

GOVERNMENT OF GHANA



DRAFT NATIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY

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FOREWORD

In several parts of the world, school meals and school feeding have been used as an effective mechanism for addressing child nutrition, educational enrolment and retention and hygiene issues. They have also effectively provided income-generation, employment creation and economic integration benefits to communities in which they have been implemented. Other countries have experienced gender-related gains, reliable markets for farmers as well as innovations in agro-processing. The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) has the potential to contribute to the national social protection agenda in these ways.

GSFP was initiated in 2005 as a social protection intervention in the context of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar III and in response to the first and second Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over two decades of implementation, the programme has evolved and periodically, witnessed efforts at improving targeting, quality, monitoring, procurement governance and social accountability. At present, the programme is providing one hot and adequately nutritious meal to 1,693,698 pupils in 4,881 schools per each school day. The programme provides employment to about 20,000 caterers and cooks nationwide.

The Ghanaian Government under His Excellency John Mahama has endeavoured to consolidate its social protection interventions, in an attempt to leverage integrated benefits for poor and vulnerable individuals, households and communities. As part of this process, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) was created and assigned strategic oversight of the sector and charged with formulation of the development of a National Social Protection Policy and other relevant instruments. The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) which had since its inception, been located under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) was transferred to the MoGCSP. The transfer is welcome because it provides a critical opportunity to link social assistance (through income replacement) to productive and social inclusion and synchronize school feeding with other efforts to improve the fortunes of disadvantaged families and food crop farmers.

However, this implies institutional strengthening of school feeding at the national, regional and district levels and a re-orientation to productive inclusion. It also offers a valuable prospect for streamlining procedures to take advantage of emerging technology as well as review re-targeting to align it with other national social protection programmes. It also implies vigorous change management processes and capacity-building amongst stakeholders.

The efforts to address its challenges including addressing its public image, strengthening financial management, human resource capacity, procurement governance, monitoring and evaluation and social accountability have to be integrated into a holistic and purposeful undertaking. It is in this regard, that the secondary social protection policy on school feeding is necessary to assist the nation to organize and deliver the programme in ways that would provide optimum benefits.

It is presented as a companion policy document to the National Social Protection Policy in order to present the analysis of the peculiar problems as well as the considerable prospects of school feeding in Ghana. It offers strategies for re-positioning, strengthening and effective delivery. However, School Feeding is provided for in the National Social Protection Policy as a flagship

programme. It therefore will work within the coordination, communication, targeting, monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements outlined in the parent policy. This companion policy document reflects the policy of “working-together” of different sectoral interventions and encourages the support of partners and stakeholders for the common purpose of social protection.

The School Feeding Programme (SFP) like the other national social protection flagship programmes provide an opportunity to pursue Ghana’s commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. 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 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.

The goal of the School Feeding Policy is to deliver a well-organized, decentralized intervention providing disadvantaged school children with nutritionally adequate, locally produced food thereby reducing poverty through improved household incomes and effective local economic development. The policy envisions rapid national socio-economic development achieved through a coordinated, integrated and accountable national school feeding programme.

The policy objectives include providing sustainable social development support to children in deprived Ghanaian communities; strengthening collaboration and coordination between national and sub-national actors; fostering local economic development in food production, marketing and processing; and promoting local collaboration and joint ownership of child nutrition, health promotion and education by local authorities, communities and stakeholders.

It provides cross-cutting interventions related to gender-sensitivity and social inclusivity, social accountability, environmental management and sustainability and image building and information management for school feeding.

A national school feeding programme that achieves wins for local economic development, agricultural productivity, poverty reduction and social justice is possible. One that covers far more children than it does presently will make a considerable difference and help to achieve the national socio-economic development characterised by improved nutrition for disadvantaged school children, reliable markets for local farmers, effective local catering services and enhanced local incomes. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection takes the opportunity to thank all the different institutions and stakeholders who contributed to the development of this policy and sustaining the School Feeding Programme to date and invites the support of all in making the vision a reality.

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MINISTER FOR GENDER, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION**

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The support of a wide range of NGOs and CSOs who participated in thematic interest group consultations as well as that of the Organized Labour, Small Enterprise Owners and Food Traders Associations is acknowledged. The thematic interest areas were: Gender and Social Accountability; Child Health and Child Rights; Food and Agriculture and Food Security; Basic Education; and Trades, Livelihoods and Local Employment; and some of the organizations have been indicated in the policy.

The Ministry also owes a debt of gratitude to representatives of Ministries, Departments and Agencies at the regional and district levels involved in school feeding activities, School Implementation Committees, Parent-Teacher-Associations (PTAs); Farmer-Based Organizations (FBOs), Caterers Associations, Traditional Authorities and Assembly members who participated in regional consultations in all the ten (10) regions. We are also grateful to the school-children from beneficiary and non-beneficiary basic schools who participated in the side-meetings that were conducted.

The interest and support of Parliament, particularly six (6) key select committees, namely the Education, Health, Local Government, Food and Agriculture, Social Welfare, Poverty Reduction, Gender and Children Committees and the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization (IMCC), the Policy Unit in the Presidency and Cabinet was valuable. Technocrats, researchers, policy analysts and consultants who supported in diverse ways are also commended.

Finally, the generous support of Development Partners made this exercise possible. Partnership for Child Development (PCD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) provided financial assistance. The technical inputs of the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Dubai Cares International, the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) also contributed immensely to the quality of the policy.

The Ministry anticipates the continued interest and support of all these partners as it pursues the vision of a well-organized, accountable decentralized intervention providing disadvantaged school children with nutritionally adequate, locally produced food thereby reducing poverty, improving household incomes and achieving effective local economic development. This way, there will be wins for human development, agricultural productivity, social justice and sustainable national development.

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Acronyms

Acronym	Entity
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DEOC	District Education Oversight Committee
DIC	District Implementation Committee
DPCU	District Planning Coordinating Unit
DPs	Development Partners
ECASARD	Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
FBOs	Farmer-Based Organizations
GSFP/SFP	Ghana School Feeding Programme/School Feeding Programme
GSGDA	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
GSOP	Ghana Social Opportunities Project
HGSF	Home-Grown School Feeding
IMCC	Inter-Ministerial Committee on Decentralization
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
LED	Local Economic Development
LESDEP	Local Enterprise and Skills Development Programme
MASLOC	Medium and Small Loan Centre
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MMDAs	Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRGP	Northern Rural Growth Programme
PCD	Partnership for Child Development
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
RPCU	Regional Planning Coordinating Unit
SADA	Savannah Agricultural Development Authority
SAP	Social Accountability Project
SDF	Skills Development Fund
SIC	School Implementation Committee
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
ZUTA	Zonal, unit, town and area

OVERVIEW

The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) was initiated in 2005 as a social protection intervention in the context of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar III and in response to the first and second Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In other countries, school meals and school feeding have provided consistent and reliable channels to address children's nutritional and educational issues as well as offer livelihood and food crop marketing opportunities. While the programme has been important in increasing enrolment and providing nutrition, there have been various challenges including public perceptions of a programme plagued with political partisanship, manipulation and expediency. In response to these, reforms including re-targeting, expansion and pilot projects in social accountability, procurement governance and school health have been undertaken. Baseline surveys and impact assessment have been conducted, and other efforts have been made to strengthen monitoring and evaluation. However, these and other measures to address the arising challenges need to be integrated into a holistic and purposeful undertaking. A national policy on school feeding is therefore necessary to assist the nation to organize and deliver the programme in ways that would provide optimum benefits, irrespective of the political party in power.

The document outlines what the policy is about, why it is necessary and what it sets out to do in an introduction. It provides an overview of the Ghanaian experience, the lessons learned, good practices initiated on a pilot basis and insights from international experiences. It is important that the policy reflects the views and priorities of Ghanaians and therefore the approach adopted in the formulation process to achieving a workable framework and the rationale underlying the choice of activities are described briefly.

The policy context, namely the relevant international and national commitments, the national development agenda and priorities, is presented along with a situation analysis. Having established the rationale and the possibilities for the future of a national school feeding programme that achieves wins for child nutrition, local economic development, agricultural productivity, poverty reduction and social justice, the policy presents the guiding principles that should drive it; these relate to national values and aspirations that underlie the pillars of the policy. The principles are based on preferred ideas and concepts and their implications for a road map for national school feeding drawn out.

The policy envisions rapid national socio-economic development achieved through a coordinated, integrated and accountable national school feeding programme delivering improved nutrition for disadvantaged school children, reliable markets for local farmers, effective local catering services and enhanced local incomes. The goal of the policy is to deliver a well-organized, decentralized intervention providing disadvantaged school children with nutritionally adequate, locally produced food thereby reducing poverty through improved household incomes and effective local economic development.

This document presents four (4) main policy objectives:

- *to provide sustainable social development support to children in deprived Ghanaian communities through an efficient and reliable school feeding programme;*
- *to strengthen collaboration and coordination between national and sub-national actors in implementing school feeding;*
- *to foster local economic development through capacity support for local enterprises involved in food production, marketing and processing; and*
- *to promote local collaboration and joint ownership of child nutrition, health promotion and education by local authorities, communities and stakeholders.*

Seven (7) areas of policy action emanate from these policy objectives namely sustainable financing of school feeding; securing and sustaining the transformation and relevance of school feeding; effective coordination and management; monitoring, evaluation and information-sharing; strengthening farmers' involvement in school feeding; streamlining service delivery through the caterer-contractor system; and strengthening local ownership of the school feeding programme.

Apart from the seven (7) areas of policy action, four (4) cross-cutting thrusts are envisaged as necessary for the achievement of the aims and objectives. These are

- a) gender-sensitive and socially inclusive considerations throughout the programme*
- b) social accountability*
- c) environmental management and sustainability*
- d) image building and information management for school feeding in Ghana*

Other components of the policy are the implementation framework, institutional relationships and provisions for overall coordination; monitoring and evaluation arrangements; the communication strategy for disseminating policy information, implementation, lessons learned and knowledge management. The final part provides the policy time frame and review mechanisms.

1. THE CONTEXT

The Ghana School Feeding Programme has been implemented since 2005 in the context of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar III and in response to the first and second Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and achieving universal primary education. Over the period of implementation, the basic idea of the program has been to provide children in public primary schools and kindergartens with one hot nutritious meal, prepared from locally grown foodstuffs, on every school-going day. The broad and specific policy objectives were that school feeding efforts in Ghana would seek to improve school enrolment, attendance and retention among pupils in the most deprived communities in Ghana as a strategy; promote an increase in domestic food production and consumption; increase the incomes of poor rural households; and improve the health and nutritional status of the pupils.

While the programme chalked various successes and was scaled up after the first five years, the implementation experience indicated the need for more robust management and accountability systems, re-targeting to ensure more equitable spread of the intervention and the need to strengthen district level ownership as well as linkages between key stakeholders such as schools, caterers and farmers. It also became evident that better information-sharing and communication throughout the system and a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system was required for more timely corrective action.

From 2009 a number of reform measures were initiated to rationalize the programme. Amongst others, the targeting criteria was refined and re-targeting undertaken with the assistance of the World Bank, using poverty rankings, food consumption scores (computed by the World Food Programme using Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessments and spatial data variables), the average share of national poverty and food insecurity per district and allocations of resources across districts using average shares.

The Programme was up-scaled in 2011, reaching 1.6 million children. Another important innovation was in the area of social accountability, largely by engaging civil society organizations in the construction of sub-district platforms known as ZUTA¹ forums in pilot districts, where citizens could interact with other stakeholders in school feeding on resources, processes and constraints to delivery. Other steps sought to improve communication and information-dissemination, vertically and horizontally throughout the programme, as well as with external parties using documentation and the media.

Ernst and Young conducted an evaluation of the first phase with support from the Dutch Government. The World Food Programme (WFP) and other development partners supported the institutionalization of a monitoring and evaluation framework and thematic consultants in agriculture and other critical areas.

Between 2010 and 2012, various assessments, pilot interventions and studies were undertaken at the national and international levels which have been relevant for this review process. They

¹ Zonal, unit, town and area

include technical and other support by the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) in relation to Social Accountability, the Home-Grown School Feeding Model and Procurement Governance. Others relate to work by the World Food Programme and the Partnership for Child Development (PCD), Dubai Cares and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Other interventions of interest included the Purchase for Progress initiative (helping the farmers to grow items for use in the SFP) and efforts by the Northern Rural Growth Programme (NRGP) and the Savannah Agricultural Development Authority (SADA) to link farmer-based organizations (FBOs) with local marketing companies. Other reviews, evaluations and policy proposals were made by the Ghana National Association of Teachers, SEND Foundation and the Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ECASARD).

These interventions have provided lessons and encouraged prospects for improving and optimizing the delivery of school feeding in Ghana. The policy development process also took into account international experiences. Internationally, the thrust is towards promoting nutrition and local economic development through school feeding. Countries like Brazil and India with extensive experiences in this endeavour approach school feeding as an investment in human capital development. In poorer countries, various approaches for provision of inputs and delivery of services provide a range of options for Ghana to consider. These include the role of community gardens, contracting of private sector service providers, mass delivery through sub-national kitchens, and the establishment and organization of regional commodity depots are some of the interesting lessons available to us. It is important that these lessons are harmonized, up-scaled and applied in an objective, consistent manner.

National priorities for school feeding as articulated over the past three (3) years in State of the Nation Addresses, Budget Statements and Economic Policies and national development plans identify nutrition, improved agricultural productivity and increased market provision as priorities. For instance, the State of the Nation Address delivered on February 21, 2013 by His Excellency the President signalled the progressive expansion of school feeding to all public basic schools in rural communities to satisfy the basic nutritional needs of pupils. The 2014 Budget Statement in Article 219 acknowledged School Feeding under Socio-Economic Intervention Programmes. The 2016 Budget Statement indicated that the School Feeding Programme had significantly increased enrolment, especially girl child enrolment and overall performance in beneficiary schools, despite its challenges. It estimated that 1,693,698 pupils in 4,881 schools per each school day were fed; and jobs were provided to about 20,000 caterers and cooks. The budget indicated that in 2016, the Programme would be expanded to cover 3,000,000 pupils nationwide, which transparency and accountability would be strengthened including the use of electronic payment systems to contractors.

Development partners (DPs) have been a critical part of the history of school feeding in Ghana. Historically, faith-based organizations like the Catholic Relief Services and multi-lateral partners such as UNICEF, the United States Agency for International Development and the World Food Programme have been involved in the delivery of food aid and feeding. The Dutch Government supported the initial start-up of the present programme. However, as Ghana consolidates its middle income status, it is critical that the nation feeds its own children. Development partners could support Ghanaian institutions to develop effective management systems and relevant capacities to deliver effective school feeding services.

2. THE POLICY FORMULATION PROCESS

To secure and sustain school feeding efforts and promote equity, a policy development process has been undertaken by the Government of Ghana in collaboration with its partners, Partnership for Child Development (PCD) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The policy is expected to anchor the gains made over the years as well as underpin effective delivery through adequate and reliable resources, robust management systems and local and national ownership. It is also anticipated that the policy will insulate school feeding through changing political circumstances and provide a basis for legislation.

The policy development process itself sought to foster ownership, knowledge-sharing, image management and participation at the national, regional and local levels. Therefore, while the process acknowledged and utilised considerable documentation available from project reports, concept papers, theses and articles, stakeholder consultation was also undertaken through workshops, review meetings, electronic messaging and interviews. The philosophies were that the voices of ordinary Ghanaians would be reflected in the document and working processes and ideas not reinvented but integrated into the policy. The process was carefully documented and dissemination of relevant information and the process tapped into existing, effective cross-sectoral practices that worked.

A fifteen (15) member Policy Reference Group provided technical backstopping to the process, comprising representatives of technical, collaborating ministries and agencies as well as civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations with expertise in various aspects of school feeding. The Reference Group and technical stakeholders reviewed emerging information and provided critical technical information in workshop sessions.

Expert interviews with technocrats, researchers and policy analysts in basic education, health, agriculture, local economic development and other relevant areas were conducted. Public electronic and written feedback was solicited on institutional arrangements for delivering school feeding and proposals for financing the intervention. Beyond the mainstream educational, school health and agriculture promotion perspectives, there were emerging concerns related to energy, sustainable development and climate change, equality, equity and rights-based approaches, food security and technological innovation. Other priorities for review, design and implementation of GSFP included monitoring and evaluation, capacity-building and strengthening of linkages between key stakeholders.

Interest-group consultations involved NGOs and CSOs drawn from the thematic areas of Gender and Social Accountability; Child Health and Child Rights; Food and Agriculture and Food Security; Basic Education; and Trades, Livelihoods and Local Employment. Organized Labour, Small Enterprise Owners engaged in Agro-Processing; and Market Traders' Associations were also consulted.

Ten (10) regional consultations were held to validate the findings and proposals, generate additional information and create public interest and ownership in the process. Participants consisted of representatives of Ministries, Departments and Agencies at the Regional and District levels involved in School Feeding Activities (Education, Health and Agriculture); Representatives of DICs and SICs; Representatives of parent-teacher-associations (PTAs); Farmer-Based

Organizations (FBOs); Identifiable Civil Society Groups and networks in the region; Caterers/Caterers' associations; traditional authorities selected by the Regional House of Chiefs; Food Vendors/Marketers' Associations; DCEs; and Assembly members. In all regions, a side-meeting was held for school pupils from beneficiary and non-beneficiary basic schools.

Consultations were held with Parliamentarians from key six (6) key select committees, namely the Education, Health, Local Government, Food and Agriculture, Social Welfare, Poverty Reduction, Gender and Children Committees. Private sector entities were also engaged to create awareness of the re-tooling process and encourage their support from business and corporate social responsibility perspectives, targeting particularly those in the food-related establishments and extractive industries (as a mechanism for alternative livelihoods). Development partners in the local government, poverty reduction, agriculture, health and education sectors were involved in the awareness creation and validation processes. Finally, the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization (IMCC), the Policy Unit in the Presidency and Cabinet were apprised of the process and the emerging proposals for their inputs.

3. THE POLICY AND PROGRAMME CONTEXT

The School Feeding Policy is relevant in the context of the commitments Ghana has made at the international and national levels and must be informed by these. National and international development priorities and obligations in education, child health and nutrition, agricultural production and enterprise development all have potential implications for and contributions to make to school feeding. Therefore, effective coordination is required to optimize the opportunities various commitments and legislations provide in order to achieve meaningful impacts on national and local school feeding and sustainable development.

3.1 International Commitments

Ghana has international obligations that justify the pursuit of a sustainable, equitable and decentralized school feeding programme that has the potential to promote local economic development, reduce poverty and create employment. These obligations include:

- International Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989
- MDGs 1, 2, 3 and to some extent, 7 and 8. Goal 1 seeks to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, targeting income increases, full and productive employment and decent work for all and reducing hunger. Goal 2 aims at achieving universal primary education for children everywhere, irrespective of gender, being able to complete a full course. Goal 3 aspires to promote gender equality and empower women beginning with the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education and eventually at all levels.
- Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the Busan Shared Principles 2011 emphasizing national ownership, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, transparency and accountability
- ILO Recommendation 202 on Social Protection Floors (2012) providing for nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion

- Education for All (UNESCO, 1990 and subsequent forums),
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990, 1999)
- UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960; 2003)
- Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme of NEPAD (CAADP)
- African Charter on People and Human Rights (the Banjul Charter, 1981, 1986)
- West African Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP, 2007)
- ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (2005)
- Food security, full and productive employment and decent work provisions in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for post-2015, particularly SDG 1 which seeks to end poverty in all its forms everywhere; SDG 2, which aims at ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition while promoting sustaining agriculture; and SDG 4 seeking to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education opportunities and access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

3.2 National Commitments

The policy must be associated with the national development agenda, existing national policies and priorities. National commitments that provide a basis for the policy would include

- The 1992 Constitution particularly, the Directive Principles of State Policy: Article 35 (Section 6 (d) indicating participation in decision making as the intent of the decentralization process and by implication, programmes implemented at the local level; Article 36 (1) requiring the state to provide adequate means of livelihood and suitable employment and public assistance to the needy; Article 36 1(b) providing for the state to ensure ample opportunity for individual initiative and creativity in economic activities and fostering an enabling environment for a pronounced role of the private sector in the economy; Article 36 (2) (a) requiring individuals (including parents) to bear their share of social and national responsibilities in overall national development; Articles 37 (2b), 38(1&3a) and 35(5) enjoining the state to make available to all citizens equitable access to educational resources and facilities and not allowing circumstances such as religion, background, gender, health status, socio-economic status, age, disability or ethnic origin to be an obstacle to achieving the individual's potential;
- The Local Government Act, Act 462 (of 1993) which makes the assembly the highest political, legislative, planning and budgeting authority at the local level; and with responsibility for total and holistic local level development responsibilities and obligations for partnerships in development as indicated in Section 10 of the law;
- The National Development Planning Act, Act 480 of 1994 requiring a coordinated development planning approach with provisions for district planning and coordination, bottom-up, community-led planning; and obligations for public hearings to require consultation;
- LI 1961 which provides a basis for integration of departments and therefore coordinated and integrated development, sectoral collaboration and composite budgeting;
- The Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA I) 2010-2013 emphasizing social development, local economic development and good governance
- The Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA II) 2014-2017 which provides for social protection under the “Human Development, Productivity and Decent

Work” thematic area. It prioritizes the National Health Insurance Scheme exemptions, the Basic Education Capitation Grant, the School Feeding Programme and the Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty Programme.

- The Ghana Education Service Act
- National Decentralization Policy Frameworks of 2010 and 2015
- Inter-Governmental Fiscal Framework (2013)
- National Policy on Public Private Partnership
- Education Sector Policies including
 - Education Sector Policy and Plan
 - School Health Education Programme and
 - Early Childhood Care and Development Policy
- Health Sector Policies including
 - Nutrition Policy
 - Imagine Ghana Free of Malnutrition
- Agricultural Sector Policies including the
 - Food and Agricultural Development Policy (FASDEP II);
 - Medium Term Agricultural Sector Investment Plan (METASIP);
 - National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP) providing for financing and capacity building for smallholders
 - Rice Sector Support Programme (RSSP)
 - Livestock Improvement Programme,
 - Roots and Tuber Improvement and Marketing Programme (RTIMP)
- Renewable Energy Policy
- Local Economic Development Policy
- Draft School Health Education Policy
- National Social Protection Strategy (2007) and the Draft National Social Protection Strategy (2012)

The policy takes account of ongoing, complementary government programmes in education including the Capitation Grant, Free School Uniforms, Free Compulsory Basic Education, the National De-Worming and Hand-Washing Programmes.

The policy also acknowledges other government programmes in social protection including the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), the Labour Intensive Public Works (LIPW) and other interventions under the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) and the National Programme on Elimination of Child Labour. Finally, the policy recognizes ongoing development efforts in employment creation such as the Local Enterprise and Skills Development Programme (LESDEP) and the Northern Rural Growth Programme (NRGP) and the Savannah Accelerated Development (SADA) Initiative.

4. RATIONALE

The original goal of the school feeding intervention was to feed school children with nutritionally adequate, locally prepared food with a focus on local foodstuffs. It also intended to promote community-level wealth generation by providing ready markets and increased household incomes which would in turn improve nutritional status and break cycles of household and community poverty. The policy objectives were to improve school enrolment, attendance and retention among pupils in the most deprived communities in Ghana as a strategy; promote an increase in domestic food production and consumption; increase the incomes of poor rural households; and improve the health and nutritional status of the pupils.

Feedback from the field suggests that the original objectives of the School Feeding Programme are still important but with different levels of emphasis. Appendix 1 outlines the opportunities and challenges for the new thrusts for school feeding in Ghana.

The current priority for child development is promotes 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.

The benefits of school feeding for Ghana can be maximized if the linkages between agriculture, health, education and local economic development are recognized and approached 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 development².

Prioritizing the role of agriculture in school feeding is possible if the Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) approach is adopted. This will concentrate spending on local foodstuffs and provide structured demand and ready markets for local farm produce and local suppliers, leading to wealth creation for rural households. This will in turn stimulate an increase in agricultural production, make small-scale farmers more secure and enable them to make calculated investments through improved seeds, fertilizers and technologies; and thereby ensure regular supply of food stuffs to various schools.

School feeding programmes are opportunities to improve children's health, especially when integrated into comprehensive school health and nutrition (SHN) programs. Daily nutritious meals designed suit to local tastes could well decrease the consumption of processed foods, while the availability of fruit and vegetables will help improve the nutrition status of school children. Well-organized school feeding can offer cost-efficient, extensive platforms for comprehensive school-based interventions like de-worming. In education, school feeding programmes have been demonstrated to increase school enrolment, attendance, cognition and educational

² Oshaug, A and L. Haddad (2002). "Nutrition and Agriculture." In Nutrition: A Foundation for Development. Geneva. ACC/SCN

achievement and eradicate hunger and reduce absenteeism, particularly if supported by complementary actions such as micronutrient fortification or supplementation³.

The school feeding programme provides an opportunity to follow up on the local economic development priorities and social agenda indicated in the 2010 decentralization policy framework. The policy defines local economic development as processes by which local governments, local businesses and other actors join forces and resources to create new jobs and stimulate economic activity in municipalities, towns and villages. School feeding 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.

School feeding therefore remains important for facilitating poverty reduction, demonstrating pro-poor growth, equitable development and ensuring greater interest and collaboration in child development by local stakeholders.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Indications from experience and national policy direction are that the School Feeding Programme should be a pro-poor initiative, able to contribute to local economic development while promoting good nutrition for Ghanaian children delivered jointly by assemblies, local communities and actors as an investment in their social development.

The school feeding programme began as a social protection initiative, was refined through poverty targeting and intended to contribute to food and livelihood security. To achieve this, local content emphasis and home-grown school feeding approaches are required.

Using decentralization and subsidiarity, school feeding can contribute substantially to local economic development through partnerships with the private sector. To sustain the effort of feeding children nutritiously in ways that would enhance local and national livelihoods, quality assurance must be ongoing, social impact analysis must be undertaken and the capacities of the diverse actors developed to that end. Figure 1 illustrates this conceptual framework and further details are provided in Appendix Two.

³ Alderman and Bundy, 2011; Adelman et al, 2008

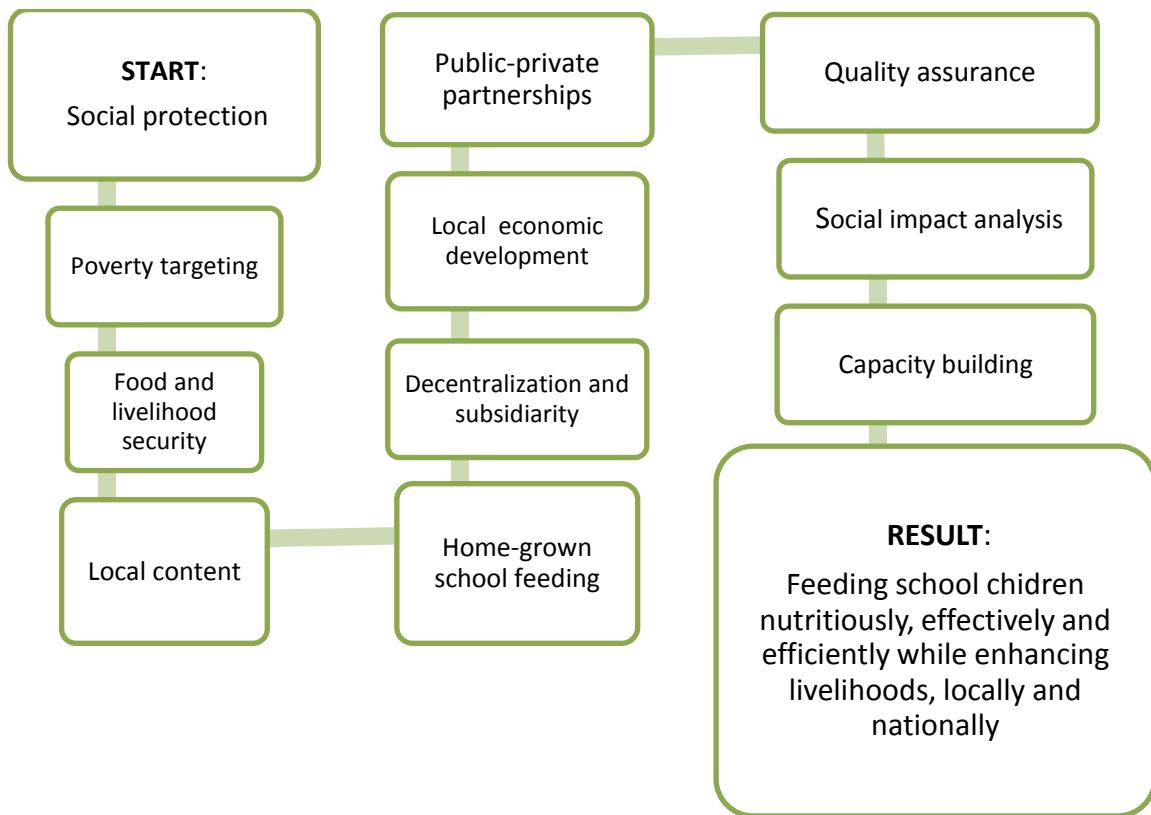


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Emanating from international practice and Ghanaian national development priorities, the principles illustrated in Figure 2 will guide the school feeding approach. These principles are further explained in Appendix Three.

<p>Quality service delivery based on national industry and health standards, the expectations of the stakeholders, respect for institutional arrangements</p>	<p>Performance-oriented monitoring of technical, organizational and behavioural aspects through systematic processes at national and district levels</p>	<p>Predictable and sustained funding flows from core national sources complemented by locally-generated resources</p>
<p>Value-for-money thereby achieving optimal results of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, without compromising quality of food in proportions and nutrients</p>	<p>Accountability and transparency at all levels, emphasizing answerability of duty-bearers, easy access to public information and open systems and processes in all aspects</p>	<p>Community participation and ownership to ensure the influence of principal actors on the school-feeding agenda and their involvement in problem-solving at all levels</p>
<p>Parental involvement to ensure direct access of parents to relevant information and opportunities for contributing resources as they are able</p>	<p>Adequate staffing and resourcing achieved through effective recruitment, job specification, training, capacity development in critical thinking and technical excellence</p>	<p>Evidence-based targeting to ensure effective impact, penetration and coverage that accommodates geographic, gender, nutrition and school differences</p>
<p>Equity and equality in school feeding services, devoid of discrimination and prejudice and are fairly distributed in accordance with local contextual needs</p>	<p>Adoption of people-centered, rights-based approaches to empower and capacitate prospective beneficiaries to demand their entitlements and accountability</p>	<p>Effective communication, coordination and collaboration through multiple channels demonstrating commitment to information-exchange, resources-sharing and mutual capacity enhancement</p>
	<p>Promotion of local initiative to harness ideas and resources to facilitate the production and procurement of goods and services in a specific local area</p>	

Figure 2 Guiding Principles

7. POLICY GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

7.1 Vision

Rapid national socio-economic development achieved through a coordinated, integrated and accountable national school feeding programme delivering improved nutrition for school children, reliable domestic markets for local farmers, effective local catering services and enhanced local incomes.

7.2 Goal of the Policy

A well-organized, decentralized intervention providing disadvantaged school children with nutritionally adequate, locally produced food thereby reducing poverty through improved household incomes and effective local economic development

7.3 Policy Objectives and Sub-Objectives and Areas of Policy Action

Based on the vision and goal above, four (4) policy objectives emerge. The policy objectives are further split into seven (7) sub-objectives arising from the experiences, challenges and national aspirations for school feeding. Seven policy areas emerge from these policy objectives and sub-objectives and the relationship is illustrated in Table 1 below:

OBJECTIVE	SUB-OBJECTIVE	EMERGING POLICY AREAS
<i>One: Provide sustainable social development support to children in deprived Ghanaian communities through an efficient and reliable school feeding programme</i>	Ensure reliable and predictable core, public financing complemented by multiple and innovative financing mechanisms from local authorities, private sector, financial institutions and communities	Policy Area 1 Sustainable financing of school feeding
	Secure relevant legal and institutional support to position school feeding as a driver of change in national development	Policy Area 2 Securing and Sustaining the Transformation and Relevance of School Feeding
<i>Two: Strengthen collaboration and coordination between national and sub-national actors in implementing school feeding</i>	Achieve robust institutional arrangements by mainstreaming school feeding in public administration at national, regional and local levels.	Policy Area 3 Effective Coordination and Management
	Facilitate programme management, service delivery, accountability and learning through participatory monitoring and evaluation of school feeding.	Policy Area 4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Information-Sharing

Three: Foster local economic development through capacity support for local enterprises involved in food production, marketing and processing	Enhance farmer involvement in school feeding to maximize the livelihoods and marketing opportunities and increase domestic food production and consumption	Policy Area 5 Strengthening Farmers' Involvement in School Feeding
	Achieve efficient, equitable and accountable school feeding services through systematic caterer engagement and development	Policy Area 6 Streamlining Service Delivery through the Caterer-Contractor System
Four: Promote local collaboration and joint ownership of child nutrition, health promotion and education by local authorities, communities and stakeholders	Mobilize local resources, initiative and leadership in school feeding programme through extensive community consultation, involvement and contribution	Policy Area 7 Strengthening Local Ownership of School Feeding

Table 1 Policy Objectives, Sub-objectives and Action Areas

7.4 Policy Cross-Cutting Thrusts

Four (4) cross-cutting thrusts are envisaged as necessary for the achievement of the overall goal and objectives. These are (a) gender-sensitivity and social inclusivity throughout the programme (b) social accountability (c) environmental management and sustainability and (d) image building and information management for school feeding in Ghana. The sub-objectives for each thrust are set out in Table 2:

Cross-Cutting Area	Sub-Objectives
Gender-Sensitivity and Social Inclusivity	Ensure equitable inclusion in all aspects of school feeding, including attention to gender equity in management, employment, service delivery and social accountability
Social Accountability	Achieve effective school feeding delivery through stakeholder involvement and ownership in exacting responsiveness and accountability at all levels
Environmental Management and Sustainability	Optimize school feeding by integrating environmental management in all aspects of the programme
Image Building and Information Management for School Feeding	Brand school feeding as an investment in human development through effective information dissemination and recognition of pro-active interventions/initiatives

Table 2 Cross-cutting Areas

8. POLICY MEASURES

8.1 Sustainable Financing of School Feeding

One of the biggest constraints to the delivery of GSFP has been the irregular flow of funds particularly caterer payments. Feeding fees per child have also been low and have not kept pace with macro-economic trends. Low allocations per head and the need for caterers to pre-finance meals have led to compromises in the quality and quantity of food served to the children.

Sub-Objective:
Ensure reliable and predictable core public financing complemented by multiple and innovative financing mechanisms from local authorities, private sector, financial institutions and communities

It is the primary responsibility of the Government of Ghana to fund school feeding sustainably and from clearly identified sources based on the projected number of school children to be fed each year. The Government shall also bear responsibility for ensuring the core human resources and the finances for their employment and the operational costs of running the National Secretariat and Regional Offices. Budgetary resources for monitoring at the national, regional and district levels shall also be clearly allocated. When SFP is fully operational, feeding grants shall go directly to the districts in line with the nation's fiscal decentralization efforts.

But funding feeding delivery shall be a shared responsibility between various actors in order to engender wide ownership. These actors are the Ministry of Finance, the National School Feeding Agency, local authorities, communities and the private sector. Locally generated funding is critical for purposes of greater autonomy and discretion in meeting local level needs as well as ownership and accountability to the local people.

Towards the aim of this policy area, the following measures shall be taken:

1. Provision of core, national public financing through the Ministry of Finance, the Consolidated Fund and Central Government Funds
2. Fund-raising efforts by a National School Feeding Agency
3. Complementary resourcing by local authorities
4. In-kind support by local communities
5. Private-sector funding sources

8.2 Securing and Sustaining the Transformation and Relevance of School Feeding

The formulation and implementation of this policy is central to the transformation of GSFP. It involves structural changes by way of institutional arrangements, funding sources, clearer involvement of old partners and the search for new collaborators. It seeks to improve productivity, marketing and incomes all along the value-chain. It positions the programme to optimize the opportunities and resources available to the School Feeding. Since it seeks to achieve changes in practices and attitudes at the local level, the resulting changes must be also managed.

Sub-Objective:
Secure relevant legal and institutional support to position school feeding as a driver of change in national development

The transformation should lead to increased productivity and incomes of the vulnerable groups, farmers, caterers, food marketers and unskilled labour. At the start of policy implementation, the state shall expect to invest considerable social assistance in the School Feeding Programme. As progress is made and the planned improvements of circumstances are achieved, there should be declines in the emphasis on social assistance and enhanced attention to ensuring school health and local economic development.

The transformation requires consistent political, technical and bureaucratic support which will translate into adequate and continuous financing and other resource support from the national budget rather than the present periodic and irregular releases of funds. Finally, inclusiveness is an essential element of sustainability. Capacities should be built for the expected uptake by the identified participants. This will require in-depth stakeholder analysis of needs and interests and how these evolve within the transformation agenda. Based on the above, there shall be structured engagement with all categories of interested parties in the design of interventions, monitoring of effects, review and re-design.

Sustaining measures must be instituted to secure the gains that will be made. Sustainability is also necessary to overcome dislocations that could occur in SFP arising from political changes or lack of consensus by key political and bureaucratic interests.

Adequate resources, capacity, preparedness for internal reform, growth and innovation, effective information management and continued relevance and responsiveness are all critical for the programme's sustenance. A legislative framework is also necessary to provide the mandate, objects, resourcing arrangements and actionable institutional obligations, irrespective of the political regime in power.

Towards the aim of this policy area, the following measures shall be taken.

1. Development of an appropriate legal framework to establish an agency to secure the gains, ensure reliable and consistent funds and position school feeding as a driver of national development
2. Introduction of a change management process with new structures and operations
3. Mainstreaming school feeding in the national economy
4. Strategic improvements to the existing programme
5. Ongoing learning and innovation
6. Building collaboration for transformation
7. Investment in local-level social change for continued programme relevance and responsiveness

8.3 Effective Coordination and Management

School feeding as envisioned by this policy goes beyond education, health, agriculture or social protection and requires a robust multi-stakeholder structure for delivery. Given the changing focus and nuances in the environment in which the programme operates, the range of participating ministries and agencies as well as future collaborators must be coordinated and their collaboration optimized.

Sub-Objective:
Achieve robust institutional arrangements by mainstreaming school feeding in public administration at national, regional and local levels.

National priorities also require that school feeding is integrated in existing public administration arrangements at national, regional and local levels; institutional duplication is reduced and government constantly engages the private sector to connect resources to school feeding. The ideal arrangements for school feeding should foster backward and forward linkages to other parts and entities in the economy. Capacity-building of the different actors must be an ongoing effort that effectively keeps pace with this dynamic environment.

The foregoing indicates an agenda that is broader than the purview of any single ministry. Therefore, learning from international best practice, a semi-independent body is required to manage the broad, multi-faceted agenda and become the coordinating office at the national level.

The coordinating office must be insulated from the prospect of being relocated within different ministries, as governments change and ministries are created, combined or split according to a prevailing, political vision. There must be unambiguous, institutional obligations in place, clarifying roles and responsibilities for participating ministries, departments and agencies that are understood at all levels for various parties so that they can be held to account. An appropriate office must employ mechanisms to strengthen inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral collaboration at all levels.

The policy proposes the establishment of an agency to meet the conditions indicated above. An agency delivers a specialized function on behalf of the government, oversees policy implementation and enforces the provisions of the relevant legislation, sometimes under the auspices of an existing ministry or public entity. It is a relatively independent entity which has administrative powers to exact performance, determine conditions and initiate reforms in relation to a specified field.

The agency will be responsible for forging and maintaining collaboration with the relevant national departments and agencies. Given the cross-sectoral nature of school feeding, the range of the programme's aspirations and the prospects of adopting, interpreting and harmonizing existing procedures, laws and standards and functions, the entity requires wide-ranging capacities at the national level.

The programme will be implemented through existing public entities at the sub-national level. Therefore, the presence of the Agency will not be required at the district level. There have been mixed experiences with the District Implementation Committees (DICs) which have been the oversight entities at the local level. While some DICs have been effective, some have not had the

full complement of membership. Others do not meet as regularly as required, are not sufficiently informed, not adequately linked to school administrations, district departments of the assembly or other requisite bodies. Because of the intention to locate the School Feeding Programme in the wider agenda of social protection and to ensure the necessary representation of different interest groups for effective and accountable decision-making, district level oversight will be located in the proposed District Social Protection Committees (DSPCs).

In view of the foregoing, the following measures are required to fulfil this policy aim:

1. The establishment of a National School Feeding Agency in line with the Public Service arrangements of Ghana, backed by the requisite legislation with a governing Board, a multi-sectoral technical advisory committee and a Secretariat
2. Operationalization of a de-concentrated regional office to ensure the performance of the sub-national obligations of the Agency of coordination, backstopping, monitoring and evaluation
3. Strengthening of district efforts in school feeding through clearer departmental involvement and stakeholder responsibility in implementation.

8.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Information-Sharing

At the onset of the Ghana School Feeding Programme, assessing and tracking the progress and achievements suffered considerably from the absence of baseline information. Efforts have been to strengthen monitoring and evaluation in the Programme with the assistance of WFP and other partners. A baseline study has been undertaken to rectify past lapses and to facilitate improvements.

Improved monitoring and evaluation is a national priority, as evidenced by the production of national standards and manuals by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). However, the programme has the advantage of pilot monitoring and evaluation initiatives, knowledge management processes and guidelines, both in the Ghanaian experience as well as from international practice, to serve as lessons.

Sub-Objective:
Facilitate effective programme management, service delivery, accountability and learning through participatory monitoring and evaluation of school feeding

The priorities of the policy require

- routine monitoring for timely, corrective action to assess processes, application of resources and results;
- evaluation against programme objectives to assess the extent of delivery, achievements and impacts in relation to the articulated priorities and potentials of the programme; as well as
- on-going studies of influencing factors and arising phenomena to interrogate their effects on school feeding, as well as track and utilise opportunities for improved delivery and results.

To these ends, policy measures shall include

1. Development and implementation of monitoring frameworks for sub-district and district, regional and national level activities and obligations in line with the NDPC guidelines;
2. Refinement and development of critical indicators for the newly prioritized areas of nutrition, local economic development, capacity enhancement and stakeholder involvement
3. Identification and adoption of innovative techniques for encouraging multi-stakeholder involvement in monitoring, evaluation as well as other review activities
4. Promotion of review efforts by partners, collaborations and relevant stakeholders to provide multi-perspective insights into the progress of school feeding and enhance accountability
5. Organization of collaborative learning activities with other parties, particularly non-governmental and civil society and international development organizations.

8.5 Strengthening Farmers' Involvement in School Feeding

Linking school feeding to local agriculture is a key aspiration under this policy and envisages the renewal of the important connection that should exist between agriculture and nutrition. Farmers and their organizations should be encouraged to view school feeding as a means of bettering their livelihoods. Supporting school feeding also provides an opportunity for Ghana to fulfil the commitment of African countries to modernising agriculture by pursuing agricultural production that is scientific, intensive and market-oriented. Projected benefits include enhanced productivity of land, resources and labour as well improved economic, social and ecological returns.

Sub-Objective:

Enhance farmer involvement in school feeding to maximize the livelihoods and marketing opportunities and increase domestic food production and consumption

From the inception of GSFP, the use of “local foodstuff” or home-grown produce from the vicinity of the consuming children was desired especially that 80% of expenditure or ingredients should come from the “locality”. However, systematic and coordinated linkages have not been evident. A number of pilot initiatives in Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) by WFP, SNV, ECASARD and PCD and interventions such Northern Rural Growth Programme (NRGP)⁴ offer learning opportunities for the programme. NRGP programme aims at developing agricultural value chains, increasing agricultural production, helping vulnerable groups, creating profitable commodity and food chains, while improving market linkages for these agricultural products with the domestic and export markets.

The evaluation of the first phase of GSFP indicated that the programme may have had some impact on farm sizes and productivity. Although farmers were ready to sell to caterers given assurances of payment, they had been discouraged by the delays in payment processes. This emphasizes the importance of credit and financial intermediation facilities.

Another important concern is whether local farms can supply the needs of the programme, readily and throughout the year. While there are potential markets in school-feeding for local farmers not only in rice but maize, soya-beans, sugar, palm oil, poultry, root crops, vegetable oils and

⁴ Supported by AfDB and IFAD and implemented in the three Northern Regions and the Brong Ahafo Region.

vegetables, there are yield gaps and relatively high post-harvest losses due to poor storage and absence of relevant farm infrastructure. Rice production is constrained by poor grain quality, cleanliness and packaging issues and relatively high production costs. Maize production is made expensive by high transport costs, high labour costs and lower yields. SFP also competes with other domestic consumers for local produce.

The National Buffer Stock Company has been an important source of cereals for SFP. A relationship has also been initiated between the School Feeding Programme and Ghana Cocoa Board. While these national-level arrangements have contributed to consistency in food supplies to schools and guarantees to producers within a time frame, it is important that local farmers experience a direct linkage with the local feeding programme and have investments directed to their enterprises.

Support for local agricultural enterprises requires increased public and private investments and strong public-private partnerships to improve farmers and agribusinesses' access to capital, irrigated land, storage, technology and electricity. Given cross-cutting concerns for sustainability, support for the agricultural industry must be done with ethical and socially responsible standards achieved thorough consultations with local communities.

Political and public support is critical for home-grown school feeding (HGSF) and to this end the SFP's potential to provide a win-win arrangement must be enthusiastically promulgated. In support of this, the documentation of lessons and public education is essential. The capacity of small-scale farmers to respond to the programme is also important.

In the initial and follow-up stages of rolling-out the HGSF, clear financial commitments are imperative for the success of the programme. The government and its development partners must devote funds to strategic procurements from local farmers for the school feeding programmes at the district and regional levels beyond the intervention by the National Buffer Stock Company.

The areas for intervention under this policy particularly for rolling-out HGSF are:

1. Strengthening farmers' and farmer-based organization involvement in school feeding and farmer- caterer- financial intermediary linkages
2. Promoting local economic development through capacity support for local enterprises involved in food production, marketing and processing
3. Strategic procurement based on local plans of action, arising from regional strategies and national-level guidelines to make the school feeding market attractive and beneficial to small farmers in localities
4. Institutional development support for assemblies, regional offices and the secretariat to develop the indicated frameworks (district plans of action, regional strategies and national guidelines) for an efficient programme to procure from farmers and monitor the interventions/efforts;
5. Provision of requisite assistance, including agricultural inputs, to encourage farmer participation in the school feeding programme
6. Requirement of clearly committed funds to strategic procurements from local farmers for the school feeding programmes at the district and regional levels

7. Documentation of lessons learned, public education and cases to enhance political and public support for SFP.

8.6 Streamlining Service Delivery through the Caterer-Contractor System

Delivering school feeding services should achieve at least three purposes: enhance the nutritional and educational status of children in disadvantaged communities; create decent employment, generate incomes and develop entrepreneurial capacity; and promote agricultural productivity and innovation in agro-processing at the local and national levels.

Sub-Objective:
Achieve efficient, equitable and accountable school feeding services through systematic caterer engagement and development

In other country models, services have been procured from formal small, medium or large-scale catering firms with minimal personal involvement in procurement processes. Other models have meals delivered on large-scale basis across regional jurisdictions for reasons of economies of scale, efficiency and quality standardization.

Ghana has worked with at least two of systems of delivery: the (employed) cook system and the caterer approach. While the cook system met the criterion of providing employment, it created additional demands on the government's wage, human resource and financial management obligations. The caterer approach has also had its challenges including delayed payments, irregularities in caterer-selection, compromises in food quality and production standards and poor documentation.

The formal, private firm models used in other countries—though attractive for employment creation, good procurement governance and competitiveness—do not offer the same prospects for addressing Ghana's socio-economic realities and maximizing its comparative advantages.

In Ghanaian circumstances presently, the caterer model appears to offer more opportunities for growing informal sector rural-based operators, taking advantage of labour-intensive methods, achieving multiplier benefits in local economies, building community-based entrepreneurial and technical capacity and generating local revenue. However, the processes of engaging, paying and monitoring caterers need to be streamlined to reduce compromises in the quality of services and other negative issues associated with this approach.

To these ends, the following policy measures shall be adopted:

1. The “caterer” shall be understood to mean the “contractor” who has the responsibility for delivering the food
2. The caterer-contractor shall be the principal person with whom the government, represented by the assembly, shall have a legal agreement to deliver the service
3. The contracting authority or the client shall be the district assembly
4. Planning and budgeting for school feeding in the district/locality shall rest with the assemblies; ultimately, these processes shall be included in the district medium-term and annual planning as well as composite budgeting arrangements
5. The assembly shall require DSPCs and CSPCs to ensure routine supervision of caterers and provide periodic reports on their performance

6. Resources from central government sources for school feeding purposes shall be transferred directly to assembly accounts specially designated for this purpose
7. In the short-term, payment of caterers shall be through electronic payment systems
8. Ultimately, caterers shall be paid through payment processes under the Ghana Integrated Financial Management Information Systems (GIFMIS), which is intended to improve efficiency in public financial management
9. The processes for engaging caterer-contractors including modes of advertisement, receipt and assessment of bids shall be outlined in guidelines developed by the Secretariat.

8.7 Strengthening Local Ownership of School Feeding

Local ownership is a critical concern that has emerged from the experience of implementing the school feeding programme. School feeding in Ghana originally envisaged a programme that optimised and responded to local conditions including the use of local foodstuffs, labour and expenditure in the local economy. Local investment in the school feeding programme must therefore impact positively on the lives and livelihoods of people in the vicinity, economically, socially and culturally.

Sub-Objective:
Mobilize local resources, initiative and leadership in school feeding through extensive community engagement

Policy areas 1, 3 and 5 emphasize local revenue contributions, involvement of local farmers and engagement of caterers, respectively. Additionally, community ownership must be encouraged by championing local responsibility for the well-being of local children and the local economy.

Beyond the direct objectives of ensuring the nutritional and health requirements of children and promoting livelihoods, desirable national social aspirations can be achieved at the local level with the involvement of local communities. These include instilling healthy eating habits and tastes from childhood, endorsing local cultures through appropriately nutritious traditional foods and advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. To these ends, assemblies need to invest their own resources in the programme and involve local stakeholders more meaningfully and actively. Assemblies and regions shall be required to take advantage of the institutional and socio-cultural resources available locally to promote the national vision. Community interest in SFP shall be sustained through social accountability.

In view of these aspirations, the following measures shall be undertaken:

1. Assemblies shall cultivate relationships with traditional authorities so that these custodians of local lands and resources and social mobilizers champion local school feeding
2. Assemblies shall develop public education strategies on school feeding to take advantage of community social events such as celebrations, festivals and durbars
3. With the assistance of the district information services and other relevant parties, assemblies shall use positive local socio-cultural practices to project the aspirations of school feeding and encourage local identification
4. Assemblies shall create an enabling environment for local enterprises, economic associations and cooperatives to enter into partnerships for food production, storage, processing and marketing for school feeding purposes

5. RCCs shall institute a practice of rewarding districts that demonstrate innovative practices in community involvement
6. Assembly members, traditional authorities and other key persons on the district social accountability forum shall encourage communities to review the programme as implemented in their communities and share the feedback with duty bearers.

9. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

9.1 Gender-Sensitivity and Social Inclusivity

Sustainable development is facilitated by equitable involvement of all sections of the population in the development process, particularly access to and control of critical resources and benefits. The business of school feeding has appreciable numbers of women in various aspects including food crop farming, food marketing, agro-processing, meal preparation and feeding of children. Women are also visible as teachers at the basic level. However, various studies suggest that women are relatively few in decision-making positions, notably constituting less than 10% of DIC membership.

Sub-Objective:
Ensure equitable inclusion in all aspects of school feeding, including attention to gender equity in management, employment, service delivery and social accountability

On one hand, school feeding provides valuable opportunities to enhance women's income-earning capacities as well as men. MDG 3 seeks to provide decent employment for women to bridge the gaps in empowerment between men and women; and this is possible under school feeding as farmers, marketers, traders and caterers. On the other hand, it is also important that women are as appreciably represented alongside men in the governance, decision-making, planning, service delivery and quality assurance aspects of the programme.

A disaggregated lens needs to be applied to examine the differential access for women, men, young people and migrants to critical resources such as land, credit, inputs and markets that would boost their productivity.

The policy shall therefore

1. Encourage the participation of women alongside men in SICs, DSPCs, CSPCs and ZUTA-level deliberations
2. Seek gender balance in employment opportunities in school feeding as appropriate and feasible throughout the programme (including encouragement of male caterers and cooks)
3. Make efforts to involve more men in planning and capacity-building in nutrition education alongside women
4. Encourage women's enterprises to partner school feeding in agro-processing, storage and suppliers/wholesalers in proteins, vegetables and fruits.

9.2 Social Accountability

Citizens have a right to demand accountability from public office-holders, who have an obligation to provide it. In order to make accountability meaningful, there must be sustained communication between the two parties— citizens and officeholders—initiated by both.

SFP benefited from an innovative, pilot Social Accountability Project (SAP) in 2011 which provides lessons for up-scaling.

SAP was concerned with the extent to which duty bearers met their responsibility to be accountable to beneficiaries; as well as the degree to which beneficiaries were aware of their rights to hold duty-bearers accountable and actually exercised these rights. Under SAP, consultations organized at the Zonal/Urban/Town/Area (ZUTA) council levels brought GSFP and community stakeholders in the catchment or administrative area together quarterly to discuss arising issues.

This policy shall encourage duty-bearers at the national, regional and local levels to recognize and proactively meet their obligations for accountability to beneficiaries and non-state stakeholders. It shall also support beneficiaries and principals to exact answers and responsibility from officials.

Towards the aim of this policy area, the following measures shall be taken:

1. The National Secretariat, collaborating Ministries and sub-national actors such as the Regional and District Offices, Regional Coordinating Councils, Assemblies and Local-Government (LG) sub-structures shall be required to outline and publicize their plans of engagement with interest groups at their various levels, annually
2. A range of mechanisms including public meetings, information-sharing and dissemination initiatives and encounters with key social groups, shall be deployed in these plans
3. LG sub-structures shall be encouraged to foster social accountability platforms to ensure community involvement; these platforms shall be supported by assemblies and facilitated by the DSPCs
4. Annual learning events shall be conducted at the district, regional and national levels at which wide participation of interested parties shall be encouraged and provisions made for equitable representation of various categories of actors (women, young people and people with disabilities)
5. The Secretariat shall design and roll-out a knowledge-management system to collate, analyse, store and show case information from annual level events as well as information relevant to school feeding and health from related sectors, actors and bodies at various levels.

Sub-Objective:

Achieve effective school feeding delivery through stakeholder involvement and ownership in exacting responsiveness and accountability at all levels

9.3 Environmental Management and Sustainability

Sustainable development is required to reduce poverty, increase available food while conserving natural habitats, reduce degradation of marginal lands, and ensure access to energy and water without environmental degradation, particularly inappropriate waste disposal and pollution. Within the context of sustainability, there must be capacity development as well as application of best-practice tools such as environmental information management systems and environmental impact assessment. Local governance involves stakeholders jointly mobilizing, safe-guarding and allocating natural resources available to them. Therefore, environmental sanitation and management must be a shared responsibility if school feeding is to be sustainable and effective. Policy awareness and interpretation, acquisition of technical knowledge, applied research, public education, information communication and advocacy of environmental management and school feeding are therefore required.

Sub-Objective:
Optimize school feeding by integrating environmental management in all aspects of the programme

Environmental management is intrinsically linked to small business and informal sector activity. Micro-economic activities have links to and implications for local environment such as farming, agro-processing, fuel and non-timber commodities production which characterize the school feeding sector. School feeding does involve the use of natural resources but it also provides an opportunity for responsible environmental utilisation.

Conserving biodiversity is an important concern in the effort to make school feeding a driving force for local level development. Fresh water and agro-systems are important for sustainable school feeding. Forests are particularly important for biodiversity through climate regulation, nurturing wildlife and timber as well as serving as a store of fuel, herbs and protein.

Energy is arguably the most critical input for economic and social development and although its generation often places strains on the environment. There is pressure to identify new sources of sustainable and renewable energy.

The responses to environmental challenges vary from locality to locality. In some assemblies, there are concerns with wetlands management, coastal erosion and flooding, which could have implications for SFP as local production is increasingly required to contribute to school feeding through HGSF. Through land use planning, assemblies can undertake a comprehensive approach to identifying optimum uses and make adequate provision for agricultural production and industrial agro-processing.

Relevant Ghanaian policy and legal frameworks for environmental management include the National Environmental Policy (1988); the Environmental Sanitation Policy (1999, revised 2007); the Environmental Protection Agency Act (1994); the Environmental Assessment Regulations (1999); the Local Government Act (1993); the Water Resources Commission Act (1996) and bye-laws of the Municipal/Metropolitan /District Assemblies (MMDAs). Guidelines and standards that have implications for environmental health management emanating from the Ministries of Health and Food and Agriculture and other parties must also be reviewed for their ramifications for school feeding.

It is therefore imperative that environmental sustainability is integrated into **all** levels of school feeding, as illustrated below:

Policy Level	Regional Level	District/Local Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•identify and propose appropriate technology and practices•undertake and disseminate relevant, action-oriented research•interpret environmental policy, legislative, scientific and management guidelines for school feeding context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•disseminate and oversee use of appropriate technology with districts•provide effective technical backstopping,•conduct inter-district and regional level impact studies•track climate change effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•encourage and lead use of appropriate technology•observe environmentally-friendly practices in land, water and energy usage in food production, processing and feeding at district level•collaborate with community based entities to undertake relevant education and track climate change

Figure 3 Environmental Sustainability in School Feeding

To achieve this policy aim, the following measures will be undertaken:

1. The National Secretariat shall, in collaboration with its partners, initiate studies, disseminate the arising information and develop strategies for integration into the programme
2. The Board shall ensure effective linkages and ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Science and Innovation, research institutions and the organizations under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for findings on cooking, preservation methods and agro-processing technology as well as post-harvest treatments, amongst others;
3. Assemblies shall demonstrate and report annually through the region on steps taken towards increased use of gas or energy/fuel efficient stoves; exploration of linkage to relevant initiatives including community woodlots, tree planting and green economy ideas; and ensuring viable waste disposal arrangements.

9.4 Image Building and Information Management for GSFP

The image of an organization is the impression that is imparted to its publics (clients, beneficiaries, collaborators, employees and the media) about it through its policies, personnel and operations. It is the way an organization is presented to or perceived by the public. A “brand” is the name, term, design, symbol, trademarks, communications, visual appearances or other feature that identifies a product or function as distinct from others. Branding is vital to an institution that wants to create a positive image.

Sub-Objective:
Brand school feeding as an investment in human development through effective information dissemination and recognition of pro-active interventions/ initiatives

While brands have been largely associated with commercial or service activities, it is important for the distinctive image creation effort that the SFP must undertake. Successful branding of SFP will ensure that stakeholders recall and recognize the programme positively, even under different conditions.

The School Feeding Programme has been constrained by perceptions about it among the Ghanaian public. While it is largely agreed that feeding children at school is an important intervention, there is a wide-spread view that the programme is politically influenced. At the local level, Chief Executives are thought to dominate caterer-selection processes. Lack of public understanding of school-selection processes, local conflicts between school heads and caterers, lack of cooperation between institutional actors and delays in caterer payments are issues that have given the Programme negative publicity.

On the other hand, it is essential that critical information is disseminated in a timely and systematic manner throughout the programme, at all levels and with the wide range of interested parties. Such information would include programme protocols, results and impacts on child nutrition and health promotion, educational retention and enterprise development. Communication about the Programme and the tools deployed to this end are important in creating awareness about the programme and creating favourable impressions about it to those not directly involved in its implementation.

It is important to communicate positive images to general audiences, as well as different, targeted audiences. The general weaknesses that must be addressed, the strengths that must be projected and the future of SFP in the context of national development will be taken on board in creating the image and brand of school feeding in Ghana. The key message will be related to the centrality of school feeding to local economic development, social development, sustainability and innovation in Ghana. The process must enable the programme principals themselves to understand their business better and influence both internal and external perceptions.

The name, logo and other visual features (including graphics, icons, shapes, colours, font sizes and alphabets), catchphrases or mottos, themes and communications must be carefully conceptualized to send the desired message about SFP to the Ghanaian public. While the present name “School Feeding” emphasizes education, there are other aspirations that must be captured including nutrition, agricultural production and local economic development. The colours associated with

the programme's documentation must be reviewed for appropriateness, desirability and consistency (shade and distinctiveness). Finally, the programme's aims and goals must be conveyed to and sustained with the target group.

The National Secretariat will ensure the following to achieve this policy aim:

1. Review the image of SFP amongst beneficiaries, caterers, farmers, local authorities, sector agencies, the private sector and the general public from secondary and primary sources; the requirements for revamping the present image and building a strong brand will also be identified
2. Compile SFP's vision, mission, objectives, organizational structure, collaborations, pilot/innovative interventions into accessible promotional materials; promotional materials, particularly, fliers and fact sheets, brochures, publications including external newsletters, study reports and case studies, newspaper features, articles and advertisements will be revised/developed as needed
3. Design and implement a responsive complaints and feedback system to be applied at national, regional and district levels.

10. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK & INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

As indicated under Policy Area 3, the creation of a Ghana School Feeding Agency (GSFA) is essential to the delivery of an effective programme and securing its future. Until the passage of the relevant legislation to create the Agency, the programme will be delivered from a School Feeding Secretariat. The Secretariat shall work under the supervision of the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection. The following sections outline the proposed composition and functions of the Board and Secretariat of the National School Feeding Agency; Organization of the Agency; the Regional Office of the Ghana School Feeding Agency; and District Level Organization of School Feeding.

10.1 The Board and Technical Advisory Committee of the Agency

The National School Feeding Agency shall operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP). The Governing Board of the Agency shall be provided for by the requisite legislation and shall consist of key stakeholder agencies and such persons for tenures and on such terms and conditions as shall be considered appropriate by appointing authority. The Board will be responsible for the general policy direction and oversight of the resources of the Agency. The Chief Executive of the Agency or any person acting in that capacity shall be a member of the Board.

Until the passage of the legislation that provides for the Board, a multi-sectoral technical advisory committee will support the Secretariat in its work. It will include representatives from such agencies as the Ministries of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Finance, Education, Health, Food and Agriculture, Trade and Industry and Local Government and Rural Development, the National Development Planning Commission and the Food Research Institute, amongst others. On the passage of the requisite legislation, the Technical Advisory Committee will assist the Secretariat in its work and the implementation of the decisions of the Board. The Committee will

represent participating ministries and lead policy review initiatives, identification of good practice and standards-setting on the components of school feeding that relate to their specializations in the Agency's work.

10.2 The Secretariat of the Agency

The Secretariat of the Agency shall be in charge of the day-to-day oversight of the national school feeding policy. The Secretariat shall coordinate various stakeholder interests at the national policy and programme levels and ensure overall technical support for the operational requisites including nutrition and child development, school health, agricultural value chains and food security, enterprise and market-led development and infrastructure development. The Secretariat shall develop systems and provide guidelines in

- Social programme development and targeting
- Procurement of services and inputs
- Coordinating monitoring and evaluation
- Research, data and policy analysis
- Internal controls, financial management and reporting and management
- Planning and budgeting
- Coordination and communication with partners, stakeholders and the various publics

10.3 Organization of the National Secretariat of the Ghana School Feeding Agency

The National School Feeding Agency Secretariat shall be headed by a Chief Executive. The Chief Executive shall be supported by three Deputy Chief Executives in charge of

- a) Finance and Administration
- b) Operations
- c) Monitoring, Evaluation and Information Management

Other responsibilities of the Chief Executive shall include the management of organizational resources, risks and internal controls, with the assistance of an Internal Auditor; and brand management, undertaken with the support of the Communications/Public Affairs Manager.

10.4 The Regional Office of the Ghana School Feeding Agency

The regional coordinating office will be a de-concentrated office of the National Secretariat responsible for coordination, monitoring and technical quality assurance and backstopping. The office of the Regional Coordinator will be located in the Regional Coordinating Council and linked to the Regional Planning Coordinating Unit (RPCU) to better involve SFP Regional Coordinators routinely in regional planning and coordinating functions. The regional SF office will be professionalized and overseen by a coordinator who shall be supported by officers with specializations in nutrition, enterprise development and monitoring/knowledge management/public education. Regional oversight for school feeding shall be provided by the Regional Social Protection Monitoring Committee (RSPMC). The RSPMC shall have a School

Feeding Sub-Committee that would draw on the Regional Departments of Education, Health, Agriculture, Food and Drugs Authority, the Women's Department and include GHS nutrition officers and other relevant bodies.

10.5 District Level Organization of the Delivery of School Feeding

The district administration shall enable the effective functioning of the District Social Protection Committees (DSPCs) through resourcing of meetings. As much as possible, the assembly shall construct kitchens, stores, eating places/canteens and procure and replenish plates and cutlery. The assembly shall link school feeding requirements to the planning, budgeting and monitoring activities of DPCUs. The DPCU shall map the impacts of the programme on vulnerability and exclusion issues.

The DSPC shall be a sub-committee of the assembly by the passage of the appropriate resolution, and exercise oversight of school feeding in the District. While the DSPC is chaired by the District Coordinating Director (DCD) The schedule of the officer responsible for school feeding in the district, municipality or metropolis shall include servicing the DSPC.

10.6 Community Level Organization of the Delivery of School Feeding

The School Implementation Committee (SIC) shall be the structure at the community level overseeing delivery and quality assurance of school feeding and shall liaise with the Community Social Protection Committee (CSPC). The SIC shall report to the School Feeding Sub-Committee of the DSPC. The Committee will consist of a Representative of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) as the chairman; the Head-teacher, one other representative of the School Management Committee (SMC), the Assembly Member for the area and a Traditional Ruler from the locality and the Girls' and Boys' Prefects of the school. The School Health Coordinator shall be the Secretary to the SIC.

The composition of the SIC is also intended to facilitate community support for the School Feeding Programme and ensure linkages with key interest groups. Therefore, the SIC shall be responsible for supervising feeding; reporting on the programme to the DIC on a term basis; advising on matters pertaining to the effective functioning of the programme; making relevant inputs into menu-planning to ensure locally acceptable yet nutritionally adequate meals.

10.7 General Institutional Partnerships

Throughout the policy document, various institutions have been indicated as collaborators in the delivery of the School Feeding Programme. Relationships between the following key agencies at the national, regional and district levels will be managed through the proposed Ghana School Feeding Agency for coherence and coordination.

Key national partners are illustrated in Figure 4.

Partner Ministries	Service Partners	Partner Agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government and Rural Development • Gender, Children and Social Protection • Finance • Education • Health • Food and Agriculture • Trade and Industry • Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghana Education Service • Ghana Health Service • Local Government Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) • Food and Drugs Authority • National Standards Authority • Energy Commission • National Board for Small Scale Industries • National Buffer Stock Company • Ghana Cocoa Board • Council for Scientific and Industrial Research • Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization

Figure 4 National Level Partners

Other national-level partners largely from private sector and civil society organizations working in education, health, agriculture, gender, poverty reduction and manufacturing shall be

- Relevant sector-based labour unions
- Research and advocacy institutions
- Universities and tertiary institutions
- Umbrella/membership organizations of private sector processing, manufacturing and industry

Regional Level Collaborators shall consist of

- Regional Coordinating Councils
- The Regional Planning Coordinating Units (RPCUs)
- The Regional Oversight School Feeding Committees
- Regional offices of the national partner agencies indicated above
- Regional Houses of Chiefs
- Regional offices of umbrella business/private sector organizations (including the Association of Ghana Industries and the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry)
- Regional Networks of NGOs

Local Level Actors to be involved in the planning, delivery, oversight, quality assurance and accountability of school feeding at the district level shall include

- Public institutions: assemblies, district administrations, departments of the assembly and sub-committees of the assembly

- Key public officials such as chief executives, presiding members and coordinating directors, district directors of education, agriculture, health and women's department and the district planning coordinating unit (DPCU) members,
- Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)
- Schools' Managements, School Heads and Teachers
- Farmer-based organizations, caterers associations, market associations, economic associations and other membership organizations
- Traditional authorities, community leaders, faith-based leaders
- Rural Banks, Unit Banks and Non-Bank Financial Institutions
- Communities, community members and family members
- School children

10.7 Development Partners

Development Partners shall support capacity development, organizational development processes and systems and knowledge management through the Agency with the aim of facilitating national development through effective and efficient school feeding.

10.8 The Private Sector

The Private Sector shall be actively encouraged to participate in School Feeding as follows:

- Large and medium scale operators shall be invited to get involved in
 - the development of appropriate technology for various activities in the value chain (agricultural production, processing, cooking utensils, crockery or other activity)
 - agro-processing
 - agro-marketing and produce storage/supply at the national and regional levels
 - information and communication services including mobile telephony
 - research and innovation in packaging, nutrition amongst others
 - and exercise of corporate social responsibility
- Small to medium formal sector operators shall support produce marketing and procurement of inputs
- Micro/informal and small enterprises shall be involved as caterers, producers and marketers shall be encouraged and up-scaled.

10.9 Civil Society

Civil society shall continue to play important roles in school feeding, particularly in social accountability. For purposes of this policy, the civil society sector shall be deemed to include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations, welfare and social associations, membership organizations, producer and economic associations, parent-teacher associations, traditional authorities, media and labour/workers' organizations.

At the national level, CSOs shall participate in a national advocacy and learning network on School Feeding which shall contribute to assessing national policy implementation, reviewing policy direction, monitoring and validating proposed guidelines and formats. At the regional level,

CSOs shall participate in proposed review and learning meetings of the regions they work in. At the local level, CSOs shall be involved in implementation as well as social accountability. The policy anticipates that associations of farmers, marketers and caterers shall be engaged in service delivery. Traditional authorities shall partner assemblies in mobilizing local resources and championing school feeding efforts within districts.

10.10 Parliamentarians

Parliament has a critical role to play in ensuring adequate financial provision especially in their role of budgetary oversight. The relevant Select Committees in Parliament shall undertake monitoring and initiate reviews to improve school feeding delivery in the context of national priorities of employment creation and sustainability. At the local level, MPs shall assist in efforts at quality assurance in their constituencies, periodically contribute logistics and resources to district-level school feeding programmes, and endeavour to attract partnerships for school feeding programmes at the constituency level.

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

This section relates to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy and the extent of advancement towards its objectives. Monitoring and evaluating policy implementation shall be a collaborative undertaking. The accompanying implementation plans shall form a basis for assessment and indicators shall be derived from the activities, outputs and outcomes.

An annual operational plan derived by the Secretariat under the direct oversight of the Chief Executive shall be a basis for monitoring. National programme managers shall collaborate with Regional Coordinators' Offices to track progress on sub-national activities and results collated into half-yearly (bi-annual) reports.

Each district shall organize an annual review meeting on achievement of key policy areas that fall within the purview of local authorities. These reviews shall include social accountability reports from the designated platforms. District reports shall be collated and presented in an annual regional learning event which shall involve school feeding staff, members of DSPCs, traditional authorities, the Regional School Feeding Oversight Committee and civil society organizations and other appropriate parties.

As appropriate, the reports of these monitoring events shall be disseminated to key parties indicated in the implementation framework and placed on the GSFP website. These reports and other relevant information arising from the studies identified in the policy and pilot initiatives by development partners, NGOs and research institutions shall form the basis of biennial learning and knowledge management meetings over the ten-year period of the policy's life.

12. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Throughout the policy document, references have been made to mechanisms for information-sharing. However, a clear communication strategy is required to provide the minimum

standards to be met over the policy period. Relevant feedback on the implementation of the policy shall be systematically provided; and lessons and experiences from community-level, generated and shared. The identified communication channels shall be used to provide relevant information to different actors as appropriate and bridging communication gaps throughout the programme.

The strategy shall be guided by the following principles:

- a) Ongoing, timely and consistent dissemination to stakeholder institutions and parties at the national, regional and local levels
- b) Deployment of multiple channels for information dissemination to suit diverse stakeholders including non-literate principals, farmers' groups, women's groups, community leaders, young people and others
- c) Orientation of local level strategies towards promoting lessons-learning and community ownership.

To these ends,

1. News media shall be engaged productively and constructively to disseminate information about school feeding to the public with a view to permeating all layers of society from the national to the community levels
2. Publications as well as electronic channels of communication (e-mail, social media and networking) shall be employed to reach wider audiences on school feeding
3. Key local level actors not directly involved in the school feeding process on a day-to-day basis shall be targeted for engagement in order to sustain interest and ownership; these shall include Presiding Members, District Coordinating Directors and Traditional Authorities, Religious Heads and Opinion Leaders
4. Available meeting opportunities/events organized by partners shall be used to disseminate information on school feeding.

Detailed provisions have been outlined in the accompanying activity framework.

13. POLICY TIME FRAME AND REVIEW MECHANISMS

The first phase of the policy shall be implemented over a fifteen-year period from January 2016 to December, 2031. The application of the Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements will provide insights on the extent of achievement of the policy's objectives on an annual basis. These efforts will allow for reflections and lessons to review policy aspects and elements. At the end of the second year, a process review including the timing of activities, release of resources and other processes shall be undertaken.

A mid-term evaluation in the fourth year shall be conducted to examine the continued relevance of the rationale, vision, objectives and key areas of policy action. Completed activities and achieved targets shall be replaced with emerging priorities. Stakeholder consultations shall be undertaken at all levels, from sub-district to national and will involve public and private sectors, traditional authorities, media, other civil society, organized labour. The results shall be used to revise and update the policy framework, even within the context of the School Feeding legislation.

Another major evaluation shall be conducted in the ninth year to review the entire undertaking and identify next steps. Immediate transition activities from December 2015 to December, 2016 are illustrated in Figure 5 below.

Develop a road map for the transition of the present School Feeding Secretariat institution to an Agency
Initiate processes for appropriate offices to be apprised of the legislative and institutional implications of the proposed implementing organization (steps towards the School Feeding [Agency])
Undertake advocacy for clearance to initiate steps towards achieving the envisaged legislation and implementing the proposed national, regional and local implementing structures
Initiate processes to put the proposed structures in place at existing Secretariat (while awaiting legislative designation)
Determine establishment and staffing requirements; and set scenarios for eventual redundancies
Secure more appropriate office space for the National Secretariat
Establish new units at the National Secretariat for Social Accountability, Procurement and Knowledge Management (beyond MIS)
Undertake change management awareness raising and capacity building, inculcating the desired features in staff members and key institutional, DP and NGO partners
Educate staff and stakeholders on policy provisions and expectations
Review internal communications systems and organizational process flows
Undertake discussions with Local Government Service and National Departments of Community Development and Social Welfare of district level staff secondment to school feeding schedules
Provide logistics to National Secretariat and Regional Offices including vehicles, furniture and office equipment
Advertise GSFP staff vacancies/positions at National and Regional levels
Initiate discussions with Public Services Commission on development of HR protocols and relevant documents
Define the kilo-calorie per child per day to facilitate pricing
Work towards ensuring the approval of the 30% RDA standard through the one, hot, nutritious meal
Review the 2011 District Operations Manual to take account of the proposed changes and accommodate new practices and arrangements

Figure 5 Immediate Transition Activities

APPENDIX ONE: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

Opportunities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Constitution as a strong basis and mandate for action especially the directive principles2. Supporting provisions in Ghanaian legislations and policy frameworks including Local Government Act, Decentralization Policy Framework, and Local Economic Development Policy3. Availability of lessons from implementation of national programme as well as other-country programmes including from Brazil, Kenya and India4. Availability of the resources of key international collaborators including UN Agencies (WFP, FAO and UNICEF); bi-lateral agencies including CIDA, USAID, and DFID; and international development organizations including PCD, SNV and GCNF.5. On-going national programmes in poverty reduction, social protection, local economic development and local development to complement and inform SF delivery including LEAP, GSOP, LESDEP, NYEP, and NSS6. Innovation and growth of school feeding programmes locally and internationally7. Initiatives to deepen decentralization including roll-out of composite budgeting, integration of district-level departments (under LI1961) and decentralization of education and health in line with assembly system8. Existence of tested local structures for delivery (including SICs, DICs) which also have the potential to foster wide ownership9. Tested models and pilots in critical areas of SF including procurement governance, home-grown school feeding, school gardens and social accountability10. Multi-purpose goal of the programme and wide potential for multi-pronged effects on social development (in education, health and social empowerment)11. Demonstrated track record of government's commitment to meeting international obligations (MDGs, Education for All, CAADP)12. Availability of single register and common targeting systems as mechanisms to ensure consistency in programme delivery13. Widespread support of the idea of school-feeding amongst Ghanaians14. Potential of home-grown school feeding programme to address marketing and post-harvest loss concerns as well as appreciation of local initiatives/local products.15. Increases in financial products and options for business financing and the prospects for growing local economies and local enterprises16. Increasing capacity of local artisans for developing technology for mass and hygienic cooking17. Enhanced interest of civil society organizations for social accountability and ownership of development programmes18. Enhanced interest and increased understanding of and capacity for public private partnerships19. Availability of resources for infrastructural development for assemblies including the DACF and DDF

Challenges

1. Harmonising varied sectoral/ institutional positions on school feeding programme and implications for national, regional and local organization, resourcing and coordination (poverty reduction, social protection or local economic development?)
2. Financing school feeding: securing and assigning sufficient resources and adequate financial provision per child by the programme
3. Achieving and ensuring timely release of funds in line with school calendar
4. Reducing social and political considerations and pressures in the implementation process which impedes targeting, selection of qualified caterers and efficient delivery and affects accountability.
5. Clarifying working definitions and concepts
6. Deepening and expanding knowledge about the programme by relevant stakeholders at national, regional and district levels
7. Adequate sharing of information at all levels and in different components of the programme
8. Maintaining freshness and ensuring nutritious value of the meals
9. Ensuring hygienic conditions and maintenance of sanitary standards for meals preparation and storage
10. Improving rigorous health and nutrition supervision
11. Enhancing commitment and interest of key parties particularly at the local level
12. Ensuring adequate occupational and institutional safety measures on school and other premises related to food production
13. Coordinating regular supply of foodstuffs through farmer-based organizations throughout the year
14. Developing adequate storage facilities to optimize agricultural production
15. Improving planning and projection at all levels for school feeding requirements and implications for teaching and learning
16. Creating awareness amongst parents and other stakeholders about rights and responsibilities in the programme
17. Reducing perceived inequities in selection of beneficiary communities, schools and pupils
18. Increasing the capacity, number and quality of caterers and attendants to ensure sufficient attention to children's eating requirements and practices
19. Ensuring adequate resources and machinery for agricultural production aimed at supporting school feeding and related food security priorities
20. Enhancing productivity of farmers through improved infrastructural support and extension services to farmers
21. Reducing delays and irregular payment of service providers and improving accountability to them
22. Promoting effective monitoring and evaluation of the programme at all levels
23. Increasing variety and wholesomeness in school meals while ensuring value-for-money (reducing reliance on rice and increasing innovation in use of local foodstuffs)
24. Sustaining gains made in increased enrolment to increased retention and completion (given the reluctance of some beneficiary children to be promoted to the junior high school).

APPENDIX TWO: IDEAS UNDERLYING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Social Protection, Equity and Rights-Based Approaches as Pro-Poor Concepts

The Ghana School Feeding Programme having started as a poverty reduction and social protection intervention should aim at achieving equitable impacts and contributing to rights-based development. Social protection refers to actions taken to help individuals and societies, particularly the disadvantaged and underserved, to build resilience to risks, vulnerability and deprivations. Social protection, attention to equity and rights-based approaches are all elements of pro-poor growth because they give poor people the opportunity to participate in, contribute to and benefit from the process of growth. Equity connotes allocation of resources to every section of society on the basis of the benefits to be derived. It implies fair, just and impartial access to nutrition, education and livelihoods. Equitable access is central to realizing rights for all.

Poverty Targeting Approaches

In spite of the successful re-targeting exercise in 2010, the School Feeding Programme is yet to fully reach the indicated target group. Further re-targeting may be required to prioritize beneficiaries of the programme as progress is made amongst beneficiaries. Careful targeting involves measures aimed at reaching specifically designated groups of children in selected communities, based on the aims and objectives of the Programme. Options available to the Programme include:

- a) **geographical** targeting of specific locations deemed particularly needy based on poverty maps or weight indicators;
- b) **nutritional status** targeting relying on nutritional status and health conditions of children;
- c) **economic** targeting using the household incomes of families as a basis of determining those most qualified for the support;
- d) **gender** targeting which aims at correcting gender imbalances in any aspect of SFP by targeting an inducement to females or males as required;
- e) **individual-based** targeting using school censuses, vulnerability assessments as well as qualitative interviews to determine the level of need and perhaps adoption of differentiated interventions such requiring more endowed pupils to make a contribution;
- f) **specific education criteria** targeting which uses particular educational criteria such as academic achievement, absenteeism or school enrolments to target particular schools;
- g) **vulnerability and mapping contexts** to analyze the causes of insecurity and needs of the populations within selected parts of the country;
- h) the **proxy mean test methodology** to estimate household welfare through proxies such as household assets, demographic, human capital and other characteristics

However, nutritional status targeting is not always sufficient where malnutrition predominates in a population. Therefore, additional measures may be required and SFP shall take advantage of the existing common targeting register and coordinate with other ongoing social protection programmes such as the as Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP).

Food Security

The School Feeding Programme is intrinsically linked to food security in that pupil beneficiaries must have sufficient, safe and nutritious food at least over the period of school terms. However, food security requires that adequate supply and access to nutritious food is always available to meet entire families' dietary needs and preferences for them to live meaningfully. This will sustain the gains made with the children through school feeding.

Livelihood Security

Livelihood security has been defined as a family's or community's ability to maintain and improve its income, assets and social well-being from year to year. Livelihood security goes beyond economic well-being to include adequate and sustainable access to and control over both material and social resources. Households should thereby be able to achieve their rights without undermining the natural resource base (Concern, 2003). Livelihood security therefore includes tangible and intangible assets, and social well being. If the Ghana School Feeding Programme is to be influenced by a livelihoods security approach, it will be conceptualized more holistically beyond the short-term feeding of children to include the eradication of the root causes of deprivation. Therefore, the linkages with enabling social, political and economic contexts and the provision of resources such as local infrastructure and social capital will be built into related plans and programmes.

Locality and Local Content

Locality implies the physical territory shared by people in close proximity within the broad national, regional and district boundaries. The locality in this policy will refer mainly to the district and to unique spaces, places and levels which provide various resources and within which strategic partnerships can be forged to enhance and sustain economic growth. In the GSFP, a local focus will create the necessary synergy where the resources essential for local school feeding can be harnessed effectively and efficiently.

For the purposes of this policy, local content means production, within the locality, of services, produce, materials, utensils, goods and other equipment which would otherwise have been procured from outside the locality implementing a school feeding programme. A local content focus will contribute to retaining and expanding local businesses, thereby building robust local economies.

Local Foodstuffs and the Home-Grown School Feeding Approach

Local foodstuffs will be considered to mean foodstuffs produced relatively close to sale points or to the localities where school feeding programmes are implemented. Ideally, to reduce ambiguity, the maximum acceptable distance for local foodstuff should be limited to the region where the foodstuff is produced; and the environmental cost of transporting foodstuffs from a central site, curtailed as much as possible. It relates to the concept of the Home-Grown School Feeding Approach.

The Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) concept seeks to link school feeding programmes with local small-scale farmer production by providing a reliable and sustained market for smallholders through the purchase and use of locally and domestically produced food, as extensively as possible.⁵

Decentralization and Subsidiarity

Decentralization refers to restructuring or reorganization of authority so that there is co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels. It is also the transfer of administrative and political powers from central to regional or sub-national governments. Subsidiarity is the organizing principle of decentralization. It requires that a matter should be handled by the smallest, lowest or least-centralized authority capable of addressing that matter effectively. Subsidiarity therefore increases the authority and capacity of sub-national levels; it also promotes communication and service delivery at the local level because the nearness of those whose needs the service is intended to address, as well as the supervision and control.

Decentralization would facilitate the delivery of the school feeding programme as local authorities are better placed to identify relevant local resources and initiatives to meet the needs of local children, while involving local communities and parents in programme processes. Whatever can be procured, produced and delivered satisfactorily at the lowest level—sub-district, district, regional or national levels—will be undertaken accordingly. When the desired product is not available, it will be accessed at the next level. Subsidiarity in the school feeding programme would enable the local communities assume ownership of the programme and address local challenges effectively and efficiently, within national level guidelines and oversight.

Local Economic Development

Local Economic Development (LED) is defined as a process in which partnerships between local governments, community and civic groups and the private sector are established to manage existing resources to create jobs and stimulate the economy of a well defined area (Helmsing, 2003). LED emphasises local control, using the potentials of human, institutional and physical and area natural resources. LED initiatives mobilise local actors, organisations and resources, develop new institutions and local systems through dialogue and strategic actions. School

⁵ It is an approach that has been facilitated by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in collaboration with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Partnership for Child Development, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and others.

feeding will initially focus on the enterprise development aspect of LED, by encouraging local producers and caterers. Progressively, the other aspects of LED, namely community economic development and locality development can also be aspired to.

Public-Private Partnership

Article 36 (2b) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana makes provision for the involvement of the private sector in the delivery of public goods. Public private partnerships (PPPs) are those relationships between the private sector and the public bodies that aim at introducing private sector resources and/or expertise into projects and services traditionally provided by the public sector. PPPs range from loose, informal and strategic partnerships to service contracts and formal joint venture companies. Through PPPs, the Programme will acquire requisite technical skills, improved service delivery and greater financial security.

PPPs are feasible options for all levels of programme delivery: assemblies in partnership with farmers and caterers at the local level; and the National Secretariat in partnership with food processing companies at the regional and national levels. Outsourcing for particular food inputs required to meet particular nutritional standards may also be considered.

Quality Assurance in Nutrition

Quality assurance is a system of measures and controls to effectively manage and maintain the quality of the goods or services being provided to target groups. It focuses on enhancing and improving processes, existing conditions and methods. In relation to nutrition, it also involves establishing standard guidelines with relevant stakeholders on the levels of nutrition that should be aimed at, the desired outcomes of food products and services and the technical requirements of the inputs, outputs and rating of suppliers and service providers.

Other elements of quality assurance would be in the distribution of food, whether sufficient food of the desired standard is getting to the intended pupils in the selected schools. Periodic inspections, testing, strong information systems and functioning feedback loops are required to ensure quality control and corrective action in the SFP in an on-going manner.

Social Impact Analysis

The practice of analyzing social impacts must be incorporated into the School Feeding Programme. This is not only relevant for review but is also important for the programme's internal and external learning processes. Social impacts relate to human capital such as nutrition, health, education, empowerment, social capital/networks and capacity. Periodic assessments of the programme's effects on each of these and the emerging priorities are required. Therefore, SFP could use social impact analysis to generate constructive feedback and timely corrective action to ensure continued, qualitative, programme responsiveness.

Capacity Building

The capacities of institutional and individual actors require periodic enhancement to deliver the responsibilities assigned to them as well as to maximize the opportunities provided by changing technology and practice. Capacity-building shall take three main forms:

- a) providing access to productive capital (particularly, financial)
- b) developing human capital through education and training; and
- c) building social capital through local organizations to enable people to better their lives.

APPENDIX THREE: IDEAS UNDERLYING THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Community Participation and Ownership

Community participation and ownership to involve the people in a community to influence the agenda and solve their own problems; as school feeding programmes are implemented in any locality, mechanisms to have community members contribute their ideas, participate in decision making and take responsibility for the initiative will be put in place. The views and commitments of community members (opinion leaders, women, men, children and the vulnerable) will be actively solicited.

Broad Stakeholder Consultation at all Levels

Participation is the intent of the decentralization process and by implication, programmes implemented at the local level (See Article 35 Section 6(d) of the Constitution). To this end, broad stakeholder consultation, facilitation of discussions and engagement of people or entities that could be potentially affected by school feeding delivery or outputs will be undertaken. Consultation will happen at the national, regional and district or community levels and involve government agencies, traditional authorities, traditional authorities, local authorities, parents, school pupils, caterers/cooks and caterer associations, farmers and farmer association, other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), school teachers, community and faith based organizations, regional coordinating councils, professional and religious bodies, community and opinion leaders.

Parental Involvement and Support

The Constitution in Chapter 6 (36) (2) (a) requires that individuals bear their share of social and national responsibilities in overall national development. The School Feeding Programme concept is based on stakeholder ownership including parents. Parental involvement and support gives parents direct access to relevant information about the programme at large and the status of implementation in the localities, opportunities to contribute resources as they are able and involvement in decision-making.

Efficiency through Adequate Staffing and Resourcing at all Levels

Staffing refers to the selection and training of individuals for specific job functions and charging them with associate responsibilities geared toward achieving programme objectives. Staffing may include re-allocation of staff and employees as well as recruitment of new staff. Steps to ensure reasonable regional and gender balance in recruitment will be taken. Adequate competency levels, critical thinking skills and technical capacities ensured through appropriate and regular training and exposure directed to impact on quality and efficient delivery.

Evidence Based Targeting Methodology

The limited availability of resources, the prohibitive cost of food provision and the possibility that those who are most in need and vulnerable may be side-lined or overlooked requires effective targeting. It is to this end that evidence-based targeting is required to improve programme impact, penetration and coverage. Evidence based targeting methodology for the programme in Ghana will require a multi-faceted, progressive approach to assessing the needs of communities, families and schools. It should accommodate geographic, gender, nutrition and school levels using mechanisms such as vulnerability analysis and mapping, proxy testing means and poverty weight indicators; and be linked to other social protection targeting strategies in Ghana. Re-targeting will be undertaken where needy areas are not adequately covered and performance is lacking to reach the most vulnerable and help prevent the “pull factor” where children move from non-programme to programme schools.

Equity and Equality in School Feeding Programme

Equity is linked to fairness and inclusiveness and aim at promoting a fairer sharing of resources in a society. Equality relates to the rights of all citizens as identified in the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution. Sections 37(2b), 38(1&3a) and 35(5) enjoin the state to make available to all citizens equitable access to educational resources and facilities, not allowing circumstances such as religion, background, gender, health status, socio-economic status, age, disability or ethnic origin to be an obstacle to achieving the individual’s potential.

The Programme will be guided by the principles of equity and equality to provide efficient and effective school feeding services delivered devoid of discrimination and prejudice; and resources distributed fairly and designed to achieve inclusiveness and in accordance with local contextual needs. The ultimate objective is to have all school going children in pre-primary and public primary schools benefit and enjoy equal access to the school feeding programme.

Rights Based and People-Centred Approaches

People-centred approaches to development aim at improving the quality of life of people through participatory decision making, capacity building of local communities to manage their own resources and ensuring social justice. The school feeding policy is underpinned by the Constitutional requirement that quality standards are met, all prospective beneficiaries have equal rights, opportunities and obligations, and they are engaged and empowered to demand entitlements and accountability.

Effective Communication, Coordination and Collaboration

Effective communication in the School Feeding Programme to produce the desired results requires multiple and effective channels for relevant information to be conveyed on a timely basis to stakeholders and to provide opportunities for stakeholders to express their perspectives and be listened to through culturally appropriate and accessible means. It also necessitates engagement of the media to assist in disseminating information, periodically.

Coordination is underpinned by the willingness of central government agencies to transfer relevant functions, powers, responsibilities and resources to sub-national entities; and institutional stakeholders to synchronize their agendas with assemblies, functionaries or be responsible for the dissemination of relevant information. Collaboration is expedited by government agencies creating the opportunities and supporting the capacities of private and non-state sectors (individuals, associations or organizations) to participate in the School Feeding Programme in particular areas or regions or districts. This participation could take the form of contributing to resource-mobilization, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation activities that will improve the programme at the various levels.

Coordination and collaboration entails commitment from all the parties involved, private and public, to achieve their common interests and objectives. This commitment will extend to exchanging information, sharing resources and enhancing their mutual or collective capacity.

Promoting Local Initiative and Use of Local Content

Local initiative and use of local content means harnessing ideas and innovations inherent in a specific local area to facilitate the production and procurement of local goods and services. In school feeding, it entails the utilization of locally grown food produce, labour and expertise in the development of menus, food production and preparation as well as the construction of kitchens.

Enhanced local initiative and content would create a sustainable base for local food production, processing, distribution, marketing and consumption and ancillary services. This will in turn, create sustainable livelihoods for local actors, facilitate local economic development and in the programme, generally.

Quality Service Delivery

Quality service delivery will result from the collective effect of service performance to satisfy users. It will be the responsibility of everybody involved in the school feeding process on a continuous basis. Quality service will be based on industry and health standards as well as the expectations of the stakeholders. Quality service delivery in relation to school feeding would require

- Active stakeholder participation (including parents, teachers and local communities) to increase potential sustainability
- Accountability through strong institutional arrangements with clear mandates in implementation, monitoring and control
- Alignment with national policy frameworks and processes
- Predictable funding flows to ensure continuity, proper planning and programme implementation.

Performance Oriented Monitoring

Performance-oriented monitoring aimed primarily at providing management and the main stakeholders with early indications of progress in achieving the results and desired outcomes will be prioritized. The rationale behind performance oriented monitoring is to improve staff output through systematic and continuous measurement to take corrective action should this be required. The determinants of performance are recognized as technical (knowledge and skills required), organizational (the objectives to be achieved and resources available) and behavioural (employee attitudes and orientation). Monitoring will draw on the indicators and data sources identified in the national and district monitoring systems. This will involve regular collection of information on results and towards demonstrating whether the programme is achieving its stated goals.

Sustainable Funding Arrangements

Quality service delivery relies on predictable funding flows to ensure sustainability. In the tradition of decentralization, the central government sets the national framework for financial and economic management within which local authorities have the freedom to raise complementary resources. The poverty reduction and food security goals of the GSFP require that funding for the Programme should be provided for distinctly from mainstream financing for assemblies. This could involve the provision of a separate, ring-fenced funding stream. However, the local economic development element goes beyond social assistance, which is non-contributory in cash or in kind.

Value-For-Money

Value for money (VFM) is about achieving the optimal results of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. It is about using resources well. Ghanaian public institutions need to demonstrate value for money to tax payers and donor organizations. It would enhance the confidence of these stakeholders about programme activities as well as promote total commitment and ownership of the programme. Economy would connote seeking to reduce costs without compromising quality (of the food, in terms of right proportions of nutrients). Efficiency is about increasing output for a given input, or minimizing input for a given output, while maintaining quality and measuring the relationship between input resources and the output resources. Effectiveness relates to successfully achieving the intended purpose of the programme.

Promoting Accountability and Transparency at all levels

Accountability and transparency are two important elements of good governance. Accountability involves both answerability and enforceability, even though the former is commonly more emphasized than the latter dimension. Answerability relates to the responsibility of duty-bearers to provide information and justification for their actions. Enforceability is about the application of the consequences for non-accountability. Transparency requires that systems are open, processes and procedures are clear and citizens have easy access to public information. Therefore, there is pro-activity in information-sharing by the parties involved in School Feeding; and pro-activity of citizens in requiring and providing feedback on Programme-related

information. The Ghana School Feeding Programme with its multi-stakeholder approach to a large extent requires the accountability and transparency test at all levels.

Social Interventions

Social development relates to interventions that focus on promoting the dignity, rights and well-being of all human beings. It aims at changing social institutions, relations and behaviour to improve the circumstances of the disadvantaged and includes interventions related to infrastructure, education, employment, personal and community health, personal safety and the natural environment. Social development is facilitated by policies that seek to promote the quality of life for a people as well as social sustainability. “Quality of life” relates to the sum of factors that contribute to the social, environmental and economic well-being of citizens. Quality of life relates to meeting basic needs and ensuring that citizens get their fair share of common resources, participate in a vibrant economy and have opportunities to attain their individual and collective goals. Social sustainability involves ensuring these as they are required, individual and community capacity. The guiding principles of social sustainability are equity, social inclusion and interaction, security and, adaptability and resilience.

Social Inclusion

Social inclusion refers to processes by which those typically marginalized in society can become fully integrated and participating citizens. It involves the provision of certain rights to all individuals and groups in society, such as employment, adequate housing, health care, education and training. The concept of social inclusion relates to the importance of ensuring the links between individual members of society and the recognition of the roles each person plays as a member of their group or society. A socially inclusive society is defined as one where all people feel valued, their differences are respected, and their basic needs are met so they can live in dignity. Social exclusion is the process of being shut out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems which contribute to the integration of a person into the community⁶.

Social Protection

As defined by the United Nations, social protection is concerned with preventing, managing, and overcoming situations that adversely affect people’s well-being. It refers to sets of public and private mechanisms that protect and prevent individuals and households from suffering the worst consequences of shocks and stresses; and promote resilient livelihoods⁷. Such interventions include social assistance, social insurance and labour market interventions. **Social assistance** provides support through resources, either cash or in-kind, transferred to vulnerable individuals or households with no other means of adequate support, including single mothers, the homeless, or the physically or mentally challenged. **Social insurance** seeks to mitigate risks associated with unemployment, ill health, disability, work-related injury and old age, such as health insurance or unemployment insurance. **Labor market interventions** are designed to promote employment, protect workers and the efficient operation of labor markets.

⁶ Cappo 2002

⁷ Paolo Brunori