



Policy Brief

**THE GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM AS AN INCENTIVE FOR EDUCATION IN RURAL
GHANA: THE CASE OF COCOA GROWING AREAS**

A PUBLICATION BY THE INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Author: Eileen Goody Gans-Lartey

September, 2017

Table of Contents

1	OVERVIEW.....	3
2	TREND ANALYSIS.....	4
3	CASE STUDY ANALYSIS.....	4
4	COMMUNITY EFFORTS.....	5
5	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	5

1.0 OVERVIEW

The Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) which started in 2005 is an initiative of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP). This initiative was conceptualized and subsequently implemented in the bid to enhance food security, abate poverty and hunger, boost domestic food production in deprived communities as well as increase access to basic education.

The concept of the programme is to provide children in selected public primary schools and kindergartens in the poorest areas of the country with one hot, nutritious meal per day, using locally-grown foodstuffs with the aim of spending 80% of the feeding costs in the local communities.

Accordingly, GSFP provides an opportunity to pursue Ghana's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 1 which seeks to end poverty in all its forms everywhere and Goal 2, which aims at ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition while promoting sustaining agriculture fall within this purview. Goal 4, which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education opportunities, is very important as it seeks to enhance access of girls and boys to quality early childhood development and ensure their access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

2.0 TREND ANALYSIS

The pilot phase ended in 2006 covering 64,775 beneficiary pupils. The first phase was rolled out in 2007 and spanned a period of four (4) years (2007-2010). The number of beneficiary pupils at the inception of the first phase was 413,498. In 2008 the number rose to 441,189 pupils. By 2009, coverage had reached 580,025 pupils. At the end of 2009/10 academic year, beneficiary pupils had shot up to 697,416, indicating a consistent upward rise over the period and currently, covers about 5,285 public basic schools in 216 districts with a total enrolment of over 1,728,681 pupils across the country.

The current priority for child development is to promote good nutrition for Ghanaian children and a vehicle for preventive health capacity (through school hygiene and health activities). Another priority is contributing to local economic development given the need to create employment, generate incomes and, through these, local revenues for development. To these ends, markets for local farmers must be systematically promoted and investments directed into building local initiatives required for supporting the programme.

3.0 CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

When one puts the cocoa growing areas into perspective, it is glaring that the school feeding program serves as an incentive for school enrolment and retention. Primary data gathered during an engagement meeting organized by the Institute for Democratic Governance under the Mondelez Cocoa Life Program across five cocoa districts indicate that most parents are hesitant to enrol their children in schools without the school feeding program. The challenge this poses is that children within the age bracket of 3-8 years are required to walk long distances daily in order to get access to schools with school feeding programs. Similarly schools such as Danyame, Nyamebekyere, Kotosaa and Nsirem recorded a decline in school attendance due to the absence of the school feeding program. This situation thus underscores the urgent need to practice school feeding programs in all basic schools.

4.0 COMMUNITY EFFORTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

Given the importance of the school feeding program, community members across the five cocoa life project districts (Bia West, Juaboso, Ahafo Ano North, Sekyere East and Awutu Senya) have initiated steps through the assistance of Mondelez Cocoa Life International and its implementing partners in self-financing school feeding programs across schools in their communities. Specifically in the communities of **Danyame, Nsonyameye Kotosaa and Nsirem** parents or caregiver donate some quantities of farm produce (Cassava, plantain, garden eggs, nkotomire) obtained from the farm. This ensures continuous supply of ingredients in running the program. Accordingly a volunteer from the women groups

within the respective communities have been selected and given termly token as motivation to cook.

A year after its inception there has been an improvement in the enrollment of all four schools within the communities. According to a teacher and a resident of Kotosaa “Absenteeism, truancy and other petty child labour issues have reduced”. Parents interviewed across the four communities attested that they now have more hours to work on their farms without thinking about feeding their wards. To this end it is important for all stakeholders to provide them with the relevant support to sustain the program.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

The following recommendations if implemented would significantly advance the initial steps taken by the cocoa life communities and other rural areas in their entirety:

1. Communities that have already initiated the program should be supported by all relevant stakeholders as a means of complimenting their efforts and sustainability thereof.
2. Exploring the linkages between agriculture, health, education and local economic development and approaching them in an integrated manner. The long-standing link between agriculture and nutrition must be emphasized to bring significant returns to small scale farmers, encourage improvements in technology and enhanced research and development.
3. School feeding programme implemented as a joint initiative between the assembly and its departments, farmers’ organizations, caterers, input providers, local financial institutions and traditional authorities would encourage competitive use of local resources, create decent jobs and achieve sustainable economic activities. To this end budgetary allocation by the District Assemblies in supporting communities would be instrumental.

References

1. Alderman and Bundy, 2011; Adelman et al, 2008
2. Bob, Ato. (September 2014) "School Feeding in Africa: Ghana's success". African Bulletin.
3. Boston Consulting Group. (2009) "School feeding: a sound investment." World Food Programme.
4. Buhl, Amanda(2009). "Meeting Nutritional Needs Through School Feeding: A snapshot of four African Nations." Global Child Nutrition Foundation.
5. Global School Feeding Sourcebook (2016). "Lessons from 14 countries".
6. Ghana School Feeding Programme (2017). "The Journey So Far".
7. Government of Ghana (November 2015). Draft National School Feeding Policy.
8. World Food Programme(December 2010). "School Meals – In-depth"
9. World Food Programme (2005). "Project Document Country Programme-Ghana 10418.0" (2006-2010)
10. World Food Programme (March 2016). "Ghana prepares school feeding bill".