

School Feeding Strengthening Initiative *International School Feeding Alliance*

300 million children around the world are malnourished; hundreds of millions more live in families and communities that are food insecure. We, the undersigned, share a vision to improve the nutritional status of school children ages 5 and above.

Evidence from around the world and over the years shows that school feeding programs

- reduce the rate of malnutrition and improve health status of children,
- increase school enrollment and performance, especially among girls, and
- stimulate economic activity in local agriculture and trade.

The School Feeding Strengthening Alliance believes that school feeding must increase as a practical solution to nutrition, educational and development challenges. We welcome the opportunity to increase the number of effective and sustainable school feeding programs around the world, taking into consideration the realities, requirements and results discussed in this declaration.

Any program, whether pilot or comprehensive, requires a resource baseline assessment of: currently available infrastructure, human resources, food, health, hygiene and medical services, financial support and, finally, related local government policies.

Building on the principle of bold and persistent experimentation and adaptation, the Alliance will work toward pilot projects in select countries with the following guidelines and goals:

- Targeting a pilot area based on practical considerations such as: current or potential school enrollment; vulnerability of the population's food security; accessibility of the population and area for intervention; level of local political support.
- Strength of local program's administrative and nutritional capacity, and its readiness to participate.
- Eventual scale up of the pilot and long term sustainability of the program.

With present and future partners, the Alliance will identify and seek adequate funding for the pilot to:

- Provide nutrition and health education at all levels, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and government officials.
- Source safe and nutritious foods that are culturally acceptable.
- Build the administrative capacity of local implementers to ensure proper management.

The alliance will conduct comprehensive monitoring and evaluation for the duration of the project and report project outcomes.

A successful pilot school feeding program, followed by a national program in which all schools will be included, will result in these achievements: **increased school attendance, particularly among females, local agriculture and industry development, increased overall education at all levels, improved family food security and health, increased students' ability to learn and develop, decreased early withdrawal from school or drop outs, and decreased child labor.**

The achievement of these goals will, over time, bring reductions in personal, community and national poverty. We commit to building a brighter future through better nutrition for children in school.

So declared in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, October 2008.

Signatories

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