

# Benin



## SCHOOL FEEDING

SABER Country Report  
2015

### Policy Goals

### Status

#### 1. Policy Frameworks

School feeding is not included in the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy 2011-2015. A national school feeding policy is prepared but is not yet validated and published.



#### 2. Financial Capacity

School feeding is funded through the national budget. A budget line exists but the allocated funds do not cover all the needs.



#### 3. Institutional Capacity and Coordination

There is no multisectoral technical committee to coordinate the implementation of the school feeding program. There is a specific unit (Direction de l'Alimentation Scolaire) with insufficient resources and trained staff.



#### 4. Design and Implementation

While this is no monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, there is a unit dedicated to M&E which needs to be strengthened. There are no national standards for the procurement of food and the arrangement of the program's logistics.



#### 5. Community Roles-Reaching Beyond Schools

School feeding management committees exist and involve parents, teachers and students. Parents feel only partial ownership of the community's school feeding program due to their limited contributions. Capacity strengthening is needed.



## Introduction

*This report presents an assessment of school feeding policies and institutions that affect young children in Benin. The analysis is based on a World Bank tool developed as part of the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) initiative that aims to systematically assess education systems against evidence-based global standards and good practice to assist countries reform their education systems for proper learning for all.*

*School feeding policies are a critical component of an effective education system, given that children's health and nutrition impact their school attendance, ability to learn, and overall development. A school feeding program is a specific school-based health service, which can be part of a country's broader school health program, and often a large amount of resources are invested in a school feeding program. SABER-School Feeding collects, analyzes, and disseminates comprehensive information on school feeding policies around the world. The overall objective of the initiative is to help countries design effective policies to improve their education systems, facilitate comparative policy analysis, identify key areas to focus investment, and assist in disseminating good practice.*

*In late 2013, the World Food Programme (WFP) launched a Revised WFP School Feeding Policy that incorporates SABER-School Feeding. The revised policy requires every WFP country office with a school feeding component to undertake a policy dialogue with the Education Sector in the country as part of capacity building activities. WFP decided to use SABER-School Feeding as one of their policy tools to guide the policy dialogue and to assess in a more systematic way the transition of school feeding programs to national ownership and/or the strengthening of national school feeding programs. WFP will integrate this tool into their project preparation from 2015 onwards.*

## Country Overview

The Republic of Benin is in Sub-Saharan Africa and covers an area of 114, 763 km<sup>2</sup>. It is bordered to the north by the Niger River (120 km), to the north-west by Burkina Faso (270 km), to the east by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (750 km), to the west by the Republic of Togo (620 km), and to the south by the Atlantic Ocean (125 km).

Benin's population is estimated at about 10 million, of which women comprise 51.2 percent of the population. The natural growth rate is 3.5 percent. The per capita GDP is estimated to be around 1,428 USD with an economic growth rate of 5.6 percent in 2013 and an inflation rate of 6 percent.

Benin is a low-income country, ranked 165 out of 187 countries according to the Report on the 2014 Human Development of the United Nations Development Programme.<sup>1</sup>

The agricultural sector is the main source of wealth creation at the national level and is an important source of foreign exchange.

The results of the Global Vulnerability Analysis and Food Security (AGVSA) assessment conducted in 2013 show that 11 percent of the population faces food insecurity.<sup>2</sup> The same study has clearly established a link between the level of food insecurity, food consumption and household poverty and the education level of the household head. About 76 percent of food insecure households have a head of household with no education and the children of these homes are less likely to attend school than children from other households.

## Education and Health in Benin

### Education

Over the past five years, considerable progress has been made in the areas of access to education and gender equity (Net Enrolment Rate of 97.3 percent in 2012 against 77.7 percent in 2006 and Parity Index girls/boys, 0.95 in 2012 against 0.86 in 2006). However, there are still some weaknesses in the school system as well as remarkable regional disparities. Challenges include:

<sup>1</sup> UNDP, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> World Food Programme (WFP), 2014a.

- At the start of the primary school cycle, more than 20 percent of students drop out;
- Over the past five years, the repetition rate has been higher than 11 percent in primary;
- A slow increase in the primary completion rate, which rose from 65 percent in 2006 to 77 percent in 2013, which does not guarantee the achievement of the target of 100 percent set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015;
- Relatively low academic performance by learners.

In the search for causes of the low efficiency of the school system, it was shown that children who are most vulnerable to food insecurity with critical issues of household nutrition often fail to attend classes regularly and perform well academically. School feeding, thus, has been identified as one of the essential measures to correct some of these weaknesses.

## Health

Benin's population faces many health challenges. Life expectancy at birth is 59 years. In 2012, approximately 55 percent of deaths were caused by communicable diseases and maternal, prenatal and nutrition conditions, which is a decrease from 2000. Deaths caused by non-communicable diseases in 2012 were 36 percent of the total deaths, which is an increase from 2000. In 2012, approximately 6 percent of the population was undernourished.<sup>3</sup>

Access to improved sanitation facilities has improved since 2000, but there is a large disparity between rural and urban access. Only 5 percent of the rural population had access while 25 percent of urban residents had access to improved sanitation facilities in 2013. A larger percentage of the population had access to an improved water source. In rural regions, 69 percent of rural residents had access while 85 percent of urban residents had access to an improved water source in 2013.<sup>4</sup>

Malaria remains a prevalent disease in Benin. The mortality rate for children under five in 2013 was 85

deaths per 1,000 live births, and malaria was the most commonly cited cause of death in children under the age of five.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, slightly more than one percent of the population between the ages of 15 and 49 has HIV. The number of children 14 years old and younger who have HIV has increased from 5,300 in 2000 to 8,400 in 2013.<sup>6</sup>

## The Case for School Feeding

School feeding programs, defined here as the provision of food to schoolchildren, can increase school enrolment<sup>7</sup> and attendance—especially for girls.<sup>8</sup> When combined with quality education, school feeding programs can increase cognition<sup>9</sup> and educational success.<sup>10</sup> With appropriately designed rations, school feeding programs can improve the nutrition status of preschool- and primary school-aged children by addressing micronutrient deficiencies. Combined with local agricultural production, these programs can also provide small-scale farmers with a stable market. School feeding programs can provide short-term benefits after crises, helping communities recover and build resilience, in addition to long-term benefits by developing human capital.<sup>11</sup> School feeding programs can be classified into two main groups: in-school feeding (when children are fed in school) and take-home rations (when families are given food if their children attend school regularly). A major advantage of school feeding programs is that they offer the greatest benefit to the poorest children. Several studies<sup>12</sup> have indicated that missing breakfast impairs educational performance.

Present data suggests that almost every country is seeking to provide food to its schoolchildren. Therefore, especially for low-income countries where most food-insecure regions are concentrated, the key issue is not whether a country will implement school-feeding programs but rather how and with what objectives.

The social shocks of recent global crises led to an enhanced demand for school feeding programs in low-income countries as they served as a safety net for food-insecure households through an income transfer. In

<sup>3</sup> World Bank, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organization, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmed, 2004; Gelli, Meir, and Espejo, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Jacoby, Cueto, and Pollitt, 1996; Powell et al., 1998; Kristjansson et al., 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Whaley et al., 2003; Kristjansson et al., 2007; Jukes et al., 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Tan, Lane, and Lassibille, 1999; Ahmed, 2004; Adelman et al., 2008.

<sup>11</sup> WFP, 2013

<sup>12</sup> Simeon and Grantham-McGregor, 1989; Pollitt, Cueto, and Jacoby, 1998; Simeon, 1998.

response to this amplified request, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Bank jointly undertook an analysis titled *Rethinking School Feeding*.<sup>13</sup> This initiative sought to better understand how to develop and implement effective school feeding programs as a productive safety net that is part of the response to the social shocks, as well as a fiscally sustainable investment in human capital. These efforts are part of a long-term global goal to achieve *Education For All* and provide social protection to the poor.

## School Feeding Program in Benin

School feeding has been identified as one of the essential measures to address low enrolment and retention.

This commitment is reflected in most documents produced in the context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In Benin, these documents include the Growth Strategy for Poverty Reduction (GPRS), the Ten-Year Plan Development of the Education Sector (PDDSE)<sup>14</sup>, the Strategic Recovery Plan Sector Agriculture (PSRSA), the Strategic Development Plan and Nutrition (PSDAN)<sup>15</sup>, and the commitment was reaffirmed in the United Nations Framework Plan for Development Assistance of Benin (UNDAF 2014-2018)<sup>16</sup>.

In executing the recommendations of the National Forum on School Feeding held in Cotonou from April 13-15, 2010, a policy document called the National School Feeding Policy Supply was developed and validated. It needs to be adopted by the Council of Ministers and published.<sup>17</sup>

Among the 7,733<sup>18</sup> public primary schools that existed in Benin in 2013, only 2,228 were equipped with canteens, a national coverage rate of 26.63 percent. This situation is explained by the fact that school feeding has fewer resources as needs increase yearly.

## School Canteen Experiences in Benin

Benin has experimented with several types of school canteens. But now, three types of canteens are underway with methods of intervention differing from one partner to another. The three types are (i) canteens supported by WFP (ii) those assisted by the government

and (iii) those implemented with funding from the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI).

Other types of feeding have ceased to function for multiple reasons. However, these schools were taken over by one of the three types of canteens that are still functional.

### School canteen experiences with WFP

WFP has supported the government in the implementation of school feeding projects since 1975. The supply of food staples makes it possible to offer a hot meal prepared on site in schools. Food is purchased at the local, regional or international market with the contribution of partners. The daily food ration per child is corn (75g), rice (75g), beans/split peas (30g), oil (10g) and iodized salt (3g).

The current project, BEN 200045 “Promotion of school feeding” currently assists more than 95,000 beneficiaries in 484 schools in 30 of the 77 municipalities in the country.

In order to sustain the achievements of the project and to improve the nutritional intake of meals offered to students in the school canteen, a school garden project was initiated and implemented jointly with the government through the Ministry of Early Childhood and Primary Education (MEMP), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The National Directorate of WFP Projects (DN-PAM) was established and placed under the Ministry in Charge of Development for the contractual obligations of the government under the binding agreement with WFP. It provides storage, maintenance, transportation and distribution of food and other items within the beneficiary structures. It has 15 stores with a capacity ranging from 300 to 500 tonnes in all departments of the country and 7 to 10 trucks that transport food. A quarterly distribution of food is made on a regular basis.

There is a significant monitoring system that collects and processes information about schools. A technical steering committee composed of representatives of the Directorate of School Feeding (DAS), the DN-WFP,

<sup>13</sup> Bundy et al., 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of Benin. Ministères en Charge de l'Éducation, 2006. Pg. 40

<sup>15</sup> Republic of Benin, 2009a.

<sup>16</sup> Republic of Benin, 2014a. pg. 13

<sup>17</sup> Republic of Benin, 2014b.

<sup>18</sup> MEMP, 2013.

Management Unit FTI Programme and WFP was established to monitor the project.

### School canteens experiences with the government

Since 2000, and in order to ensure the provision of school feeding to children, the Government of Benin established a school canteen project drawing on WFP's approach. An annual budget allocation of 1.5 billion CFA is regularly available to the Ministry of Early Childhood and Primary Education for the operation of school canteens. The number of schools canteen rose from 144 in 2000 to 1,144 in 2014 without significant increase in the budget.

The food basket includes corn, rice, beans, oil and salt, but the government canteen also offers pasta, cassava flour and canned fish.

To make the school feeding activities in Benin visible, the Directorate of School Feeding (DAS) was established in 2013 under the Ministry of Early Childhood and Primary Education. This department coordinates the interventions related to school feeding.

Despite the efforts of the government to allocate sufficient resources, the limited budget does not cover the entire school year as there are only enough resources for four months of the school year. The lack of sufficient resources is worsened by the increasing number of schools from 1,114 in 2014 to 1,307 schools in 2015. There are also logistical difficulties—lack of transportation for products, no stock at the local level, and the long process of acquiring food—that do not promote the achievement of the project's objectives.

### School canteens experiences with the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI-FCB)

The establishment of canteens funded by FTI started during the 2010-2011 school year. FTI operates 554 canteens (501 canteens targeted by WFP and 53 canteens previously assisted by DANIDA). The approach to implementation is to recruit service providers to supply meals to schoolchildren. A daily meal rate of 125 francs CFA per student is offered. The funds allocated to each school are domiciled at the city office Recette Perception. This account is funded from the budget account of MEMP through the General Directorate of the

Treasury and Public Accounting (DGTCP). The provider hired for each school is responsible for providing one meal a day at noon to every child in that school. The provider is paid fortnightly at the city office upon the presentation of documents proving that the service was rendered to the school.<sup>19</sup>

Monitoring is carried out by local NGOs. The main problem here is the delay in payment of service, which is likely to decrease the supply and the quality of food.

Moreover, it should be noted that the lack of community participation in the financing of these canteens does not bode well for the sustainability of school feeding once the program ends.

## Five Key Policy Goals to Promote School Feeding

There are five core policy goals that form the basis of an effective school feeding program. Figure 1 illustrates these policy goals and outlines respective policy levers and outcomes that fall under each goal.

**The first goal is a national policy framework.** A solid policy foundation strengthens a school feeding program's sustainability and quality of implementation. National planning for school feeding as part of the country's poverty reduction strategy (or other equivalent development strategies) conveys the importance the government places on school feeding as part of its development agenda. For most countries that are implementing their own national programs, school feeding is included in national policy frameworks.<sup>20</sup>

**The second policy goal for school feeding is financial capacity.** Stable funding is a prerequisite for sustainability. However, where need is greatest, programs tend to be the smallest and the most reliant on external support. Funding for these programs can come from a combination of sources, such as non-governmental organizations (i.e., WFP) and the government. When a program becomes nationalized, it needs a stable and independent funding source, either through government core resources or development funding. In the long term, a national budget line for

<sup>19</sup> Republic of Benin. Ministère du Développement, De L'Analyse Economique et de la Prospective.

<sup>20</sup> Bundy et al. 2009; WFP, 2012.



school feeding is necessary for an effective and stable program.

**The third policy goal is institutional capacity and coordination.** School feeding programs are better executed when an institution is mandated and accountable for the implementation of such a program. Effective programs also include multisectoral involvement from sectors such as education, health, agriculture, and local government, as well as a comprehensive link between school feeding and other school health or social protection programs and established coordination mechanisms.

**The fourth policy goal is sound design and implementation.** In order to maximize effectiveness, school feeding programs should clearly identify country-specific problems, objectives, and expected outcomes. The country's context and needs should determine the program's beneficiaries, food basket (menus), food modalities and supply chain. Countries and partners should work towards creating a delicate balance among international, national, and local procurement of foods to support local economies without jeopardizing the quality and stability of the food supply.

**The last policy goal is community roles-reaching beyond schools.** School feeding programs that are locally owned, incorporate contributions from local communities, and respond to specific community needs are often the strongest. These programs are most likely to make a successful transition from donor assistance to national ownership. Community participation should be considered at every stage, but without overburdening community members.

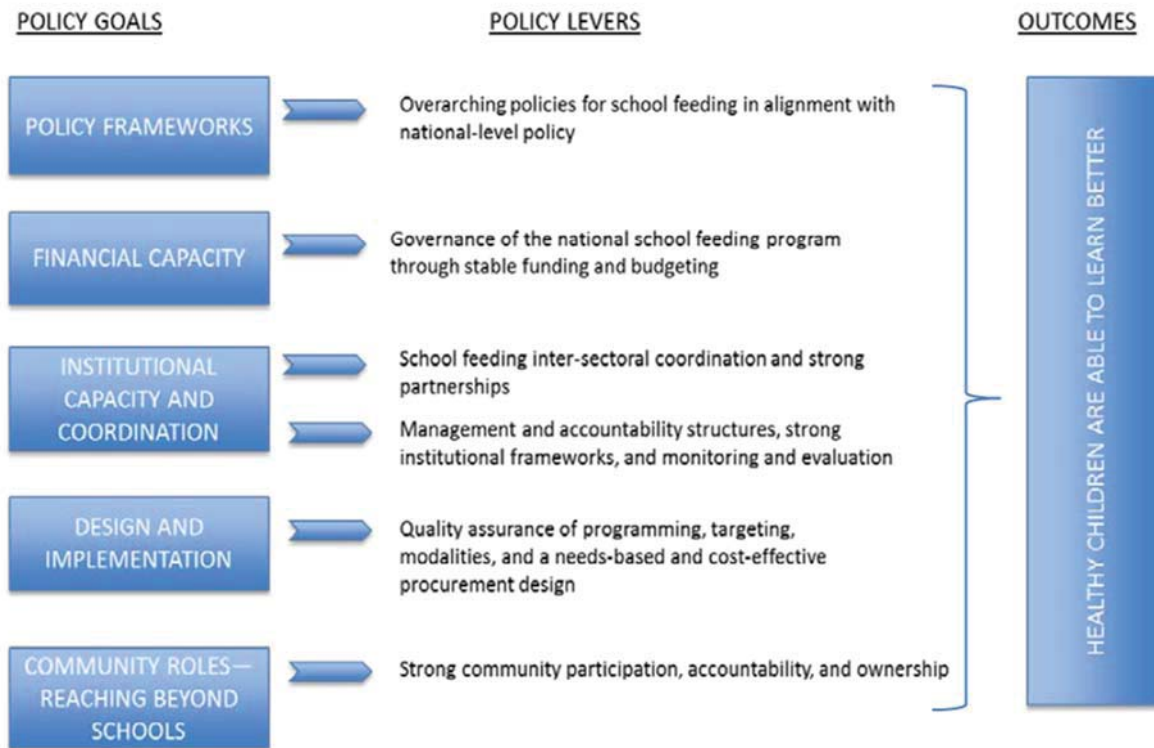
### Use of Evidence-Based Tools

The primary focus of the SABER-School Feeding exercise is gathering systematic and verifiable information about the quality of a country's policies through a SABER-School Feeding Questionnaire. This data-collecting instrument helps to facilitate comparative policy analysis, identify key areas to focus investment, and disseminate good practice and knowledge sharing. This holistic and integrated assessment of how the overall policy in a country affects young children's development is categorized into one of the following stages, representing the varying levels of policy development that exist among different dimensions of school feeding:

1. **Latent:** No or very little policy development
2. **Emerging:** Initial/some initiatives towards policy development.
3. **Established:** Some policy development
4. **Advanced:** Development of a comprehensive policy framework

Each policy goal and lever of school feeding is methodically benchmarked through two SABER analysis tools. The first is a *scoring rubric* that quantifies the responses to selected questions from the SABER School Feeding questionnaire by assigning point values to the answers. The second tool is the *SABER School Feeding Framework rubric* that analyzes the responses, especially the written answers, based on the framework's five policy goals and levers. For more information, please visit the World Bank's website on SABER-School Health and School Feeding and click on the ["What Matters" Framework Paper](#) under Methodology.

Figure 1: Policy goals and policy levers for school feeding



## Policy Goal 1: Policy Frameworks in Benin



### Policy Lever:

- Overarching policies for school feeding in alignment with national-level policy

*A policy foundation helps strengthen the sustainability and accountability of a school feeding program as well as the quality of its implementation. Nearly all countries with national ownership of programs have well-articulated national policies on the modalities and objectives of school feeding.<sup>21</sup>*

The Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (GPRS) from 2011 to 2015 does not specifically address the issue of school feeding.<sup>22</sup> It has a section on nutrition and food because improving the population's nutrition conditions is one component of the government's development goal to build human capital.<sup>23</sup> The GPRS also states that the government intends to implement the Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition (PSDAN), which is operated by the Results-Based National Food and Nutrition Program (PANAR).<sup>24</sup> PSDAN is a policy document that includes nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive approaches and focuses on food availability and security in order to reduce malnutrition.<sup>25</sup> The National Food and Nutrition Council is the agency responsible for PSDAN. The Growth Strategy for Poverty Reduction (SCRIP) also mentions the need to address nutrition and food issues.<sup>26</sup>

School feeding is discussed in some sectoral policy documents, which includes the Ten-Year Development Plan for the Education Sector (PDDSE) 2006-2015.<sup>27</sup> The National School Feeding Policy was developed and validated during a stakeholder workshop in December 2013.<sup>28</sup> It has yet to be adopted and officially published.

1. Policy Frameworks is EMERGING		
Indicators	Score	Justification
1A. National-level poverty reduction strategy as well as education sectoral policies and strategies identify school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, with clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities.		<p>School feeding is recognized as an intervention in the domain of education or social protection, but is not yet included in the SCRIP, the GPRS, or in other similar policies and sectoral strategies.</p> <p>The SCRIP 2011-2015 mentions food and nutrition in general without specifying school feeding.</p> <p>Ten Year Development Plan Education Sector (PDDSE) 2006-2015 takes into account school feeding without mentioning the goal.</p> <p>School feeding was discussed during the preparation of the GPRS. School feeding was also discussed during the preparation of this plan. PDDSE also includes the subject.</p>

<sup>21</sup> WFP, 2012

<sup>22</sup> Growth Strategy for Poverty Reduction (GPRS) 2011-2015

<sup>23</sup> Republic of Benin, 2011; Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Republic of Benin, 2009.


<sup>25</sup> FAO Benin, 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Republic of Benin, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Republic of Benin, 2006.

<sup>28</sup> World Food Programme (WFP), 2014b.



<p>1B. An evidence-based technical policy related to school feeding outlines the objectives, rationale, scope, design, and funding and sustainability of the program and comprehensively addresses all four other policy goals.</p>	<p>Emerging</p> 	<p>The need for technical policy for school feeding is recognized, but this policy has not yet been published. A National School Feeding Policy was developed and validated in December 2013. It has yet to be officially adopted and published. The policy is set to be reviewed and revised.</p>
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## Policy Goal 2: Financial Capacity in Benin



### Policy Lever:

- Governance of the national school feeding program through stable funding and budgeting

*Stable funding is necessary for the long-term sustainability of a school feeding program, especially one that transitions from being donor-funded to government-funded. School feeding programs supported by external partners generally rely on food aid, government in-kind donations, and/or government cash contributions. In order for the program to be sustainable and nationally owned, the school feeding program should have a budget line and be part of the government's budgeting and planning process.*

School feeding is funded by the national budget of Benin and international partners such as WFP and FTI-Fonds Commun Budgétaire pooled donor funds. However, there are no budget lines for school feeding at the regional and school levels because the system is centralized. DAS manages the funds at the national level and provides food for the government's school canteens. FTI-Fonds Commun Budgétaire's school canteens are funded from a global budget where money is distributed per school and each school's funds are domiciled at the city office. The funding from the central level is small with bureaucratic disbursement procedures. In 2013, the government allocated 1,051,103,904 CFA for the management and operation of school canteens, which is the lowest amount since 2005.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. Financial Capacity is EMERGING

Indicators	Score	Justification
2A. National budget line(s) and funding is allocated to school feeding; funds are disbursed to the implementation levels in a timely and effective manner.		School feeding is integrated into the national planning process and stable national funding is guaranteed by a dedicated budget line, but all needs are not met; there is no budget line at the regional and school level; existing funds for school feeding are distributed at the national level and implemented unevenly.

<sup>29</sup> Republic of Benin, 2013. Table 9.

### Policy Goal 3: Institutional Capacity and Coordination in Benin



#### Policy Levers:

- School feeding inter-sectoral coordination and strong partnerships
- Management and accountability structures, strong institutional frameworks, and monitoring and evaluation

*Implementing a school feeding policy requires significant institutional capacity because the program is a complex school health intervention. The policy should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and actors at all levels. Methodically increasing government capacity to manage a school feeding program is important to the program's long-term sustainability. A national institution that is mandated and accountable for the implementation of the school feeding program is considered to be a best practice. This institution should have a specific unit that has adequate resources and knowledgeable staff to manage the school feeding program. Moreover, policies that detail accountability and management mechanisms can help ensure program quality and efficiency, especially if the school feeding program is decentralized.*

Benin has no multisectoral steering committee, only a Directorate of School Feeding at the national level with insufficient resources, knowledge and staff for its mission. The Directorate of School Feeding provided national coordination for the Fast-Track school canteen program, which was intended to include school committees consisting of students, parents, and teachers.<sup>30</sup>

3. Institutional Capacity and Coordination is LATENT		
Indicators	Score	Justification
3A. Multisectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy		<p>Coordination initiatives are not systematic.</p> <p>A National Policy on School Feeding has been developed and validated but</p>

		not yet adopted and published. There is no multisectoral committee
3B. National school feeding management unit and accountability structures are in place, coordinating with school level structures.		<p>A structure devoted to school feeding is in place at the national level, but with limited resources, and without a clear mandate and sufficient personnel; coordination mechanisms between the national, regional / local (if applicable) and schools are in place but are not yet fully operational.</p> <p>Formerly a Governmental Canteen Unit, the National Canteens Management Unit became the Directorate of School Feeding with representation at the departmental level.</p>
3C. School level management and accountability structures are in place.		<p>Management mechanisms of school feeding in schools are not standardized and the national framework is insufficient</p> <p>Management committees in schools are functional in only FTI-FCB school canteens.</p>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

## Policy Goal 4: Design and Implementation in Benin



### Policy Lever:

- Quality assurance of programming and targeting, modalities, and procurement design, ensuring design that is both needs-based and cost-effective

*A well-designed school feeding policy that is based on evidence is critical to the implementation of a quality school feeding program. The policy can include details on targeting the correct beneficiaries, selecting the proper modalities of food delivery, and choosing a quality food basket. Over time, the school feeding policy may be redesigned or modified according to reassessments of the school feeding program.*

There is no M&E plan, but a unit dedicated to M&E is in place and needs to be strengthened. There are no national standards for the procurement of food and logistical arrangements.

4. Design and Implementation is LATENT		
Indicators	Score	Justification
4A. A functional monitoring and evaluation system is in place as part of the structure of the lead institution and used for implementation and feedback.		<p>The importance of M&amp;E is recognized, but there is still no government monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of school feeding.</p> <p>The importance of monitoring is seen but a clear mechanism is not yet established. However, a budget line is planned for the development of tools for monitoring and evaluation.</p>

4B. Program design identifies appropriate target groups and targeting criteria corresponding to the national school feeding policy and the situation analysis.		Criteria and targeting methodology have been developed in line with the national school feeding policy; situation analysis which assesses needs has not yet been completed.
4C. Food modalities and the food basket correspond to the objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety, and nutrition content requirements.		The need to establish national standards for school feeding modalities and content of the food basket is recognized, but not yet materialized.
4D. Procurement and logistics arrangements are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline.		<p>The need to establish national standards for the procedures for procurement and logistics is recognized, but not yet materialized.</p> <p>Stability in the delivery is sometimes difficult. There is a National Directorate of WFP Projects which has shops and trucks in all departments but it must be strengthened. There are currently no logistical arrangements that can promote local purchases.</p>

## Policy Goal 5: Community Roles—Reaching Beyond Schools in Benin



### Policy Lever:

- Community participation and accountability

*The role of the community should be clearly defined in a school feeding policy because community participation and ownership improves the school feeding program's chances of long-term sustainability. If the government places the responsibility of sustaining the school feeding program on the community, the school feeding policy should detail the guidelines, minimum standards, and support for the community to implement the program. The school feeding policy can also include mechanisms for the community to hold the government accountable.*

*At the school level, there may be a school management committee composed of parents, teachers, and students that acts as a liaison between the school and community and manages the school feeding program. Care should be taken not to overburden the community, because in some cases the community may introduce fees to support the local school feeding program, which can negatively impact enrolment rates. Community-assisted school feeding programs are usually most successful in food-secure areas.*

Canteen management committees composed of parents, students and teachers exist in each school. Capacities were strengthened for the management of school canteens. However, the small contribution of the parents inhibits a sense of ownership of the school feeding program.

WFP supports community ownership of school canteens and encourages community involvement in school feeding programs. Parent associations commonly oversee school canteens by maintaining the kitchen and food storage areas.<sup>31</sup> Although there are canteen management committees, parental involvement can be increased.

## 5. Community Roles—Reaching Beyond Schools is EMERGING

Indicators	Score	Justification
5A. Community participates in school feeding program design, implementation, management and evaluation and contributes resources.		<p>There is a management committee for school feeding, but the participation of parents and community members should be further strengthened; the possibility of them monitoring and influencing the school feeding program is not sufficiently recognized.</p> <p>Existence of management committee in all schools with canteens.</p> <p>There is low participation of parents and communities in the management of school canteens.</p> <p>A mechanism for monitoring and supervision by the community exists but is non-functional.</p>

*To view the scores for all indicators and policy goals in one table, please refer to Appendix 1.*

<sup>31</sup> World Food Programme, (WFP) 2014c.



## Conclusion

An analysis of the five policy goals shows that, for the policy framework, the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (GPRS III) 2011-2015 does not specifically include in its strategic axes questions of food and nutrition in schools (although nutrition is generally addressed). Although some sectoral policy documents seem to refer to school feeding, the problem remains unsolved. The National School Feeding Policy was developed and validated, but it needs to be reviewed before its adoption and publication. In terms of funding, an effort is made by the Government of Benin, which provides an annual budget to finance school canteens. But allocations remain low and disbursement procedures complex. There is no suitable mechanism for coordination and implementation of the national school feeding program. An inter-sectoral steering committee should be put in place to take into account all the essential sectors for the implementation of a school feeding program. Similarly, special attention should be given to small local producers and the implementation of mechanisms to increase local production purchases. Action must be taken to promote the participation and contribution of communities in implementing school feeding programs.

In terms of implementing a school feeding policy, Benin is still in a Latent stage. The proper implementation of the developed action plan will ensure an improvement of the current situation.

## Policy Options:

- Accelerate the adoption process and then publish the school feeding policy. To this end, the Ministry of Early Childhood and Primary Education (MEMPE) has a key role to play in monitoring.
- Establish as soon as possible an inter-sectoral steering committee and make it functional.
- Integrate School Feeding in the Ten-Year Development Plan Education Sector (PDDSE) as a clear and specific goal.
- Advocate for the integration of school feeding into sectoral policy documents and in the next poverty reduction and growth strategy.
- School-based management committees should be involved in the management of school feeding. This is necessary for sustainability.

## Appendix 1

**Table 1. Levels of Development of SABER School Health Indicators and Policy Goals in Benin**

Systems Approach for Better Education Results: School Feeding Policy Framework						
POLICY LEVER	INDICATOR	STAGE				OVERALL SCORE PER DOMAIN
		Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced	
Policy Goal 1: Policy frameworks						
Overarching policies for school feeding - sound alignment with the national policy	National-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy as well as sectoral policies and strategies (education sector plan, nutrition policy, social protection policy) identify school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, clearly defining objectives and sectoral responsibilities	There is recognition of school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, but school feeding is not yet included in the published national-level poverty reduction strategy, equivalent national policy, or sectoral policies and strategies	School feeding discussed by members and partners during preparation of national-level poverty reduction strategy, equivalent national policy, or sectoral policies and strategies but not yet published	School feeding included in published national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national policy (including specifications as to where school feeding will be anchored and who will implement); published sectoral policies or strategies have clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities	School feeding included in published national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national policy (including specifications as to where school feeding will be anchored and who will implement and accompanied by targets and/or milestones set by the government); published sectoral policies or strategies have clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities, including what school feeding can and cannot achieve, and aligned with the national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy	L A T E N T
	An evidence-based technical policy related to school feeding outlines the objectives, rationale, scope, design, and funding and sustainability of the program and comprehensively addresses all four other policy goals (institutional capacity and coordination, financial capacity, design and implementation, and community participation)	There is recognition of the need for a technical policy related to school feeding, but one has not yet been developed or published	A technical policy and situation analysis under development by the relevant sectors that address school feeding	A technical policy related to school feeding is published, outlining the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the program and covering some aspects of all four other policy goals, including links with agriculture development	A technical policy related to school feeding is published, outlining the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the program and comprehensively covering all four other policy goals with a strategy for local production and sourcing, including links with agriculture development and small holder farmers; policy is informed by a situation analysis of needs and aligned with national poverty reduction strategies and relevant sectoral policies and strategies	
Policy Goal 2: Financial Capacity						
Governance of the national school feeding program - stable funding and budgeting	National budget line(s) and funding are allocated to school feeding; funds are disbursed to the implementation levels (national, district and/or school) in a timely and effective manner	There is recognition of the need to include school feeding in the national planning process, but this has not yet happened; the government is fully reliant on external funds and does not have provision in the national budget to allocate resources to school feeding; there is recognition of the need for mechanisms for disbursing funds to the implementation levels, but these are not yet in place	School feeding is included in the national planning process and national funding is stable through a budget line but unable to cover all needs; there is no budget line at regional and school levels; existing school feeding funds are disbursed to the implementation levels intermittently	School feeding is included in the national planning process and is fully funded through a national budget line; all ministries involved in the program implementation have a budget line or funds allocated; budget lines also exist at regional and school levels; school feeding funds are disbursed to the implementation levels in a timely and effective manner	School feeding is included in the national planning process and is fully funded through a national budget line consistent with the school feeding policy and situation analysis including options for engaging with the private sector; budget lines and plans also exist at regional and school levels, sufficient to cover all the expenses of running the program; school feeding funds are disbursed to the implementation levels in a timely and effective manner and implementers have the capacity to plan and budget as well as request resources from the central level	E M E R G I N G

Policy Goal 3: Institutional Capacity and Coordination					
School feeding coordination - strong partnerships and inter-sector coordination	Multisectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	Any multisectoral steering committee coordination efforts are currently nonsystematic	Sectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	Multisectoral steering committee from at least two sectors (e.g. education, social protection, agriculture, health, local government, water) coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	Multisectoral steering committee from at least three sectors (e.g. education, social protection, agriculture, health, local government, water) coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy; this government-led committee provides comprehensive coordination (across international agencies, NGOs, the private sector and local business representatives as well) and is part of a wider committee on school health and nutrition
Management and accountability structures, including staffing - strong institutional frameworks for implementation	National school feeding management unit and accountability structures are in place, coordinating with school level structures	A specific school feeding unit does not yet exist at the national level; coordination between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and schools is lacking	A school feeding unit exists at the national level, but it has limited resources and limited staff numbers and lacks a clear mandate; while coordination mechanisms between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and school level are in place, they are not fully functioning	A fully staffed school feeding unit with a clear mandate exists at the national level, based on an assessment of staffing and resources needs; coordination mechanisms between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and school level are in place and functioning in most instances	A fully staffed school feeding unit exists at the national level, based on an assessment of staffing and resources needs, with a clear mandate, and pre- and in-service training; coordination mechanisms between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and school level are in place and fully functioning
	School level management and accountability structures are in place	Mechanisms for managing school feeding at the school level are non-uniform and national guidance on this is lacking	National guidance on required mechanisms for managing school feeding are available at the school level, but these are not yet implemented fully	Most schools have a mechanism to manage school feeding, based on national guidance	All schools have a mechanism to manage school feeding, based on national guidance, with pre and in-service training for relevant staff
Policy Goal 4: Design and Implementation					
Quality assurance of programming and targeting, modalities, and procurement design, ensuring design that is both needs-based and cost-effective	A functional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is in place as part of the structure of the lead institution and used for implementation and feedback	The importance of M&E is recognised, but government systems are not yet in place for M&E of school feeding implementation	A government M&E plan exists for school feeding with intermittent data collection and reporting occurring especially at the national level	The M&E plan for school feeding is integrated into national monitoring or information management systems and data collection and reporting occurs recurrently at national and regional levels	The M&E plan for school feeding is integrated into national monitoring or information management systems and data collection and reporting occurs recurrently at national, regional and school levels; analysed information is shared and used to refine and update programs; baseline is carried out and program evaluations occur periodically
	Program design identifies appropriate target groups and targeting criteria corresponding to the national school feeding policy and the situation analysis	The need for targeting is recognised, but a situation analysis has not yet been undertaken that assesses school feeding needs and neither targeting criteria nor a targeting methodology has been established as yet	Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology is being developed corresponding to the national school feeding policy; a situation analysis assessing needs is incomplete as yet	Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology exists and is implemented corresponding to the national school feeding policy and a situation analysis assessing needs	Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology exists and is implemented corresponding to the national school feeding policy and situation analysis (including costings for various targeting and designs); M&E information is used to refine and update targeting and coverage on a periodic basis
	Food modalities and the food basket correspond to the objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements	There is recognition of the need for national standards for food modalities and the food basket, but these do not exist yet	National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to two or more of the following: objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements	National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements	National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements; M&E information is used to refine and update food modalities and food basket on a periodic basis
	Procurement and logistics arrangements are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	There is recognition of the need for national standards for procurement and logistics arrangements, but these do not exist yet	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on three or more of the following: procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline; M&E information is used to refine and update procurement and logistics arrangements

Policy Goal 5: Community roles—reaching beyond schools						
Community participation and accountability - strong community participation and ownership (teachers, parents, children)	Community participates in school feeding program design, implementation, management and evaluation and contributes resources (in-kind, cash or as labor)	Systems and accountability mechanisms are not yet in place for consultation with parents and community members on the design, monitoring and feedback of the school feeding program	A school feeding management committee exists but parent and community member participation could be strengthened and awareness on the opportunity to monitor and feedback on the school feeding program is lacking	The school feeding management committee comprises representatives of teachers, parents, and community members and communities have accountability mechanisms to hold school feeding programs accountable at the school level	The school feeding management committee comprises representatives of teachers, parents, and community members and has clearly defined responsibilities and periodic training. Accountability mechanisms are in place by which communities can hold school feeding programs accountable at the school, regional, and national levels	E M E R G I N G

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## Acronyms

**AFD** : Agence Française de Développement

**AGVSA** : Analyse Globale de la Vulnérabilité et de la Sécurité Alimentaire

**AGVSAN** : Analyse de la Vulnérabilité, de la Sécurité Alimentaire et de la Nutrition

**ANCB** : Association Nationale des Communes du Bénin

**BM** : Banque Mondiale

**CAPE** : Cellule d'Analyse des Politiques Economiques

**CCS** : Chef de Circonscription Scolaire

**DAS** : Direction de l'Alimentation Scolaire

**DDEMP** : Direction Départementale des Enseignements Maternel et Primaire

**DGCTP** : Direction Générale du Trésor et de la Comptabilité Publique

**DN-PAM** : Direction Nationale des Projets PAM

**DSRP** : Document de Stratégie de Réduction de la Pauvreté

**EMICOV** : Enquête Modulaire Intégrée des Conditions de Vie

**FAO** : Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture

**FCB** : Fonds Commun Budgétaire

**FTI** : Fast-Track Initiative



**INSAE** : Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique

**MAEP** : Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Pêche

**MDAEP** : Ministère du Développement, de l'Analyse Economique et de la Prospective

**MEMP** : Ministère des Enseignements Maternel et Primaire

**MISPC** : Ministère de l'Intérieur, de la Sécurité Publique et des Cultes

**MJLDH** : Ministère de la Justice, de la Législation et des Droits de l'Homme

**OCS** : Observatoire du Changement Social

**OMD** : Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement

**ONG** : Organisation Non Gouvernementale

**OP** : Organisation Paysanne

**PAM** : Programme Alimentaire Mondial

**PCD** : Partenariat pour le Développement de l'Enfance

**PDDSE** : Plan Décennal de Développement du Secteur de l'Education

**PIB** : Produit Intérieur Brut

**PME** : Partenariat Mondial pour l'Education

**PNAS** : Politique Nationale d'Alimentation Scolaire

**PNUD** : Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement

**PSDAN** : Plan Stratégique de Développement de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition

**PSRSA** : Plan Stratégique de Relance du Secteur de l'Agriculture

**PTF** : Partenaire Technique et Financier

**SCRIP** : Stratégie de Croissance pour la Réduction de la Pauvreté

**TNS** : Taux Net de Scolarisation

**UNDAF** : Plan Cadre des Nations Unies pour l'Assistance au Développement

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This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of **School Feeding**.

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