



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



## Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Monitoring Framework

March 2021 version

**Indicator 20:** Percentage of children and youth (under 18 years) benefitting from school feeding programmes

MUFPP framework of actions' category: Social and economic equity

*This indicator measures the proportion of children and youth (everyone under 18 years old) attending school who benefit from a school feeding programme.*

### Overview table

MUFPP Work stream	Social and economic equity
MUFPP action	<b>Reorient school feeding programmes</b> and other institutional food service to provide food that is healthy, local and regionally sourced, seasonal and sustainably produced.
What the indicator measures	The proportion of children and youth (everyone under 18 years old) attending school who benefit from a school feeding programme.
Unit of measurement (i.e. Percentages, averages, number, etc.)	Percentage; in relation to the total number of children and young people (everyone under 18 years old) attending school in the city
Which variables need to be measured / what data are needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Numbers and percentages of total population under 18 years old attending school and benefiting from a school feeding programme</li> <li>-Number and type of school feeding programmes</li> <li>-Categories of beneficiaries by age, sex or by type of feeding programme or by geographical area (e.g. neighbourhood). Further detail may be needed where within one school some parents pay for school food and others do not.</li> </ul>
Unit(s) of Analysis (i.e. people under 5 years old, etc.)	School children. Data can be disaggregated by category of 'school': pre-school/kindergarten; primary school; secondary & high school; other type of school. Data can also be disaggregated by sex and by school age categories (defined as appropriate for each city for children under the age of 18 years). Data can be disaggregated by type of school feeding programme, or by geographical area of the city.
Possible sources of information of such data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-National and local population statistics</li> <li>-Organisations and institutions that work with children</li> <li>-School feeding programme providers</li> <li>-Schools and education authorities</li> </ul>

	-Children's residential centres; Street children centres; Community-run schools; Free school meal statistics
<b>Possible methods/tools for data-collection</b>	Analysis of city population statistics; audit of number and type of school feeding programmes; analysis of school feeding programme statistics and monitoring; surveys if there is insufficient data
<b>Expertise required</b>	Data and statistical analysis; research, surveying and data collection
<b>Resources required/estimated costs</b>	
<b>Specific observations</b>	There are different aims for school feeding, depending on the country. Countries in the global south (lower income) will typically focus on addressing poverty and malnutrition as well as encouraging school attendance, while countries in the global north (higher income) tend to focus more on addressing obesity and healthy eating (also this is an increasing problem in other regions, like Latin America, as well). Nutrition will be a shared objective, though approaches and standards will vary. However it is important to note that there are increasing food poverty/food insecurity initiatives in the global north that operate within the school context, and in addition to school lunches (e.g. breakfast clubs, after school food, holiday hunger or emergency food programmes in schools). Some cities/countries in both the global north and south do not have school feeding programmes nor provide any kind of school meals. It will be important to note where there is an absence of school feeding programmes, and the reasons for that in context notes.
<b>Examples of application</b>	Community-based school feeding programme and an urban intervention in Lusaka province, Zambia, with a focus on street children. (See more information in References section below.)

### Rationale/evidence

**Scope:** This indicator differs from the previous indicator (Percentage of people supported by food and/or social assistance programmes) in that is specific to children and to all types of school feeding programmes. However there could easily be overlaps with both indicators and it will be important for each city to find ways to clearly distinguish one indicator from the other. For example this indicator could be seen as a sub-indicator to the other.

**World Food Programme (WFP) rationale:** The WFP says that almost every country in the world for which they have information seeks to feed its school children. In 2013, based on a sample of 169 countries, the WFP estimated that at least 368 million children are fed daily when they are at school.<sup>1</sup> The WFP and partners have invested significantly in school feeding programmes. WFP highlights the crucial role that school feeding programmes play. 'Every day, countless children across the globe turn up for school on an empty stomach, which makes it hard to focus on lessons. Many simply do not go, as their families need them to help in the fields or around the house. For all of them, a daily school meal can mean not only better nutrition and health, but also increased access to and achievement in education. It is also a strong incentive to consistently send children to school.'<sup>2</sup>

### Glossary/concepts/definitions used

**Definition of 'child':** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) defines children as 'everyone under 18 years old'.<sup>3</sup>

**Definition of 'school feeding' programme:** The World Food Programme defines 'School Feeding' as

<sup>1</sup> The state of school feeding worldwide, 2013, The World Food Programme (see reference section below)

<sup>2</sup> The World Food Programme; school meals <http://www1.wfp.org/school-meals>

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF Summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

the provision of food to schoolchildren. This is most commonly done by provision of in-school meals - breakfast, lunch or both; and/or fortified, high-energy biscuits or nutritious snacks. Alternatively, and to enhance school attendance, some programmes provide take home rations (transfer of food resources or cash to entire families conditional upon school enrolment and regular attendance of children). The WFP also encourages a local procurement connection with local farmers and growers, thus combining nutritional and educational benefits with a positive impact on local economies.

**Typical types of school feeding programmes in cities:** There are many different types of school feeding programmes, some run by government institutions and others run by the private sector or NGO's; some centralised, some decentralised and some specific to localities. There are also many different objectives e.g. education, health and nutrition, agriculture and community development. Some school feeding programmes are explicitly a form of social protection system that provides vulnerable populations (i.e. children) with access to healthy food and others are not. For example, Brazil's school feeding programme was established in 1954 initially as a national strategy to address under-nutrition and low levels of education. It has evolved over the years to the current focus of 'meeting nutritional needs while in the classroom, and by supporting the formation of healthy habits through food and nutrition education [... and] also promotes local family farming.'<sup>4</sup>

*School lunches:* In some countries, school lunches are provided. Lunches may be paid for by parents; free to low-income families; or free to all, depending on the country or the local education authority policy or the individual school. Government schools may have different arrangements to non-government run schools. It will be important to clarify the particular context of the city and its schools.

*School breakfasts and after school meals:* In some countries breakfast before school starts, or food after school closes is provided. This may be because families can't afford to feed their children or it could be because parents have to drop children at school very early and it is easier for the child to eat breakfast once they are in school. After school meals could be provided along with other play activities because parents cannot collect their children earlier, or because the children are part of an activity club after school hours. Some families may depend on the school for feeding their children due to low income and others due to demands on the parents' time. It will be important to clarify the particular context of the school and its non-lunch food provision.

*Snacks, milk, fresh fruit and vegetables:* Many schools around the world provide milk or healthy snacks, even if they do not provide lunches. These may be paid for or free, compulsory or voluntary. These schemes may be independent of school meal provision, and administered by different agencies or organisations. Again the context of this is important to note.

**Children's centres (under the age of 5):** Data from children centres could be included if this is an important aspect for the city. For example, in Ecuador addressing chronic child nutrition through child centres is a key priority. However this data may already have been used for the indicator 'Percentage of people supported by food and/or social assistance programmes'. Technically this indicator is focussed on school age children, but 'school age' will need to be defined.

**Age and school attendance:** There may be more complications if school attendees fall outside the definition of 'children' and are over 18 yrs. of age. As noted above, there may also be children under the typical school age that should be counted. The city of Curitiba in Brazil for example has information regarding the national school feeding program (PNAE). All students and children enrolled in the

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<sup>4</sup> The Brazilian school feeding programme: an example of an integrated programme in support of food and nutrition security, 2012; Sidaner, Balaban and Burlandy; NS Public Health Nutrition Journal; [http://hgsf-global.org/en/bank/downloads/doc\\_details/294-the-brazilian-school-feeding-programme-an-example-of-an-integrated-programme-in-support-of-food-and](http://hgsf-global.org/en/bank/downloads/doc_details/294-the-brazilian-school-feeding-programme-an-example-of-an-integrated-programme-in-support-of-food-and)

Municipal Education Network benefit from the program (a total of 132,145 children and students from 3 months to young and old).

See the reports below in 'References' for further information on types, case studies and evidence of impact.

## Preparations

The team responsible for monitoring this indicator should agree on:

1. The context: is vulnerability an important aspect and therefore needs more specific data (e.g. focus on types of school feeding programmes that are targeted at vulnerable groups)? Or is the focus on school feeding programmes in general and therefore on all children benefitting in any way – all school children themselves being a 'vulnerable' group?
2. Which types of school feeding programmes should be included?
3. Should children's centre data be included or not, if the focus is on school age children?
4. Type of data disaggregation and categories that will be used (see further below)
5. Data collection method (analysis of existing data or new surveys)
6. If surveys are to be used, survey questions and instrument have to be designed. Training of survey enumerators may be needed.

## Sampling

In case new data are collected by means of a school feeding programme survey, a 10% sample (ideally 10% of each different type of school feeding programmes) is minimally needed. Alternatively, the sampling could be done by geographic area of the city (10% of all the programmes in each agreed specific area of the city).

## Data collection and data disaggregation

Data can be disaggregated by school stage-related age categories (defined as appropriate for each city for children under the age of 18 years). For example, pre-primary, primary and secondary-school age children. Data can also be disaggregated by type of school: e.g. pre-school/kindergarten; primary school; secondary & high school; other type of school; or by government/non-government school. Data can be disaggregated by type of school feeding programme: e.g. school lunches only; breakfast, lunch and after school meals; snacks only; no feeding programme, etc.

Data can be collected from existing records and registers held centrally (national or local government or independent school feeding programme organisers). If no such records exist, then data should be collected by surveys with schools or school feeding programme organisers. In this case sampling will very likely be needed (as above).

## Data analysis/calculation of the indicator

In order to calculate the proportion of school-attending children who are beneficiaries of the national school feeding programme, two figures are needed:

- The total number of school-attending children (under the age of 18) in the city
- The total number of pre-primary-, primary- and secondary-school children who receive some form of school feeding (e.g. a hot meal, biscuit or snack or take-home ration) from the national school feeding programme.

## References and links to reports/tools

**The state of school feeding worldwide, 2013, World Food Programme:** 'An attempt to share and learn what works best in school feeding programmes around the world so that governments may

explore their life-changing potential to nourish young bodies and minds in classrooms everywhere, particularly in the world's poorest and most challenged communities'.

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp257481.pdf>

**Global School Feeding Sourcebook: Lessons from 14 Countries, 2016; Lesley Drake et al.**

Case studies from around the world that look at different models and their impacts

<http://hdl.handle.net/10986/24418>

**Zambia's Community-based school feeding programme**

An urban intervention in Lusaka province, Zambia, with a focus on street children.

(School Feeding programme in Zambia; Kate Vorley, Project Concern International and Mary Corbett, ENN, 2016 <http://www.ennonline.net/fex/25/school>)

**School meals in Europe**

A report by the Polish Eurydice Unit: Foundation for the Development of the Education System Warsaw 2016. This report provides an overview of contrasting approaches to meal provision and financing in different European countries (provision for children from low income families, p8; milk, fruit and vegetables, p16)

([http://eurydice.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/meals\\_raport\\_ENG.pdf](http://eurydice.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/meals_raport_ENG.pdf))