community gardens.



MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT

The Ministry of Works and Transport shall:

- a. Support schools in erecting and improving existing school feeding infrastructure particularly relating to storage and cooking.

MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD WELFARE (MGCW)

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGCW) shall:

- a. Ensure gender equality and equitable socio-economic development of women and men as well as boys and girls is achieved in the NSFP.
- b. Take responsibility for providing school meals to children in Early Childhood Development centers across the country.
- c. Take a lead in developing an integrated approach to supporting ECDs with clear mandates for the key stakeholders: The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (NPC)

The National Planning Commission (NPC) shall:

- a. Facilitate the integration of the NSFP in National Development Plans (NDPs).
- b. Provide guidance on monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP.
- c. Promote visibility and assess contribution of NSFP to human capital development, local economic development and poverty reduction.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

The Ministry of Finance shall:

- a. Provide the critical support to the NSFP when it comes to funding allocations necessary for the smooth implementation of the activities.
- b. Support capacity building of school feeding implementers to maximise impact of NSFP implementation.

4.3.5 Partnerships

Eliminating hunger among school children and improving access and quality of education requires broad partnerships with various organisations, sectors and implementers operating at various scales (national to community levels). This policy recognises the role of development partners, the private sector and civil society organisations in achieving the school feeding objectives. In recognition of further unexploited benefits of these partnerships, this policy will expand and formalise the partnership between NSFP and the private sector and local and international development partners in order to maximise the impact of the programme.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector has supported a number of NSFP services including provision of donations of food and construction of facilities among others. Nevertheless, the support has been informal without clearly defined mechanisms and mode of engagement. The policy on private sector partnerships will include but not limited to:

- a. Development of innovative technology and products for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the NSFP (e.g. energy saving stoves).
- b. Contributions in cash and kind towards food and non-food NSFP items including support to essential services and infrastructure in areas of agriculture, health, nutrition, water and sanitation. This shall ideally be provided on a regular basis for enhanced sustainability of the programme.
- c. Technical and financial support to smallholder farmers and producers to promote local production and processing of food items.
- d. Expanding smallholder farmer opportunities and know-how (new products, agricultural inputs, food, energy components) that could be used in school feeding.
- e. Supporting school feeding advocacy and awareness campaigns.

CIVIL SOCIETY

The policy promotes partnerships of NSFP with the civil society. Civil societies are essential in raising awareness, resource mobilisation and capacity building in the NSFP.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

The Government recognizes the importance and the role of the institutes of higher learning in the implementation of the school feeding programme. The Institutions of higher learning will play a role in research, monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP.

LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Local and development partners and more specifically the World Food Programme, have also contributed immensely to the design, management and implementation of the school feeding programme. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will coordinate local and international development partners involved in School feeding. The policy with regard to partnerships with the local and development partners will be as follows:

- a. Technical support to the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP.
- b. Support capacity building of all stakeholders involved in NSFP.
- c. WFP has extensive experience in school feeding and logistics and it will continue to work with Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and other development partners in providing technical assistance to the NSFP.

4.4. Resource Mobilisation

Quality provision of school feeding services requires secure and sustainable funding. Budget allocation specific to school feeding and decentralized to Regional Council level will enhance the security and sustainability of school feeding programme funding. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will seek stable funding and budgets, which is a prerequisite for long-term sustainability of the school feeding programme.

The financing of the school feeding programme shall be as follows:

- a. The inclusion of school feeding as a priority in the planning and budgeting of government of Namibia through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.
- b. The school feeding budget will include operational and over-head costs to facilitate the effective management and implementation of the programme.
- c. The budget for school feeding will be used specifically for school feeding and its related operational and management activities both at the national and regional level.
- d. Stakeholders that are part of this policy shall be expected to budget or mobilise resources for their activities, projects and programmes that support the NSFP.
- e. The MoEAC will seek additional funding to address gaps within the programme through collaboration with development partners and public-private partnerships.
- f. Remuneration of cooks will be considered when deemed feasible and sustainable further to resource availability. Otherwise, the policy recommends that the school board and parents nominate the cooks and incentivize them as appropriate and consider cooking a community contribution.

4.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of this policy will be done at both the policy and programme implementation levels. The objectives outlined in this policy will be assigned clear indicators that will be measured each year to assess their achievement of outcomes. Many of these are already in existence, and widely used by the relevant ministries.

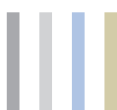
The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture already has indicators and data on educational outcomes (enrolment, retention and performance) captured by the Education Management Information System (EMIS). The Namibia Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) has indicators for nutritional outcomes. Efforts should be made to include children between the ages 6-14 years in the DHS sample frame. All these will be further developed and systematically developed into a performance management framework for the NSFP policy.

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has also established a web based Namibia School Feeding Information Management System (NaSIS) to enhance monitoring, data analysis and reporting of the NSFP which will feed into the overall monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

The implementation of this policy will be monitored through an annual implementation report, and comprehensive evaluation will be carried out every 3-5 years. The evaluation will feed into the NSFP five-year road map and/or the policy implementation action plan.

4.6. Advocacy and Dissemination

Upon the approval of the Namibia School Feeding Policy, various awareness strategies will be undertaken. The policy will be communicated widely to relevant Ministries at the central, regional as well as constituency levels. Partners including institutions of higher learning, private sector, civil society, UN, international and national development partners shall be given electronic copies through email for dissemination to their respective networks. Institutions at the decentralised levels are central to the implementation of the NSFP particularly schools, parents and communities in general. Hard copies of the policy will be distributed to schools. Further, the broadcast media, both television and radio, print media in all the local languages will be used in order to raise awareness on the existence of this policy. For wider dissemination to the public in Namibia and elsewhere, the policy will be made available on the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture Website.



5. CONCLUSION

Improving the school feeding programme is an imperative for human development and economic growth. It is an integral part of Namibia priorities to achieving the vision 2030 for long term development. This is so because of the returns that are derived from good nutrition for school children both in their immediate and longer term capabilities. Besides relieving short-term hunger and contributing to improved health of school learners and their access to education. In the long term, it has the potential to contribute positively to strengthening the human development capacity of the nation by improving education level of the population, increasing their chances of attaining rewarding employment and significantly reducing socio-economic inequalities.

This policy intends to improve the school feeding programme and maximise the benefits of school feeding. These benefits range from; Enhanced school participation, Enhanced health and nutrition, Support to small holder producers and Strengthened coordination and sectoral linkages.

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture will lead the overall coordination for the policy implementation. However, given the inter-connectedness of the policy issues to other sectors, successful results-oriented implementation will depend on full participation, commitment and accountability of all stakeholders. These will require the involvement of multi-stakeholders and several line ministries as well as private sectors, development partners, civil society, the community and the beneficiaries themselves. The NSFP will be decentralized to the regional level within existing platforms which have relevant key Ministries responsible for agriculture, water and sanitation, fisheries, poverty, forestry, gender, health and nutrition and rural development. It is expected that by embracing a multi-sectoral perspective and having the custodian to the higher level, the policy expands ownership and implementation responsibilities to all sectors which will result in increased sectorial commitments and opportunities for improved support.

This policy reinforces Namibia's government commitment to improving quality, inclusive education which is central to long term development efforts and growth for Namibia.

ANNEX 1: BENEFITS OF THE SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY

Based on research evidence, the policy highlights the following benefits:

a. Alleviation of short-term hunger to improve quality of learning

Provision of meals will alleviate short-term hunger, increase attention span, and facilitate learning, ensuring the children remain at school rather than going away to find food. Children who are hungry have difficulty in concentrating and performing difficult tasks even when they are well nourished.

b. Increased enrolment, attendance, retention and completion rates

School feeding will help to get children into school and help to keep them there. Once learners are in school, their achievement and cognitive abilities will be improved.

c. Improved nutrition and health

Provision of diversified and fortified foods will improve the children's micronutrient and macronutrient intake thereby leading to enhanced nutrition and child health, increased learning performance.

d. Social protection

The policy will strengthen the benefit of school feeding as a safety net. The NSFP will transfer resources to households of the value of the food given to the children enrolled in schools thereby averting negative livelihood coping strategies and allowing investments in productive assets.

e. Reduction of gender and social inequalities

School feeding will address gender and social inequalities in education by ensuring that the needs, rights and entitlements of the most disadvantaged girls and boys including children living with disabilities, those affected by HIV and AIDS, pregnant children and Orphans and Vulnerable Children are addressed in an inclusive manner.

f. Enhanced local economic development, food security and poverty reduction

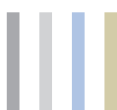
By promoting procurement of food from smallholder producers, school feeding will stimulate local economies, increase small producers' incomes and at the same time increase the provision of fresh and diversified foods.

g. Increased knowledge and skills

School feeding will develop knowledge and skills of children to appreciate the inter-relationships and linkages between various sectors- education, health, nutrition, agriculture, water and sanitation, HIV/AIDS etc. and how these influences and shape their well-being. This would be achieved through reinforcing the integration of nutrition, HIV/AIDs and school gardens into the school curriculum.

h. Improved synergies and policy coherence

School feeding will enhance opportunities for strengthening partnerships and inter-sector coordination particularly between education, health, agriculture nutrition and social protection sectors including community participation and ownership.



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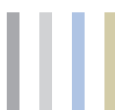
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