

Position Paper on Emergency School Feeding

Prepared by the Education Cluster

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is firstly to clarify the position of the Somali Education Cluster in terms of school feeding and secondly to develop a position paper which can be used to communicate and advocate for school feeding among all stakeholders and donors. The position paper was developed by the school feeding working group commissioned by the Education Cluster. The paper was endorsed by the Education Cluster on 07.11.2008. The paper was developed in consultation with World Food Programme (WFP)

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The overall humanitarian situation in Somalia has sharply deteriorated since the beginning of the year with 3.24 million people in Humanitarian Emergency and Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis and is foreseen to worsen. Children are among those who suffer most from crises – both in the short and long term. Of a population of 7.5 million people more than half are children/youth below the age of 18¹. Approximately 22% of the population (equivalent to more than 700.000) are children and youth of school going age. Only 28% of children and youth of school going age are going to school due to conflict, drought and poverty.

WHY EMERGENCY SCHOOL FEEDING

School feeding is used in many countries throughout the world to fight short term hunger by ensuring at least on daily nutritious meal and support access to education. The high level of food insecurity, significant incidence of malnutrition and collapse of traditional coping strategies in Somalia makes it relevant to provide school feeding. Food will have greater significance than cash as the latter could be spent on other goods than cash. In an emergency situation, school feeding becomes even more important due to the reasons listed below:

- a. Increases enrolment rates, stabilizes attendance and significantly reduces the drop out rate of children from school.
- b. Stabilizes attendance amongst others because children/youth do not have to leave school in search of food
- c. Reduces short term hunger thereby improving the ability of children to concentrate and thus improving children's overall learning ability. Hungry children are sleepy and unfocused
- d. Reduces gender disparities as school feeding in particular improves girl's enrolment and attendance
- e. Can help change the attitude of girl's education among parents and encourage them to send girls to school

¹ Socio-Economic Survey, Somalia, UNDP 2002, p. 11

- f. Ensures children at least one nutritious meal a day which promotes their physical, mental and emotional well being and development in a situation where families are unable to meet basic needs
- g. Provides a supplement to household food availability
- h. In the long term school feeding will help stabilise the education system, and maintain gains already made in a time of crisis. This will have positive impact on the country's economic and social indicators.

EVIDENCE

Evidence shows that if well done, school feeding can increase enrolment rates of children with approximately 50%. In particular school feeding is found use in promoting girl's enrolment (up to 70% increase in enrolment) just as school feeding can help change parent's attitude towards girl's education.

Somalia Case Study

In 2006 and 2007 Trócaire found that enrolment rates in supported schools in Gedo Region (Dollow, Bulla Hawa and Luuq districts) were decreasing as resources in the community were depleted due to the emergency situation in the area (drought and conflict). Children were dropping out of school as they no longer had the physical and/or mental resources to attend school, or because they needed to work in order to help sustain the family. As a result of introducing a school feeding programme, enrolment rates for February-August 2006 increased by 36%; those for December 2007 - May 2008 increased by 28%.

	Prior to School Feeding	During School Feeding	% Increase
Feb-Aug 2006	2,155	2,927	36%
Dec 2007-May 2008	2,337	2,993	28%

In September 2008, 1,905 children had enrolled in school, a decline that reflected the absence of school feeding at the time. With HRF funding, Trócaire is presently recommencing a school feeding programme in the same areas of Gedo.

APPROACH

Emergency school feeding will target primarily primary education schools (formal and non-formal) will be targeted for school feeding, through wet-feeding programmes. School feeding programmes will provide two meals a day on normal school days. Preferably food will be provided by WFP, however where this is not possible or cost effective, school feeding programmes will be implemented through local purchase of food supplies. When exiting school feeding programmes will be handed over to communities where possible. The same approach and standards will be used in both cases.

STANDARDS

All school feeding programmes will be implemented in line with World Food Programme standards, irrespective of whether food supplies are provided by WFP or bough locally. Minor variations may occur, if school feeding programmes are implemented with local purchase of food supplies. Main standards are listed below but please refer to WFP's "Guidelines for School Feeding in Emergencies" for a complete description of standards.

Food

- **Food supplies:** Each portion will count 1,500 kilo joule, meeting 2/3 of children's daily nutritional requirements. One portion of food consists of: cereals 200 g, pulses 30 g, corn/soya blend 50 g, vegetable oil 20 g, and sugar 20 g. Where WFP is unable to deliver food supplies on location, arrangements for other transportation may be made.

Facilities

- **Cooking facilities:** A kitchen, cooking utensils and jerry cans are needed to set up a school feeding programme. The (I)NGO implementing the school feeding programme will provide and budget for all cooking facilities and ensure that they are safe for children.
- **Storage:** Appropriate and secure storage will be built/identified by the (I)NGO implementing the programme. All costs incurred will be paid by the (I)NGO.
- **Dining shelter:** Will not be provided given the scale and severity of the humanitarian situation combined with the resources available.

Other Resources Needed

- **Cooks and store keepers:** Through their Community Education Committees (CECs), targeted communities will identify and engage cooks and storekeepers. The CEC and (I)NGO will jointly ensure appropriate training of cooks.
- **Non food items:** The (I)NGO will provide and pay for the necessary non-food items such as kitchen utensils, pots, jerry cans etc.
- **School Feeding Committees:** The CEC or targeted communities will ensure that a School Feeding Committee is established to monitor the school feeding programme, ensure safe storage of food supplies and in all other matters support the school feeding programme.
- **Water and firewood:** Targeted communities will provide the necessary water for cooking and hygiene purposes for children and cooks for hand washing etc. as well as firewood for food preparation for the school feeding programme.
- **Training:** WFP provides the necessary training of all human resources such as Community Education Committees/cooks/storage keepers

ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA

School feeding programmes will be initiated and terminated according to the criteria listed below. Please refer to World Food Programmes manual for a full list of entry criteria.

Entry criteria

- School is located in a food deficit and/or low income area
- School has a high proportion of poor pupils or a high number of IDPs
- Community Education Committee is willing to actively participate in the implementation of the school feeding
- School is a public and primary education school. Only in rare cases will pre-primary or secondary schools be supported with school feeding.
- School has resources (class rooms, latrines, water, teachers etc.) to expand as enrolment increases as a result of school feeding
- School feeding facilities are/will be at hand
- School is already supported by the (I)NGO

- School is part of a larger group of schools receiving school feeding

Exit criteria/strategies

- The area is no longer a food deficit and/or low income area
- Community Education Committee/(I)NGO ceases to fulfil their responsibilities or live up to standards

TEACHERS, EDUCATION PERSONNEL AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION COMMITTEES

Teachers are key in delivering education to children in emergencies and are important role models for children inside as well as outside the classroom. In many schools, teachers receive no salary but depend on contributions from the community or small incentives from (I)NGO's. Teachers are therefore considered eligible for inclusion in school feeding programmes. Likewise other education personnel and Community Education Committees are key players in the maintenance, development and monitoring of the school and teachers. Community Education Committees and other education personnel may therefore also be provided with a meal on equal terms with the children as part of the school feeding programme. Take home rations for teachers and Community Education Committees are not supported.

MONITORING

Each agency is responsible for putting in place appropriate monitoring mechanisms. Where WFP or other providers of food supplies are unable to monitor the school feeding programme, the (I)NGO in collaboration with the Community Education Committees, will ensure monitoring according to WFP standards.

LINKS TO OTHER FOOD AID PROGRAMMES

School feeding programmes can without problems be carried out in communities targeted for other food aid programmes e.g. general food aid distributions. The general food aid distribution doesn't meet the desired daily nutritional requirements of the household and school feeding is therefore a good supplement for households.