



**LOCALLY PRODUCED SCHOOL  
FEEDING PROGRAMS IN FOUR  
COUNTRIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

**U.S. Department of Agriculture  
U.N. World Food Programme  
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**

# Description:

USDA, with technical assistance from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) assessed the viability of implementing school feeding programs that purchase products from small holder farmers (thereby increasing farmer income through increased productivity and improved markets).

# Countries:

Eight countries requested specific assistance from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Four were selected for assessments:

- Mali
- Rwanda

- Kenya
- Ghana



# Assessments:

## Assessment teams reviewed:

- current government policies
- ongoing school feeding and other nutrition programs
- viability of local production and market opportunities and community support
- nutritional needs (balanced rations)
- current and potential partners
- availability of inputs, supplies and services

# Objectives for Assessments:

- Offer recommendations to the requesting government and to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for whether and how a sustainable locally produced school feeding program that involves purchasing small holder African farmers' agricultural products and strengthens agricultural markets might be implemented in each country;
- Identify key factors that affect program viability and sustainability, and make recommendations to address issues;
- Explore mechanisms to ensure that poor women farmers will benefit from the program.

# Findings

- **Most of the assessed communities were food deficit at least part of the school year**
- **Insufficient inputs, limited extension services**
- **High pre- and post-harvest losses**
- **Limited facilities for storage, processing, marketing; little or no credit**
- **Limited school facilities for cooking, serving, sanitation, storage; very large “school farms”**
- **Limited time and abilities of school staff to manage and implement programs**
- **Procurement contracts and systems often overly complicated**

# Recommendations:

- Make sure adequate extension services, inputs and infrastructure needs are in place, and credit is available
- Start small. Develop effective pilot programs before expanding
- Target one or a few commodities for local production; supplement with other purchased foods to create a balanced ration
- Develop management capabilities among school administrators and staff
- Rethink the concept of “school farms”
- Develop simple and transparent procurement mechanisms

