Objective of the Tool

As the analysis in this document suggests, several elements critical to the sustainability of a school feeding program should be planned for at the outset. There are also trade-offs in the design that need to be addressed. This tool takes those elements into consideration with the objective of providing a checklist of the type of information, minimum conditions, and steps that are needed to set up a new school feeding program.

Description of the Tool

This tool presents a series of steps or activities that may be followed when planning a new school feeding program. The checklist starts by detailing the information that will be needed to do a thorough analysis of the situation, identifying the problems and the context to determine whether school feeding is the appropriate intervention. After defining the objectives of the program, the tool provides guidance on the targeting mechanisms, rations composition, management and implementation structure, and school-level arrangements. The tool also includes guidance on how to plan for sustainability when designing school feeding programs.
**Step-by-Step Guide for Design and Implementation of School Feeding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross-cutting issues</th>
<th>To ensure quality school feeding programs that are sustainable and in line with international standards, the following issues need to be considered at each step of program design and implementation.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting government policies and building government capacity</td>
<td>School feeding programs should be owned by national governments and support government priorities, policies, and needs. Partnerships with national governments should be implemented in a manner consistent with the principles of ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for results, and mutual accountability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination and cooperation</td>
<td>Partnerships are central to delivering a school feeding package to children. Food inputs need to be combined with other resources to enhance education, health, nutrition, and equity outcomes. The Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH) framework and the Essential Package recommend the integration of school health and nutrition interventions. Programs must therefore be planned and implemented jointly with appropriate partners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community participation</td>
<td>While not overburdening families or communities, their commitment, participation, and contributions strengthen the implementation of school feeding programs and open up community development opportunities.</td>
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<td>Gender</td>
<td>In cases where there are significant gender gaps in access to and completion of basic education, programs should include specific activities to address these imbalances. Implementation modalities should also be gender sensitive.</td>
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Formulating school feeding activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step or activity</th>
<th>Key issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem analysis</td>
<td>Carry out an assessment, in collaboration with the government, key partners, and local communities, to examine</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is there a need for school feeding?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What problems should it address?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Is it feasible?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is it in line with government priorities and policies?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The problem analysis considers the following main factors:

- **Prevailing situation in the country or region.** Onset or protracted crisis, post-conflict situation, postdisaster, or stable.
- **Need for school feeding.** Type and extent of problems regarding safety net (food security and income at household level; calorie intake at household and student level), education (access, retention, completion, learning, broken down by gender, regions, sociocultural groups; quality of education), nutrition (malnutrition rates including micronutrient deficiencies), and causes of these problems. Is there a need for school feeding?
- **Feasibility of school feeding.** Government institutional structures and implementation capacities; implementation capacities at school level; government financial capacity for school feeding; existence of complementary programs in, for example, school health and girls’ education programs.
- **Government policies related to school feeding.** National policies, priorities, targets in school feeding, education, nutrition, social protection, and so on; does the proposed program fit into this context?
Objectives

Clearly identify the program objectives and the expected outcomes, based on assessment results, corresponding to the country’s specific context and to national policies.

Targeting

Identify relevant target groups and target areas, based on assessment results. Identify targeting mechanism.

This should consider:

- Target areas (geographical areas with greatest need; accessibility, security of areas; availability of partner programs in areas; and so forth)
- Target groups (schoolchildren—all, specific groups such as girls; families and community members—all, families of schoolchildren, other specific groups)
- Types of schools to be assisted (educational level, public or private)
- Minimum criteria that schools have to meet for inclusion in the program (infrastructure, parents’ committee ready to support school feeding, accessibility and security, and so forth).

Targeting criteria need to be clearly communicated and agreed on by all stakeholders.

Targeting criteria need to be respected during program implementation.

Rations composition and food distribution modality

Select type and composition of food rations in line with program objectives and practical aspects:

- Decide on appropriate modality (meals, snacks, take-home rations)
- Decide on frequency of distribution (daily, monthly, or other)
- Define culturally acceptable, nutritionally balanced food rations (type, quantity of commodities), taking into account
Management structure

Identify the government institution mandated with the implementation of school feeding at central, regional, and local levels (typically, Ministry of Education) and the management structure.

Identify capacity of this institution (staff, skills, funding, and so forth) and possible capacity-building activities.

Establish how the management of school feeding relates to the other responsibilities of the institution.

Identify existing planning and accountability structures in which school feeding will be included (technical working groups, steering committees, and so forth).

Establish the responsibilities of the central, regional, district, and school-level staff in the management of the program. Define roles, responsibilities of WFP and other partners in program management.

Sign letters of understanding between the government and each of the partners. Define arrangements for regular school monitoring and backstopping.

This may concern:

- Check on proper food storage, preparation
- Check records, reporting
• Check if basic school sanitation standards are met
• Check if program functions regularly, correctly
• Check on correct timing of food distribution (for example, serve food early to correctly address short-term hunger).

Define food procurement arrangements, taking into account:
• Local procurement whenever possible
• Cost-effectiveness
• Regularity of food supplies.

Define logistics system, including
• Food transport system
• Warehousing network
• Food transport to end point (school).

School-level management

Ensure necessary school infrastructure is available for school feeding implementation (storage, kitchen, water supply, cooking and eating utensils, and so forth).

If necessary, identify measures and partnerships to ensure that adequate infrastructure is developed.

Identify role of parents and local communities in school feeding implementation.

This can include:
• Provision of fuel wood, water
• Building storage, kitchen area
• Cooking, distribution of food
• Assistance with food transport, off-loading
• Participation in program monitoring and evaluation.

However,
• Make communities true program partners; don’t limit participation to funding.
• Avoid overburdening communities and parents (risk to increase education costs to households).
Avoid overburdening women (for example, as cooks)—women should be equal participants in the program.

Plan for necessary training and community mobilization.

Monitoring and evaluation

Define system to monitor program functioning and results.

This includes examining the following:

- What information to collect (input, output, process, outcome indicators)
- How often to collect what type of information
- How to collect it
- How to use it
- Who should use it.

As much as possible, monitoring and evaluation indicators and methods should be aligned with national education management information systems (EMIS) or other sectoral information systems.

Coordination and partnerships to maximize results

Identify appropriate complementary activities to school feeding (in line with program objectives, expected outcomes), particularly for micronutrients and deworming.

Identify available partnerships, ways to implement such activities in targeted schools.

Set up intersectoral coordination mechanism, led by the government lead institution, and involving all school feeding stakeholders and partners.

Planning for sustainability

Ascertain that the government is supportive of school feeding.

Main indicators include:

- The identification of school feeding in national poverty reduction strategies (as an education, social protection, nutrition policy)
• The inclusion of school feeding in sectoral plans, strategies, budgets
• A specific policy related to school feeding or school health and nutrition that specifies the objectives, rationale, scope, design, management structure, and funding of the program
• Commitment and plans to develop such a policy if not yet existing and to integrate school feeding in sectoral plans
• Contributions to the proposed school feeding program, within the countries’ means
• A specific request for external assistance to school feeding (if appropriate).

Do not start or scale up a school feeding program without clearly stated government interest and support.

If necessary, provide technical support to help the government identify its position regarding school feeding.

Assess national capacity regarding school feeding policy development, planning, implementation, and funding.
• Identify capacity gaps that need to be filled by external assistance.
• Identify activities to gradually build national school feeding capacity and ownership.
• Define an agreed-on strategy (or a plan to elaborate one) with clear targets and milestones regarding increasing government financial and managerial responsibility for school feeding and related reduction and phasing out of external assistance.

Design program in way that lends itself to government takeover.
This concerns, for example:

- Food rations (use locally available, acceptable foods; do not create food habits and preferences difficult to sustain)
- Role of parents and local communities (payments for local services such as cooks may be difficult to sustain)
- Monitoring and evaluation (system to be aligned to national EMIS).

Risk management, contingency planning

Identify possible risks to program implementation (changes in resources, breaks in pipeline, change in country situation) and a strategy to contain and address them.

Costing, budgeting

Identify cost components for the program (one-off, continuing), such as:

- Start-up or scaling up costs (training, infrastructure, equipment, and so forth)
- Commodity costs
- Food transport, storage, handling costs
- Staff costs
- Management costs
- Costs arising at local level, to communities
- Cost of possible policy support, capacity-development activities.

Calculate costs for identified program period.

Identify possible funding sources (cash, in-kind), for example:

- Government
- WFP, other donors and partners
- Private sector
- Local communities.